



International Academy of Mediators

Montreal Conference Planning Committee Report

In addition to the updates/reports below, Committee Chair, Jay Rudolph is asking for guidance on the following:

At the zoom meeting of the Subcommittee on Saturday dealing with the Pepp Talks and Focus Group Discussions, I was asked to email with the following issues for you to consider at your board meeting:

1. Quite apart from the issue that you are going to address as to whether the Montreal Conference is going to be an in-person conference only or a hybrid conference with members “attending” online as well, will you please provide guidance whether any of the speakers, panelists of facilitators of the Focus Group Discussions can participate virtually online?
2. Orit Asnin has raised the issue whether the Montreal conference or any subsequent conference can extend the program on the Saturday to include either an educational component or a recreational (collegial) component in the afternoon? It was noted that this was done in Banff as well as in Edinburgh. Orit believes that extending the conference in this manner on the Saturday will appeal in particular to those members who are traveling long distances or internationally to attend the conference.
3. Whether the Montreal Conference will be solely an in-person conference or potentially in-person and online (zoom or otherwise).
4. Lastly, I would be grateful if the Board would clarify its policy and provide me and the Planning Committee with guidance regarding any expenses that the IAM pays to speakers, moderators and/or panelists (for example, travelling expenses, hotel expenses, an honorarium or any other expense or stipend).

Thank you very much for considering these issues at your board meeting.

Jay

From an Email dated Jan 28 to the Planning Committee:

Colleagues:

I am writing to follow up my email dated January 26th to urge all of you to keep in mind a few key points as you move forward in contacting potential speakers, moderators, and panelists as part of the follow

ups that you have undertaken over the next week or so. As best I can tell, Paul Iacono, Michael Dickstein, Andrea Morrison, Barb Cornish, Orit Asnin and Michel Kallipetis are all in the process of contacting potential speakers, moderators, and panelists.

My key points which I urge all of you to recognize and adhere to are the following:

1. We want the program, speakers, moderators and panelists to entice members of the IAM to attend Montreal from all over the world. In order to do so, the content has to be practical, relevant, grounded and exciting to the IAM members in attendance. Most people attending may never have done a mediation involving an environmental dispute, a dispute involving indigenous people or a sports dispute.
2. In order for the conference to be successful, we should be asking each speaker, moderator and panelist to focus on the theme of community and to ask themselves a few key questions:
 - a. How can the audience learn from the wisdom and experience of the speaker, moderator and panelist?
 - b. How does the speaker, moderator and panelist manage and conduct that particular type of dispute in that particular community of people or organizations?
 - c. What practical tips or techniques can the speaker, moderator or panelist impart to the audience regarding the particular type of dispute being discussed?
 - d. How can each speaker, moderator and panelist appeal to the IAM members in attendance (who have various areas and levels of expertise) by focusing on practical aspects as well as theoretical/conceptual aspects of the subject matter and community with which they are dealing and with which they have expertise?

If all of us keep the foregoing in mind as we recruit and communicate with the potential, speakers, and panelists, we will most certainly have a very successful conference.

I recognize that for the potential keynote speakers such as Governor General Mary Simon and General Romeo Dallaire, the focus of their talks may be more weighted on the theme of community and less on the practical aspects of how particular disputes with certain communities are conducted.

Please feel to cut and paste my points from above when you email with potential speakers, moderators or panelists.

I am copying Jeff Trueman with this email as well because these points should also be considered by his subcommittee when arranging Focus Group Discussions and Pepp Talks. Jeff's committee is already aware of the need for Focus Group Discussions to provide practical, hands-on practice tips, techniques and tools for attendees to take away with them.

Two additional items to report are that we will open the conference on Thursday with a 20-30 minute introduction by our President, Michel Kallipetis on the concept of community that will lead into our first speaker or panel. Thank you Michel for this. Also, Steve Paul, our incoming President, has kindly agreed to facilitate/moderate the open mike session on Saturday morning. Thank you Steve. Lastly, the "New Trolls", our IAM band lead by Chuck Doran, Jeff Trueman and others will return to entertain us after the banquet on Saturday night and perhaps for a short set between Friday morning's session and Friday afternoon's session.

Lastly, if you have not yet responded to the doodle poll that Richard emailed on January 24th, please do so as soon as possible so the date and time of our next meeting can be finalized.

Once again, I am grateful to everyone for your assistance, participation and cooperation. Thank you very much.

From an email dated Jan 26 to the Planning Committee:

Colleagues:

Thank you very much for participating in the very productive planning meeting on January 21st. This email will summarize the key decisions made and the follow-ups (in yellow) that are to be done hopefully before our next meeting during the week of February 7th. If you haven't already done so, please respond to the "doodle poll" that Richard Rejino sent on Monday January 24th at 6:04pm EST. I refer you as well to my emails dated December 20, 2021, at 5:04pm, December 22, 2021 at 1:29pm, December 28, 2021 at 1:23pm and January 6, 2022 at 6:43pm. All times are EST.

1. Update on General Romeo Dallaire

Michael Dickstein reported that General Dallaire is prepared to speak on Thursday morning. Michael will be receiving a contract which Michael will review with me and we will also seek Steve Paul's input as well.

2. Update on Potential Keynote Speaker, current Chief Justice Wagner

Paul Iacono reported that his request has been acknowledged but we are waiting to hear if the Chief Justice will attend. Paul Iacono will follow up and politely provide a deadline for a response as we will have to go to our Plan B (Rosalie Abella).

3. Update on Subcommittee re Focus Group Discussions and Pepp Talks Chaired by Jeff Trueman

I reported that Jeff Trueman's committee is composed of Jeff, Michael Dickstein, Orit Asnin, Jeremy Lack and Mercedes Tarazan Rodin. I will participate as requested and required. The subcommittee has exchanged a number of emails and has a number of ideas. A Zoom meeting of the Subcommittee is currently scheduled for Saturday January 28th at 1pm EST. The subcommittee is aware that Focus Group Discussions and Pepp Talks are to be lead and given by IAM members (and not by outside speakers) and that Focus Group Discussions will provide attendees with practical hands on tips, strategies, techniques and tools that attendees can take away from the conference and utilize in their upcoming mediations. Michael Dickstein will assist in working out the logistics and scheduling of the Focus Group Discussions and Pepp Talks.

4. Creating the Schedule, Finalizing the Topic Areas, Narrowing and Targeting Potential Speakers and Panels

The bulk of our discussion was focussed under this topic. We discussed the following potential schedule for the conference:

A. Thursday Morning

Theme of Community (ie. the meaning of community, how to build community and how to achieve reconciliation)

Potential Speakers: John Beaucage- Paul Iacono knows him well. The other name that Andrea had previously mentioned was Ghislane Picard, the Chief of Assembly of the First Nations of Quebec. We have to make a decision at the next meeting on which indigenous speaker to invite.

Keynote Speaker: Romeo Dallaire- We will have to ascertain what aspect of community or community building or what other topic he may speak about.

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We also talked about inserting some type of ice breaker activity/discussion with the attendees. Anyone have any ideas?

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We also talked about having a Focus Group Discussion Thursday morning.

During this discussion, there was a consensus that we would try to secure Governor General Mary Simon as a speaker. As an indigenous woman and as the Queen's representative of all communities across Canada, her participation in our conference would be incredible. Paul Iacono has drafted a letter of invitation to her which I have edited slightly. The letter will hopefully be signed by Michel Kallipetis and by Louise Otis and will be mailed to the Governor general as soon as possible. Richard Rejino is assisting with this. If the Governor General will speak, we will need to accommodate her availability and it was agreed that we would not have two keynote speakers back to back.

B. Thursday Afternoon (or possibly Friday Morning)

Theme of Dispute Resolution in the Environmental Community

Confirmed Speaker-Louise Otis- Andrea will speak to Louise to obtain the Louise's topic or theme of her speech.

Panel chaired by Michael Brown- Andrea will speak to Michael and narrow down 2 other panelists and the title and theme of the panel.

IAM Green Pledge-presentation or preferably a group discussion facilitated by John Sturrock and Jonathan Lloyd Jones- Michel will contact and invite John and Jonathan.

Andrea has agreed to assist in the coordination and preparation for the Thursday afternoon (or potentially Friday morning) Environmental theme.

C. Thursday Late Afternoon Reception

Richard Rejino has been and will continue to be in touch with Louise Otis to see whether the City will sponsor the reception at the hotel.

D. Friday Morning (or possibly Thursday Afternoon)

Theme of Dispute resolution in the Sports Community

Confirmed Speaker- Marie Claude Asselin- Barb Cornish has confirmed that Ms. Asselin will be speaking. Would Barb please ascertain the title or theme of her speech?

Potential Sports Panel- I am hoping that Barb will speak to Ms. Asselin and will help put together a panel.

Focus Group Discussion- To be determined

Note: Depending on the consensus of the group, it may be better to have the environmental theme kick off Friday morning and the Sports theme take place Thursday afternoon. The sports theme may be less full from a scheduling point of view and a little lighter in terms of subject matter. This can be discussed at our next meeting.

E. Friday Afternoon

Theme of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Potential Speaker- Governor General Mary Simon— We should have a plan B for a different speaker if the Governor General can't participate.

Panel with IAM Diversity Committee— Orit has agreed to coordinate the people for this panel. Andrea will not be on the panel given her responsibilities in assisting with the Environmental Mediation sessions.

Potential Focus Group Discussion- To Be determined

F. Friday Evening Banquet

Please see the discussion under Administrative and Social Matters.

G. Saturday Morning

Business Meeting -30 minutes- I'm not sure what this business meeting is for.

Open Mike-Where are we going from here as a community? We will need a facilitator and some topics for discussion.

5. General Matters

It was suggested that we plan for a few reserve speakers in the event that speakers (or panelists) can't attend due to COVID. This needs to be discussed.

I note that the preliminary schedule above does not include participation by the IAM's two scholars in residence, Douglas Frenkel and James Stark. We need to discuss this at the next meeting. Perhaps they can be standby speakers. This needs to be discussed.

6. Administration and Social Matters

Richard Rejino advised that the hotel is being flexible in terms of cancelling the conference. The “drop dead” date is probably early to mid-March. There is a further deposit due in April.

Richard also confirmed that the hotel has Covid protocols. If someone needs to be quarantined, there is a quarantine floor. The cost is at the conference rate or any lower rate then in place.

Carol Wilbur sent an email on Friday January 21, 2022 at about 1:51pm EST with a link to a number of potential social plans for the spouses/partners of attendees as well as for everyone. Michael Dickstein and Andrea Morrison have provided some input in response to carol’s email. **The social plans will have to be decided. Please provide any additional input if you wish to do so.**

We will likely have some entertainment during the cocktail hour of the banquet and during the dinner by either Cirque du Soleil or Cirque Eloize. **Richard will make inquiries of Cirque du Soleil as Andrea is still trying to secure a speaker from Cirque du Soleil.**

Andrea raised the issue whether any IAM members (or perhaps someone to be paid) could lead a pre-breakfast yoga session or meditation session on Thursday, Friday and/or Friday morning.

7. Conclusion

I hope the email accurately reflects our decisions, discussions and the follow ups that are to be done. Please provide any comments that you may have.

I have copied Jeff Trueman so that we can collectively thank him for his involvement in chairing the Subcommittee that will be planning the Group Focus Discussions and Pepp Talks. I also want Jeff to see a preliminary skeletal outline of the conference as this may assist him and his subcommittee.

I am grateful to everyone for your assistance, participation and cooperation. Thank you very much.

Jay