

## **Biographies – ERD 2023**

In speaking order.

### **François Carrier**

François was appointed Director of the University of Ottawa's Office of International Research (OIR) in February 2011. A civil engineer holding two degrees from the University of Ottawa (B.A.Sc. and M.A.Sc.), he worked for 10 years as a water and sanitation specialist in developing countries, on assignment for government agencies and private sector companies. In 2015, he earned an M.B.A. from the University of Toronto's Rotman School of Management.

Prior to joining uOttawa, he spent 11 years at McGill University, serving for nine of these years as Head of the International Research Office. Leading a team of nine staff members, the unit provided support services to researchers at the pre-and post-award stages of their international grants and contracts. He led the development of numerous strategic partnerships and oversaw a portfolio of more than 140 international research and development projects worth more than \$93 million.



At uOttawa's OIR, he led a team of four members through nine consecutive years of growth, increasing the portfolio from 18 new awards in 2011, to 96 in 2019. Annual revenue grew five-fold to \$16 million over the period. In 2020, François completed a one-year secondment as Executive Director, Programs, for Polar Knowledge Canada, a federal research organization based in Cambridge Bay, Nunavut.

Since January 2022, François acts as Director of the newly established International Research and Experiential Learning (IREX). He is responsible for providing a broader range of services to researchers and their students, leading to the diversification of funding sources, the development of new research initiatives, the oversight of co-funded programs and a variety of engagement activities.

He continues to advise senior management on international S&T policies and priorities and on opportunities and trends and to represent and promote the University in different settings.

## **Mary Kavanagh**

Dr. Mary Kavanagh is a Senior Expert in the *Global Approach and International Cooperation* Directorate of DG Research and Innovation at the European Commission, where she works on the international dimension of the Horizon Europe Program and relations with Canada and the U.S.

From 2016 to 2021, she was the Minister-Counselor for Research and Innovation at the European Union's Delegation to the United States of America in Washington DC, where her role included raising awareness of opportunities for EU-U.S. cooperation and mobility in research and innovation and facilitating that cooperation at both government agency and stakeholder levels. Prior to that, she was the Deputy Head of the Unit which deals with cooperation with North America, Latin America, and the Caribbean.



Mary has a BSc (1983) and a PhD (1988) in Plant Science from University College Cork, Ireland and carried out post-doctoral research in France and Switzerland before swapping the laboratory for science policy.

## **Stéphane Lessard**

Stéphane Lessard is Executive Director of the Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) division at Global Affairs Canada (GAC). He and his team negotiate and manage Canada's STI collaboration agreements with key foreign partners; support GAC and federal decision-making on global STI policies; oversee the efforts of the Trade Commissioner Service (TCS) on attracting foreign venture capital; manage the Canadian International Innovation Program (CIIP), which helps Canadian SMEs develop international co-innovation partnerships; coordinate GAC's research security efforts; and provide training and support to TCS officers in Canada's missions abroad to help develop international STI initiatives. This is implemented in close collaboration with colleagues abroad, and partners in the Canadian STI ecosystem.



From 2016 to 2020, Stéphane was Consul General of Canada to the U.S. Rocky Mountain West region (Colorado, Kansas, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming). He worked with his team to strengthen trade and economic ties; enhance political, academic, and cultural links; and assist Canadians visiting or living in the region.

Stéphane began his career practicing commercial law in Montréal before joining the Government of Canada in 1993. From 2006 to 2016, he worked at Health Canada, serving in different executive positions across the Offices of the Chief Scientist, the Strategic Policy Branch, the Healthy Environments and Consumer Safety Branch, and the Pest Management Regulatory Agency.

Stéphane has also worked with the Canadian Space Agency (1993 to 2004), where, as the Head of International Affairs, he oversaw relationships with foreign national and multinational space agencies. He also worked from 2004-2006 in the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade's Global Partnership Program, where he focused on preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction.

Stéphane holds a LL.B. from the University of Montréal, a J.D. from the University of Ottawa, a LL.M in Air & Space Law from McGill University, and an MBA from the University of Western Ontario. He was among the first Canadian students (and the first Quebecker) to attend the International Space University in 1988.

A native of Montréal, Canada, Stéphane and his wife, Raji Bansal, have three children: Jasmine, Lana, and Benjamin.

### **Derya Buyuktanir Karacan**

Derya Buyuktanir Karacan is Regional Coordinator at EURAXESS North America, the European Commission's initiative covering Canada and the U.S. She is also a visiting scholar and adjunct professor at the [Institute for International Science and Technology Policy](#) (IISTP) of the Elliott School of International Affairs of George Washington University.



Dr. Buyuktanir Karacan holds a Ph.D. in Economics and International Relations of the European Union from Ankara University, Turkey. After completing her Ph.D., she continued her studies in the Department of Government at Georgetown University, Washington DC, as a post-doctoral fellow between 2014 and 2015. Following her tenure at Georgetown University, she taught courses on global politics, introduction to international relations, and the European Union as an assistant professor.

Besides her academic credentials, she has 13 years of experience as a participant, trainer, or coordinator on different national and international projects on youth supported by the European Commission and the World Bank. Dr. Buyuktanir Karacan currently is the guest editor of the peer-reviewed journal Science and Public Policy (Science Diplomacy in the Global South) and Frontiers (Engaging Scientific Diasporas for Development: Policy and Practices).

### **Jackson Howard**

Jackson Howard is the Regional Coordinator for EURAXESS North America, responsible for Canada and the United States. His main role is to inform the community of researchers of all scientific domains and nationalities based in North America about the career opportunities that the European Research Area (ERA) offers, including European, national, and regional funding opportunities. Another important role is the management of the European Scientific Diasporas in North America initiative together with the EU Delegation and EU Member States & Associated Countries.



Prior to joining EURAXESS, he worked in the international relations and nonprofit sectors, including the Embassy of Chile to the U.S. and Diplomacy Matters Institute. Jackson holds a Master of Arts degree in International Relations from American University in Washington, DC.

### **Clotilde Ribaut**

Clotilde Ribaut is a Senior Advisor, International Research within the International Research and Experiential Learning team from the Office of the Vice-President Research and Innovation at the University of Ottawa. Clotilde obtained a PhD in Chemistry in developing biomedical devices. She then pursued her career as a research associate in different laboratories across Europe.

Now in Canada, Clotilde uses her knowledge of the research landscape to support international collaborations. She strongly believes in the benefits of cooperation and partnerships between the research communities.

Besides these activities, Clotilde Ribaut is also involved with several national organisations in Canada promoting the career of women in STEM.



### **Britta Baron**

Britta Baron is an accomplished leader in the realm of international cooperation in higher education, research, and innovation. Currently serving as the President and CEO of the European Canadian Centre for Innovation and Research (ECCIR), she is dedicated to fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange between Europe and Canada.

With a career spanning two decades at the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), she played a pivotal role in promoting academic exchange and cultivating international partnerships. Her expertise and dedication led her to the University of Alberta in Canada, where she assumed the position of Associate Vice-President (International). During her tenure, she contributed to the expansion of the university's global presence and established strategic alliances with institutions worldwide. Britta has also served as the Head of the International Department at Humboldt University of Berlin and the Associate Vice President and Vice Provost at Western University.



Britta has an honorary doctorate from Oxford Brookes University in England. In May 2022, she received the prestigious Bundesverdienstkreuz am Band, a distinguished German honour, in appreciation of her service to the nation.

As a dual citizen of Canada and Germany, Britta resides in London, Ontario.



## **Gina Soparlo**

Gina Soparlo is the Senior Advisor of Strategic Partnerships - Global Markets at Mitacs. Based in Canada's capital, Ottawa, she leads the organization's national business development team's engagement with private firms for global innovation collaborations. Gina believes that Canada's higher education sector and innovation ecosystem offers the ideal platform for multilateral, knowledge-based economic growth and social solutions.

From her role as the University of Regina's Manager of International Relations (Americas) at the inception of her career through her continual advancement in Mitacs, Gina has mastered building the establishment of high-level international partnerships and translating said diplomatic relationships into market stakeholder activity. Namely, she built the foundations of Mitacs's relationship with Global Affairs Canada and the Trade Commissioner Service and has since supported over 100+ mutual clients in 25+ countries to leverage research, development, and innovation funding.



Gina's current focus is to advance international innovation programming; develop global communication avenues; and foster strategic partnerships in Mitacs's international industry priority verticals:

1. Supporting the global growth of Canadian innovators;
2. support knowledge-based investment in Canada; and,
3. talent circulation.

Gina earned a B.A in Political Science and International Relations, as well as a Certificate in Spanish from the University of Regina. Her academic career was complimented by an elected position as Women's Director for the University of Regina Student Union, and an International Distinction for studies and work at Universidad Panamericana and the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Mexico.

### **Milad Asgarpour Khansary**

Milad took the role of Canada west coordinator of MCAA North America in 2023.

Milad is a former MSCA postdoctoral fellow and spent his fellowship in Ireland 2019-2022. His MSCA research has been published in PNAS (Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of USA) and highlighted in Irish Medical Mirror.

Milad is a graduate of University of Tehran (Iran) and has the experience of working in diverse cultural settings including China, Hong Kong, Russia, Germany, Ireland, and Canada.

Milad is currently based in UBC Vancouver and today his representing MCAA North America chapter (MCAA-NA) team.



### **Delphine Nakache**

Dr. Delphine Nakache is a Full Professor at the Faculty of Law (French Common Law) at the University of Ottawa. She teaches courses in the areas of public international law, constitutional law, and immigration, citizenship, and refugee law. Her research focusses on the most precarious groups of refugees, temporary migrants (such as migrant workers and undocumented migrants), and immigrants. It seeks to shed light on the many factors creating or exacerbating precarity, or preventing access to a secure status, and to suggest ways to improve their rights and protections. She regularly engages with government representatives and civil society on those topics.

Prof. Nakache is currently leading a five-year SSHRC-funded research link on pathways into and out of precarity for temporary migrants in Canada. She is also leading the SSHRC-funded Canadian portion of the VULNER project, an international research initiative which has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program under grant agreement #870845 (for the Canadian part of the research: Profs Dagmar Soennecken and François Crépeau, Co-investigators; Nathan Benson and Prof. Anna Purkey and James Milner, Collaborators). She is as well a Co-Investigator in a SSHRC-funded research (Partnership Grant, 2018-2025) titled "Civil society and the global refugee regime: understanding and enhancing impact through the implementation of global refugee policy," led by Prof. Milner). In this research, she is leading the working group on "Protection," in collaboration with Nathan Benson from the Refugee Hub.



## **Eamonn McKee**

Ambassador Eamonn McKee graduated from University College Dublin with a degree in history (modern Irish) and economics in 1982, followed by a Ph.D. from the National University of Ireland in 1987 for a thesis on Irish economic policy, 1939 to 1952. Ambassador McKee joined the Department of Foreign Affairs in 1986 and worked in Anglo-Irish Division, which would become the focus for his work for the following twenty years, including for six years at the Embassy in Washington from 1990 to 1996. He served twice more in Anglo-Irish Division focused on security issues, including Bloody Sunday, contentious parades, policing and confidence in the rule of law, the use of lethal force, the Cory process and criminal justice reform.



Ambassador McKee was a member of the Irish Government's talks team that negotiated the Good Friday Agreement and was later involved in its implementation on the policing and justice agenda. After working as Director for Humanitarian Relief and UN Director, he founded the Conflict Resolution Unit at the Department. He served as Ambassador to Seoul (2009-13) and Israel (2013-2015). He took up duty as Director General, Trade and Promotion Division in August 2015 where he led on the development of Team Ireland and on Ireland at Expo Dubai.

Today he serves as Irelands Ambassador to Canada, Jamaica, and The Bahamas. He writes regularly on his blog at [www.eamonncmckee.com](http://www.eamonncmckee.com).