



Information and Privacy
Commissioner/Ontario
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UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO

News Release

May 14, 2012

Time to Get Smart about Big Data ... Enter SmartData! Three-day symposium to advance the vision of privacy and freedom

TORONTO – Leading experts from around the world will gather today in downtown Toronto to speak at the first ever *SmartData International Symposium: Privacy meets Evolutionary Robotics: Protecting our Freedoms with Virtual Tools*.

- [Video message with Commissioner Cavoukian](#)
- [SmartData website](#)

SmartData is an intelligent way to protect our information by allowing the data to “protect itself.” The goal is to create Internet-based virtual agents, which will act as an individual's online proxy to securely store their personal information, and disclose it based upon the context involved, taking into account the individual's instructions and preferences.

“Privacy equals control. This mantra is as vital as ever to the protection of our privacy. The challenge that privacy is now facing is how to control our personal data, which is rapidly multiplying in today's era of Big Data and continuously evolving technology,” said Ann Cavoukian, Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario, Canada.

“Just imagine if your data could reflect your wishes and personal preferences. For example, if your medical record knew it could be shared with your doctor, but not with a marketer. That is what this research effort, and this symposium is all about – making the data “smart.” It's a huge undertaking that is very innovative in nature. This is the future direction of privacy.”

Hosted by the [Identity, Privacy, and Security Institute \(IPSI\)](#) at the University of Toronto in association with the [Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario, Canada](#), this event has been made possible through a grant from [the University of Toronto's Connaught Fund](#), which invests between \$3-4 million annually in research and innovation, making it the largest of its kind in Canada. The SmartData Symposium is funded under its newest program in support of research to target unmet societal needs and cultivate collaborations with transformative impact.

“The University of Toronto is privileged to welcome renowned experts from around the world to this important Symposium,” said University of Toronto President David Naylor. “SmartData is an exciting and ambitious initiative to control and protect personal information in a world of ever increasing digital threats.”



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More than 20 renowned experts, from around the world, and from various disciplines, will present on SmartData from differing perspectives, including artificial intelligence, evolutionary robotics, cognitive science, computer science, biology, engineering, privacy and philosophy of science. As well as opening remarks by University of Toronto President David Naylor, keynote speeches, and over a dozen presentations, there will also be Q&A panel sessions with audience participation to explore SmartData themes.

Speakers include;

- [Bob Blainey](#), IBM Fellow, Hardware Acceleration Laboratory IBM Software Group;
- [Dr. Ann Cavoukian](#), Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario, Canada;
- [Dr. Dario Floreano](#), (EPFL) École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne, Head of Laboratory of Intelligent Systems Lausanne, Switzerland;
- [Dr. Inman Harvey](#), Visiting Senior Research Fellow, University of Sussex, Brighton, U.K.;
- [Dr. Kirk Jordan](#), Emerging Solutions Executive, Computational Science Center at IBM Watson Research Center, Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.;
- [Dr. Mark Kingwell](#), Professor, Department of Philosophy, University of Toronto, Canada;
- [Dr. Peter Lewis](#), Associate Vice President, Research, University of Toronto, Canada;
- [Dr. David Naylor](#), President, University of Toronto, Canada
- [Dr. Enrique Pujals](#), Professor, Associacao Instituto Nacional de Matematica Pura e Aplicada, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil;
- [Dr. George Tomko](#), Expert-in-Residence, Identity, Privacy and Security Institute (IPSI), University of Toronto, Canada;
- [Dr. Denis Walsh](#), Professor, Department of Philosophy, University of Toronto, Canada;
- [Dr. Michael Wheeler](#), Professor, Department of Philosophy, University of Stirling, U.K.

[Full list of speakers](#)

The conference sessions are organized around the various obstacles that need to be overcome in the pursuit of SmartData. These include contextual and intelligent protection of your data, data transformation and the hardware/software technical challenges. Within these sessions, many topics are discussed including the following;

- SmartData – Privacy meets evolutionary robotics in the Matrix:
Protecting freedom using virtual tools;
- Perspectives on artificial intelligence;
- Evolutionary robotics and SmartData;
- The development of autonomous virtual agents;
- Evolution of learning in robots;
- What matters: real bodies and virtual worlds;
- Emerging ideas in computer architecture.

[Full schedule here](#)

****Media is welcome to attend. Please contact the representatives below to accept your invitation, or to book an interview with the symposium speakers.**

About the IPC

The Information and Privacy Commissioner is appointed by and reports to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, Canada, and is independent of the government of the day. The Commissioner's mandate includes overseeing the access and privacy provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, as well as the *Personal Health Information Protection Act*, which applies to both public and private sector health information custodians. The Commissioner's mandate includes educating the public about access and privacy issues.

About the IPSI

The Identity, Privacy and Security Institute (IPSI) at the University of Toronto is dedicated to developing new approaches to security that maintain the privacy, freedom and safety of the individual and the broader community. Established in 2007, the Institute strives to facilitate linkages between the diverse body of researchers working in this area at University of Toronto and the national and international community.

About the University of Toronto

The University of Toronto has assembled one of the strongest research and teaching faculties in North America, presenting top students at all levels with an intellectual environment unmatched in breadth and depth on any other Canadian campus.

U of T faculty co-author more research articles than their colleagues at any university in the U.S. or Canada other than Harvard. As a measure of impact, U of T consistently ranks alongside the top five U.S. universities whose discoveries are most often cited by other researchers around the world. U of T faculty are also widely recognized for their teaching strengths and commitment to graduate supervision. Established in 1827, the University of Toronto today operates in downtown Toronto, Mississauga and Scarborough, as well as in nine renowned partner hospitals.

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