



IN COLLABORATION WITH



EVENT PROGRAM

Canadian-Caribbean Tourism Resilience Symposium

Co-Designing the Next Decade

July 29-30, 2026



Tourism faces major challenges.

We're coming together to identify solutions.

Welcome to the Canadian- Caribbean Tourism Resilience Symposium

A two-day symposium, focused on building resilience in the Canadian and Caribbean tourism sectors.

Gathering change-makers with multi-disciplinary experience and expertise, we will explore the common challenges that face affect the current tourism sector landscape – from climate adaptation to workforce resilience, to digital transformation – designed to interrogate pain points in search of community-minded, forward-facing solutions.





About George Brown Polytechnic

George Brown Polytechnic (GBP) equips graduates with the career-ready skills and real-world experience to thrive in today's dynamic job market. With three campuses in downtown Toronto, we blend academic excellence with hands-on learning. George Brown offers more than 200 career-focused programs, including degrees, diplomas and certificates, along with 175 continuing education certificates and designations. Each year, we welcome nearly 30,000 full-time students and receive more than 63,000 continuing education registrations.

About Research and Innovation at GBP

George Brown's Office of Research & Innovation turns ideas into action, working with industry and community organizations to solve real-world challenges thoughtfully, responsibly, and in partnership with the people who will actually benefit from the results. Since 2007, we have received over \$110 million in research funding, establishing significant capacity in areas vital to economic and social development – from advanced manufacturing and digital transformation to social innovation and sustainability. Our Think, Make, Test approach is shaped by practical applications, real timelines, and the need for solutions that hold up beyond the lab.





Photo courtesy Saint Lucia Tourism Authority

About the Global Tourism Resilience and Crisis Management Centre

The Global Tourism Resilience and Crisis Management Centre (GTRCMC) is an international Think-Tank headquartered in Jamaica, with offices in Africa, Canada, and the Middle East. Founded in 2018 by the Honourable Edmund Bartlett and operationalized by Professor Lloyd Waller, GTRCMC helps tourism stakeholders worldwide prepare for, manage and recover from a crisis. This is accomplished through providing services such as training, crisis communications, policy advice, project management, event planning, monitoring, evaluation, research, and data analytics.

Event schedule

Day One | July 29th, 2026

9AM	Opening Remarks
11AM	Financing Tourism Resilience
12:00PM	From Climate Risk to Climate Action
1PM	Lunch and Cultural Performance
1:45PM	Keynote Address: Minister Edmund Bartlett
2:10PM	Keynote Address & Moderated Conversation
2:45PM	Ideas Lab/Poster Showcase
3:45PM	Supply Chains, Transport, and Food Security in Tourism
4:45PM	Workforce Resilience
6PM	Reception

Event schedule

Day Two | July 30th, 2026

9AM	Site Visit: Port Lands Regeneration OR Tour of Limberlost
11:15AM	AI and Tourism Resilience Workshop
12:30PM	Lunch and Closing Remarks
2:30PM	Tour of Limberlost

Register for your Day Two Site Visit

REGISTER >>>



Day One

Photo courtesy of Turks And Caicos Islands Tourism Authority

PANEL DISCUSSION

Financing Tourism Resilience: Business Risk, Tax, Concessions and Regulatory Tools

11AM

A case-study presentation and panel discussion about how tourism businesses can fund adaptation, manage risk, and stay viable under climate and market shocks. This will include examples of public policy support, regulatory risks, and financial instruments or support mechanisms that help local operators invest in resilience.

SPEAKERS

Laura Zizzo

Co-Founder and CEO
Estian Partners

Dr. Lloyd Waller

Professor, Digital Transformation Policy and Governance
Executive Director, GTRMC
University of the West Indies – Mona

Dr. Hilary Becker

Associate Professor
Sprott School of Business, Carleton University

CONVERSATION

From Climate Risk to Climate Action: Emergency Preparedness and Crisis Communication

12:00PM

A solutions-focused session on emergency preparedness, crisis communications, and effective strategies for coping with major disruptions such as COVID-19 and hurricane events. This conversation will spotlight practical lessons, response coordination, and initiatives that protect marine and coastal ecosystems as part of tourism resilience.

SPEAKERS

Dr. Balfour Spence

Chair, GBP GTRCMC Advisory Council
Professor, Applied Disaster and Emergency Studies
Brandon University

Mr. Narendra Ramgulam

Deputy Director, Sustainable Tourism
Caribbean Tourism Organization

KEYNOTE

The Honourable Edmund Bartlett

OJ, CD, MP

Minister of Tourism for Jamaica

Founder and Co-Chair, GTRCMC

1:45PM

Minister Bartlett will speak about sustainable tourism planning amidst unprecedented climate, technological and geopolitical changes, highlighting highlight priority resilience challenges and opportunities across Canada and the Caribbean. The keynote address will be followed by a brief moderated question and answer session.

ABOUT OUR KEYNOTE SPEAKER

The Hon. Edmund Bartlett is a transformative leader who is recognized globally for his wide-ranging expertise and accomplishments in both tourism and politics.

Hands-on leadership, innovative thinking and a passion for effecting positive change have been hallmarks of his over forty years of successful service to Jamaica. Mr. Bartlett was first appointed Minister of Tourism in 2007, serving until December 2011. Before this, he already had a solid record of accomplishment as an outstanding legislator in central government in both Chambers of Parliament. He served as Minister of State for Information, Broadcasting and Culture in the Office of the Prime Minister and Minister of Youth, Sports and Community Development from 1980 to 1989; later he served as Senator and Opposition Spokesman on various portfolios, including Tourism, from 1989 to 2007.

While serving in the shadow Cabinet following his first stint as Tourism Minister, Mr. Bartlett travelled the world forging alliances with strategic partners for global initiatives. He returned to the helm of the Ministry of Tourism following the 2016 general elections and was reappointed after the 2025 general elections.

Under Minister Bartlett's leadership, tourism has been positioned as a catalyst for sustainable and inclusive growth, through job creation, Public Private Partnerships (PPPS), wealth creation and community transformation. He is an internationally regarded spokesperson and tireless advocate for global tourism resilience. Mr. Bartlett represents leadership in action. He sees the gaps and fills them.

Beyond his ministerial duties, Mr. Bartlett has continually championed the advancement of education, skills training and job creation as ways of improving the lives of his constituents in East Central St. James.

Minister Bartlett has been married for over 50 years and has one child and two grandchildren. His passions include cricket, dominoes and dancing.

SHOWCASE

Ideas Lab: Live Pitch Session

2:45PM

PRESENTERS:

Dr. Nadine McLeod

*Researcher and Adjunct Senior
Lecturer*

**Caribbean School of Media
and Communication
University of the West Indies – Mona**

Raine Chen

Student
Toronto Metropolitan University

Cymone Walters

Student
George Brown Polytechnic

PANEL DISCUSSION

Supply Chains, Transport, and Food Security in Tourism

3:45PM

A solutions-focused conversation about vulnerabilities across sourcing, logistics, and food systems related to tourism. Speakers will identify practical ways to reduce disruption, strengthen local procurement, and improve resilience across hospitality and destination supply chains.

SPEAKERS

Dr. Krista Holmes

Associate Vice-President, Research and Innovation
George Brown Polytechnic

Gordon Cole

Assistant Vice President, North America
Tropical Shipping

Professor Robert Ruggieri

Professor and Program Coordinator
George Brown Polytechnic

Donovan White

Director of Tourism
Jamaica Tourist Board

PANEL DISCUSSION

Workforce Resilience: Skills Development, TVET, and Retention

4:45PM

This session addresses critical issues related to workforce development including labour shortages, affordability, and career-wage concerns with a focus on training pathways and employee retention strategies. Speakers will discuss approaches for collaboratively developing a resilient workforce, bringing together employers, polytechnic and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) leaders to explore the practical and human skills required to transition into sustainable tourism careers.

SPEAKERS

Sharon Banfield-Bovell

Director, Resource Mobilization and Development
Caribbean Tourism Organization

Dr. Cecil Cornwall

Founding President and Executive Chairman
Western Hospitality Institute

Dr. Luz Longworth

Senior Corporate Director
Sandals Corporate University

Philip Mondor

President and CEO
Tourism HR Canada

Dr. Hassun Malik

Provost and Vice-President, Academic
George Brown Polytechnic



Day Two

WORKSHOP

AI and Tourism Resilience Workshop: Preparing, Managing and Recovering from Crisis

11:15AM

Designed to help tourism leaders, destination managers, businesses, communities and public officials understand how artificial intelligence can strengthen resilience across the full crisis cycle, this workshop is organised around three critical moments: Anticipate, Plan and Prepare; Manage; and Recover and Thrive. Participants explore real tourism-resilience use cases, including early warning, risk and vulnerability mapping, crisis communication, situational awareness, resource allocation, damage assessment, recovery financing, workforce support and community recovery.

Specific AI tools, including ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, ArcGIS GeoAI, Google Earth Engine, Google Flood Hub, Power BI and other specialised platforms, are matched to the tasks they can support. Short demonstrations and videos show how these technologies work in practice.

Each section concludes with an interactive scenario in which participants use their preferred AI assistant to analyse a tourism crisis and develop practical solutions. The workshop encourages participants to embrace AI as a co-creator and decision-support partner, while reinforcing that verification, ethics, local knowledge, human judgement and institutional accountability must remain central to every resilience decision.

SPEAKERS

Dr. Lloyd Waller

Professor, Digital Transformation Policy and Governance

Executive Director, GTRCMC

University of the West Indies – Mona

SESSION

Lunch and Closing Remarks

12:30PM

SPEAKERS

Dr. Balfour Spence

Chair, GBP GTRCMC Advisory Council
Professor, Applied Disaster & Emergency Studies
Brandon University

Sharon Banfield-Bovell

Director, Resource Mobilization & Development
Caribbean Tourism Organization

Dr. Lloyd Waller

Professor, Digital Transformation Policy and Governance
Executive Director, GTRCMC
University of the West Indies – Mona

Meet the speakers



Dr. Gervan Fearon

President, George Brown Polytechnic

Dr. Gervan Fearon is president of George Brown Polytechnic. An accomplished economist, scholar and teacher, he brings his vision for the transformative impacts of education to leading one of Canada's most culturally diverse, urban post-secondary institutions. Recognized for his ability to inspire and move teams toward positive and constructive change, Dr. Fearon collaborates across the college to support career-focused programs, advance applied research and innovation, and promote community development.



Dr. Krista Holmes

Associate Vice-President, Research and Innovation, George Brown Polytechnic

Recognized for her deep collaboration across academia, industry and community, Dr. Krista Holmes leads research and innovation at George Brown Polytechnic, one of Canada's most culturally diverse urban post-secondary institutions. With a focus on inclusive excellence, quality improvement and evidence-informed decision-making, Krista guides a large multi-disciplinary team to deliver complex projects that are positively impacting Canadian businesses and communities. Committed to equity and justice, Krista leads transformative initiatives in postsecondary education by providing opportunities for students, employees and partners to thrive in inclusive and supportive academic environments.



Dona Regis-Prosper

Secretary General and CEO, Caribbean Tourism Organization

Dona Regis-Prosper is Secretary-General and CEO of the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), the first woman to assume leadership of the intergovernmental body. Hailing from St. Lucia, Regis-Prosper is an exceptionally dynamic and transformative leader who has cultivated and nurtured a robust network of professionals spanning both the public and private sectors. Her collaborative efforts extend to working closely with regional government officials, tourism stakeholders and industry experts worldwide.



Kelly Jackson

Vice-President, Destination Development, Destination Toronto

As Vice-President at Destination Toronto, Kelly oversees corporate communications, community engagement and government relations. She led the efforts to develop Toronto's tourism master plan, a 10-year roadmap for growing the visitor economy while delivering tangible benefits to residents. Kelly has extensive leadership experience in public affairs and higher education, previously holding roles at Humber and Seneca Polytechnic and within multiple provincial ministries.

Meet the speakers



Elizabeth Dove

Executive Director, UN Global Compact Network Canada

Elizabeth is the Canadian Network Executive Director of the UN Global Compact – the world's largest corporate sustainability initiative. A tri-sector leader, Elizabeth specializes in social impact and sustainability strategies which engage the public, business, and government. Through her leadership as a consultant, facilitator, and senior staff, more children have found loving foster homes, concerned individuals and the government more easily dialogue on foreign aid, banks have adopted new ways to support Indigenous peoples, non-profits partner with business in innovative ways, businesses enhance inclusion and belonging through their community engagement, and regular citizens have discovered their superpowers as changemakers.



Kyana Bowen

Executive Director, UN Global Compact Network Caribbean

Ms. Kyana Bowen was appointed Executive Director of the UN Global Compact Network Caribbean in May 2024. Prior to joining the UN Global Compact, Kyana was the National Project Coordinator for the ILO Caribbean Office implementing the SDG Fund Joint Programme, "Resilient Caribbean: Engaging and Training Youth, Strengthening Integrated Social Protection Sector Delivery" across three countries.



Dr. Tyrone Hall

Head of Research & Innovation, Brookfield Sustainability Institute, George Brown Polytechnic and Program Director of GBP-GTRCMC

Tyrone Hall is Head of the Brookfield Sustainability Institute and Program Director of the GTRCMC at George Brown Polytechnic (GBP). He previously served as Special Advisor in the Office of the Vice President, Academic Affairs at GBP. Prior to joining GBP, Tyrone led strategic outreach for climate change in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General at the United Nations. He is a climate change specialist with 15 years of in-country research, intergovernmental and industry experience across the Americas, Sub-Saharan Africa, India and the Pacific region.



Laura Zizzo

Co-Founder and CEO, Estian Partners

Laura Zizzo is the Co-founder and CEO of Estian Partners, an infrastructure investment platform that partners with municipalities and private capital to develop and finance resource recovery and energy solutions across North America. Through Estian, Laura is actively engaged in transition finance, public-private partnership structures, and moving institutional capital from climate commitment to real-asset deployment.

Meet the speakers



Dr. Lloyd Waller

*Professor, Digital Transformation Policy and Governance
Executive Director, GTRCMC, University of the West Indies – Mona*

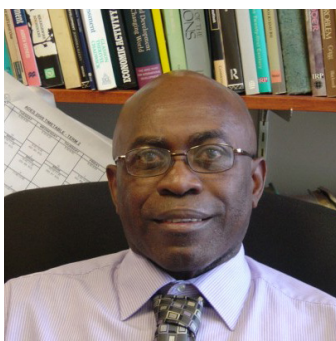
Professor Lloyd G. Waller is Professor of Digital Transformation Policy and Governance and Director of SALISES at The University of the West Indies, Mona. He also served for ten years as Director of the Centre for Leadership and Governance, where he advanced work on leadership, public policy, governance, institutional strengthening, and national development. He is also Executive Director of the Global Tourism Resilience and Crisis Management Centre (GTRCMC), a global think tank headquartered at UWI, with offices across the UAE, North America, Africa, and Europe.



Dr. Hilary Becker

Associate Professor, Spratt School of Business, Carleton University

Hilary Becker, PhD, CPA, CGA, is an Associate Professor of Accounting at Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada, with more than 30-years teaching experience in Strategic Management and Performance Management at the undergraduate, MBA and PhD levels, as well as professional and executive programs in Canada, Caribbean, South America, Middle East, India, and China. Hilary has consulted and researched with profit, not-for-profit and governmental organizations.



Dr. Balfour Spence

*Chair, GBP GTRCMC Advisory Council
Professor, Applied Disaster & Emergency Studies, Brandon University*

Balfour Spence is a Professor in Applied Disaster and Emergency Studies at Brandon University. He has worked extensively as an academic researcher and practitioner in disaster risk management and environmental management throughout the Caribbean and Latin American regions. Balfour has also worked as a consultant in environmental management, disaster risk management and food security issues for numerous international, regional and national development agencies, including UN-FAO, World Bank, IDB, EU, JICA, USAID, CDB, CARICOM and CDEMA.



Narendra Ramgulam

Deputy Director, Sustainable Tourism, Caribbean Tourism Organization

Narendra Ramgulam is the Deputy Director of Sustainable Tourism at the Caribbean Tourism Organization, leading regional efforts to strengthen resilience, innovation, and sustainability in Caribbean tourism. With over a decade of experience across academia, research, and destination management, he has guided award-winning initiatives and published widely on sustainable tourism and cultural resilience. A respected lecturer and speaker, Narendra continues to shape the future of Caribbean tourism through leadership, mentorship, and advocacy for a more sustainable and regenerative industry.

Meet the speakers



The Honorable Edmund Bartlett

OJ, CD, MP Minister of Tourism for Jamaica and Founder/Co-Chair, GTRCMC

The Honorable Edmund C. Bartlett is an internationally recognized tourism leader and policymaker with more than 40 years of public service. As Minister of Tourism for Jamaica, he has advanced the sector as a driver of sustainable and inclusive growth, with a focus on innovation, workforce development, and community transformation. In 2018, Minister Bartlett founded the Global Tourism Resilience and Crisis Management Centre, establishing a global network dedicated to destination preparedness, crisis response, and sustainable recovery.



Gordon Cole

Assistant Vice-President North America, Tropical Shipping

Gordon Cole has held various commercial and senior management positions in the transportation sector. With 35 years' international transportation experience, he started in the transportation industry in 1988 with a major customs brokerage firm. Gordon then joined the Irving Group of Companies between 1990 and 1994 working in both the transport and ocean components of industry. Between 1994 and 2003 he held the position of Sales and Logistics manager at Connors Bros., Limited, a major food processor and exporter in the region. In 2003 Gordon joined Tropical Shipping of Canada in the role General Manager of Canada, based at their head office in Saint John, New Brunswick. He has held various roles and positions moving up within Tropical and currently is the Assistant Vice President responsible for North America.



Professor Robert Ruggieri

Professor and Program Coordinator, George Brown Polytechnic

Robert Ruggieri is a Professor of Supply Chain Management and Program Coordinator at George Brown Polytechnic, bringing a unique blend of academic expertise, industry leadership, and entrepreneurial experience to the classroom. With more than 30 years of private-sector and academic experience, Robert has extensive expertise across the aerospace and defense, high-tech, automotive, cleantech, and energy sectors. His professional background spans senior management, consulting, strategic supply chain management, capital markets, mergers and acquisitions, and project management.



Donovan White

Director of Tourism, Jamaica Tourist Board

Donovan White has served as Jamaica's Director of Tourism since 2018, bringing over 20 years of senior executive experience in marketing and business development. Under his leadership, Jamaica surpassed four million visitor arrivals in 2018 and 2019, driven by award-winning campaigns like Heartbeat of the World and Escape to Jamaica. Previously VP at Cable & Wireless and Columbus Communications (FLOW), he holds a Marketing degree from the University of New Orleans and an Executive MBA from the UK's Telecoms Academy.

Meet the speakers



Sharon Banfield-Bovell

Director, Resource Mobilization and Development, Caribbean Tourism Organization

With more than 25 years in Caribbean tourism, Sharon Banfield-Bovell has led transformative initiatives in tourism planning, sustainable development, and workforce capacity building. As Director of Resource Mobilization and Development at the Caribbean Tourism Organization, she is dedicated to strengthening regional tourism competitiveness while inspiring future leaders through mentorship, collaboration, and strategic innovation.



Philip Mondor

President and CEO, Tourism HR Canada

Philip is a seasoned leader with more than 40 years of experience collaborating with labour market stakeholders across Canada and internationally. His work spans foreign governments, pan-global organizations, Canadian and international businesses, and a wide range of education and training institutions. Throughout his career, Philip has been frequently called upon to provide strategic input on workforce policy development to governments and industry associations.



Dr. Hassun Malik

Provost and Vice-President, Academic, George Brown Polytechnic

Dr. Hassun Malik joined George Brown Polytechnic as Provost and Vice-President, Academic in January 2026. Dr. Malik brings nearly three decades of distinguished experience in higher education leadership, a proven record of academic innovation, and a deep commitment to student success, equity, and community engagement. In this role, he oversees the academic enterprise, with a focus on innovative programming and academic excellence.



Dr. Luz Longworth

Senior Corporate Director, Sandals Corporate University

Dr. Luz Longworth holds a Doctorate in Business Administration in Higher Education Management from the University of Bath in the United Kingdom, both a Master of Business Administration (Marketing) degree from the University of the West Indies (Mona), a Master of Arts degree in Hispanic Studies from Queen's University, Ontario, Canada and a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish and French (First Class Hons.). Her research and practice have focused on Virtual Leadership in Higher Education, Leadership Development, Women in Leadership, and Organizational Transformation and Change.

Meet the speakers



Dr. Cecil Cornwall

Founding President and Executive Chairman, Western Hospitality Institute

Dr. Cecil Cornwall is the Founder and Executive Chairman of the Western Hospitality Institute (WHI), Jamaica's only tertiary standalone hospitality and tourism institution holding both local registration and international accreditation. A pioneer in regional education, Dr. Cornwall has served on the board of the HEART-NSTA Trust (National Training Agency) and as President of the Joint Committee for Tertiary Education (JCTE) for colleges and universities principals and presidents. Internationally, Dr. Cornwall has served as an Advisor to Curaçao's Minister of Education, Irene Dick, where he guided the strategic development and expansion of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in schools across the country.

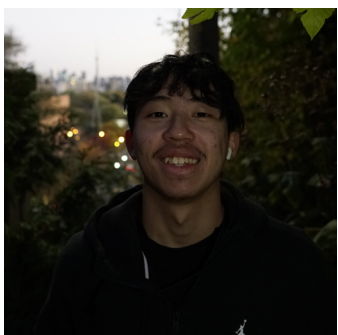
Ideas Lab Participants



Dr. Nadine McLeod

Researcher and Adjunct Senior Lecturer, Caribbean School of Media and Communication, University of the West Indies – Mona

Dr. Nadine McLeod is an award-winning broadcast journalist, communications scholar, educator, and strategic communications consultant with more than 25 years of experience in media, public relations, and higher education across Jamaica and Canada. She holds a doctorate in Communication Studies from the University of the West Indies, Mona. Her research explores media, language, and public discourse, while her professional work focuses on helping individuals and organizations communicate with clarity, confidence, and impact. She is passionate about fostering meaningful dialogue that connects people, cultures, and communities.



Raine Chen

Student, Toronto Metropolitan University

Raine Chen is an incoming fifth year student at Toronto Metropolitan University majoring in the Geographic Analysis program and also minoring in Caribbean Studies. His academic interests include Caribbean history, cultural geography, and cross-cultural studies. Through his studies, he aims to better understand the connections between people and place, and history while also expanding his global perspective.

Meet the speakers



Cymone Walters

Student, George Brown Polytechnic

Cymone Walters is a mother of five, Construction Management Honours graduate from George Brown Polytechnic, and co-founder of Elysian Renovations. With experience in residential and commercial construction, estimating, design, and project coordination, she is passionate about safety, innovation, sustainable development, and creating stronger, more inclusive communities through construction leadership and continuous learning.

Meet Chef Noel



Catering by Chef Noel Cunningham

Chef Noel Cunningham is an award-winning Jamaican-Canadian chef, television food personality, author, and culinary consultant. As the founder of Cuisine by Noel, he is passionate about showcasing Caribbean cuisine through innovative, culturally inspired dishes. A regular guest on Canadian television and a proud ambassador for Jamaican gastronomy, Chef Noel is dedicated to celebrating food, culture, and hospitality on both national and international stages.

The Menu

DAY ONE



Breakfast **8:15am - 8:50am**

Ackee and plantain cups

Assorted Caribbean Loaves & Muffins

Fresh Seasonal fruit platters

Grace Foods Tropical Juices

Coconut Water

Coffee & Tea



Lunch **1:00pm - 1:45pm**

Jamaican Jerk chicken

or

Curried chickpeas with potato

Rice and peas

Creamy Coleslaw

Rum & Raisin Bread Pudding

Grace Foods Island Sodas

Coffee & Tea

The Menu

**Official Cocktail Experience of the
Canadian-Caribbean Tourism Resilience Symposium
5:45p.m – 8:00 p.m.**

3rd Floor, Atrium



Signature Cocktails

The Bartlette

*Appleton Estate Blended Rum with
Grace Gingerbeer, lime juice & bitters*

The Resilience Old Fashioned

Appleton Estate 12 Year Rare Casks, simple syrup & bitters

Caribbean Daiquiri

Appleton Estate Rum with Lime juice



Passed Appetizers

Jamaican curried goat Arancini

Chicken skewers with tamarind jerk sauce

Veggie wonton cups

Jamaican cocktail patties (beef, vegetable, chicken)

Mini Cheesecake bites

The Menu

Day 2



Lunch 12:30-1:30

Kraft Boxed Lunch

BBQ Jerk Chicken Wrap

Garden Salad

Rasta Pasta

Island Cookies

Grace Tropical Beverages

Coffee & Tea

Sponsors

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The team

Special thanks to the people listed below for their many contributions which made this symposium possible.

George Brown Polytechnic

Office of Research & Innovation

Dr. Tyrone Hall

Symposium Convenor
Head of Research & Innovation
Brookfield Sustainability Institute

Dr. Kay-Ann Williams

Research Lead
Brookfield Sustainability Institute

Dr. Hugh Simmonds

Partnerships Advisor
Brookfield Sustainability Institute

Donna Fanfair

Event Coordinator
Brookfield Sustainability Institute

Dr. Krista Holmes

Associate Vice-President
Research & Innovation

Jillian Butler

Knowledge & Communications Specialist

Daniel Caunter

Manager, Industry Liaison & Business Development

Mackenzie Kiemele

Commercialization Coordinator

Baaba Lewis

Administrative Assistant

James Matsuoka

Research Project Coordinator

Victoria Trang

Manager, Research Budget & Operations

George Brown Polytechnic

Global Tourism Resilience & Crisis Management Centre Advisory Committee Members

Dr. Balfour Spence, Chair

Professor, Applied Disaster & Emergency Studies
Brandon University

Dr. Tyrone Hall, Program Director

Head of Research & Innovation
Brookfield Sustainability Institute
George Brown Polytechnic

Dr. Krista Holmes, Executive Sponsor

Associate Vice-President
Research & Innovation
George Brown Polytechnic

Garrett Chow, Secretary

Research Program Coordinator
George Brown Polytechnic

Nicole Breedon

Engagement Researcher
Rural Development Institute
Brandon University

Jeremy Collymore

Chair, Advisory Board
Disaster Risk Reduction Centre
University of the West Indies

Dr. Sheika Henry

Assistant Lecturer
University of Alberta

Dr. Esther Munyiri Kaguri

Lecturer
Kenyatta University

Dr. Jacob Opadeyi

Director
Guyana Online Academy of Learning

Elizabeth Riley

Executive Director
Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA)

Mary Rose Stafford

Vice Dean, Research & Innovation
Faculty of Business
Munster Technological University

Dr. Lloyd Waller

Professor, Digital Transformation Policy and Governance
Executive Director, GTRCMC
University of the West Indies – Mona