REGIONAL FiberConnect

November 19, 2026
JW Marriott Parq Vancouver

7:15AM	**Registration Opens** Sponsored by Wesco
7:15AM – 8:00AM	**Networking Breakfast with Exhibitors,** Sponsored by Corning
8:00 – 8:05AM	**Welcome & Introduction** Richard Williams, FBA Conference Program Director
8:05AM – 8:25AM	**Fiber Broadband: The Future that Fiber Enables** Gary Bolton, President & CEO, Fiber Broadband Association
8:25AM – 8:30AM	**Platinum Sponsor Remarks** TBD, Adtran
8:30AM – 9:00AM	**Opening Keynote** Julie Cook, Acting Director General, Strategic Planning, Broadband Fund & Networks, Telecommunications Sector, CRTC
9:00AM – 9:40AM	**Case in Point: Building the Fibre Infrastructure Behind the AI Economy: From Demand to Deployment** AI, data centres and other high-capacity digital infrastructure are creating new demand for fibre and opening opportunities in emerging markets. But identifying the opportunity is only the beginning. Drawing on real-world experience, panelists from Pomegran will examine how demand shapes decisions about where to build, capacity requirements and the business case for entering new markets. The discussion will then explore the practical realities of turning opportunity into infrastructure, including network planning, construction, permitting and partnerships with municipalities, utilities and other stakeholders—from identifying the market to putting fibre in the ground and bringing services online. **Moderator:** Ian Oliver, Technology and Project Consultant, Globema **Panelists:** • Jerry Mi, Managing Director, BT Energies Corp. • Arman Salah, CTO & President, Manufacturing Operations, IONAXIS • Rob Barlow, Director, RevQuotient • Christine Marion, President PomeGran Québec
9:40AM	**Breakfast Sponsor Remarks** Martin Gagne, Canadian Sales Director, Corning
9:40AM – 9:45AM	**Older Adults Technology Services (OATs) and FBA Program** Richard Williams, FBA Conference Program Director
9:45AM	**Networking Break Sponsor Remarks** Dr. Kalai Kalaichelvan, Chairman & CEO, Pomegran Inc.

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9:45AM – 10:30AM **New AI Inference Driven Fibre Broadband Requirements**

As AI adoption moves beyond hyperscale data centers into enterprises, universities, telecom networks, factories and public institutions, inference is driving a more distributed AI infrastructure ecosystem. This shift has important implications for the fibre networks that connect compute resources, applications and end users.

This panel will explore how emerging AI workloads are influencing where compute is deployed, the connectivity requirements of distributed AI infrastructure, and the implications for fibre network capacity, latency, reliability and reach. Industry experts will examine the relationship between AI infrastructure and fibre deployment, where new investment opportunities may emerge, and how network operators can position themselves to support and benefit from the next phase of AI growth.

Moderator: Cliff Grossner, Ph.D., Chief Innovation Officer, OCP

Panelists:

- Tyler MacDonald, Regional Sales & Business Development Manager, Noramco Telecom
- Nicolas Philiptchenko**,** VP, Strategic Accounts, Vytal Digital Infrastructure

10:30AM – 11:15AM **Networking Break with Exhibitors**

11:15AM – 11:20AM **FBA Membership Update**

Jennifer Vassil, Vice President, FBA Membership

11:20AM – 12:00PM **Community-Led Connectivity: Building Broadband in Rural and Indigenous Communities**

Rural and Indigenous communities across British Columbia continue to face unique challenges in achieving reliable, affordable broadband – from difficult terrain and high deployment costs to permitting, funding, workforce, and long-term network sustainability. This panel will explore how First Nations and network operators are navigating these barriers, building strong partnerships, and pursuing community-led connectivity solutions. Panelists will share practice lessons from the Vancouver region while discussing what governments, operators, and deployments can do differently. Attendees will gain actional insights for planning, funding, and delivering broadband projects that meet the needs of the community.

Moderator: Robert Petruk, VP Strategic Growth & Partnerships, CommTech Solutions and Co-Chair, FBA Canadian Working Group

Panelists:

- Marissa Nobauer, Director, Reconciliation, Community Engagement & External Relations, TELUS
- Nathan Pullar, VP Network Technology, Northwestel
- David Dwyer, Director, Business Development & Partner Strategy, KGPCo

12:00PM – 12:05PM **FBA OpTIC™ Path Program: Developing that Workforce Needed**

Laura Hartman, Workforce Development Program Manager, FBA

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12:05PM – 12:45PM **Networking Lunch**, sponsored by FiberCloudNW

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12:45PM – 1:30PM **Networking Dessert with Exhibitors**

1:30PM **Lunch Sponsor Remarks**
Ryan Strietelmeier, Business Account Manager, Whidbey Telecom

1:30PM – 2:15PM **AI Automation – What's the Value to Telecom?**
AI automation is rapidly moving from experimentation to real-world telecom applications as networks generate more data and become increasingly complex. Agentic AI can help fiber providers monitor networks, detect anomalies, identify root causes, automate service assurance and streamline field and customer operations – reducing costs while creating opportunities for new AI-enabled services and revenue. This panel will examine how AI agents are moving telecom toward predictive, increasingly autonomous operations, while Canada's investments in AI compute and connectivity accelerate adoption. Attendees will learn where automation delivers value and how AI can drive both efficiency and growth.
Moderator: David Eckard, Co-Chair FBA's AI & Machine Learning Working Group and VP of Broadband Partners, Nokia
Panelists:

- Rob Josey, Application Sales Manager, Calix
- Cory Zimmer, CEO, One-Up Technologies Inc.
- Monali Supramanyam, Managing Director, Xeo Strategic Consultancy
- Michael Kuhlmann, President & CEO, Colony Networks
- TBD, Adtran Canada

2:15PM – 2:30PM **Sip & Stretch Coffee and Snack Break**

2:30PM **Networking Reception Sponsor Remarks**
Shawn Arnot, Vehicle Upfit Specialist, Sterling Fleet Outfitters

2:30PM – 3:25PM **From Lab to Market: Accelerating AI and Quantum Technology in British Columbia**
British Columbia is emerging as a hub for AI and quantum innovation, with nearly 600 AI companies and growing investment in technologies that can strengthen the province's global competitiveness. From healthcare and robotics to mining and advanced manufacturing, these technologies are creating opportunities to boost productivity, develop new products and services, create skilled jobs and expand exports. But turning breakthroughs into economic impact requires more than research – it demands the right infrastructure. This panel will explore B.C.'s path from lab to market and what it means for telecom. Attendees will learn where opportunities are emerging, what's needed, and how fiber can help scale commercialization and adoption.

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Moderator: John George, Sr. Director, Global Business Development, Lightera and Chair, FBA Technology Committee, FBA Senior Council
Panelists:

- Rob Goehring, CEO and Founder, Wisr AI
- Dr. Thomas Jennewein, Professor, Canada Excellence Research Chair, Simon Fraser University
- Saeed Shamsi, Head of AI Platform and Automation, BUZZ HPC
- Ilijc Albanese, Ph.D., P.Eng., Lead Quantum Engineer, TELUS

3:25PM – 3:30PM **Closing Remarks**
Richard Williams, FBA Conference Program Director

3:30PM – 4:30PM **Networking Reception with Expo Hall,** sponsored by Sterling Fleet Outfitters

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