



ONSEP

The Ontario Network for Sustainable Energy Policy

DR. JULIE MACARTHUR

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Discussing how to build
democratic foundations for
the energy transition



KEYNOTE TALK

Momentum continues to build for decarbonisation. The most recent World Energy Outlook shows a record rollout of renewable energy and a scaling-up of electric vehicles, however we are still far from limiting warming to 1.5°C. Governments urgently need to ramp up action to substantially reduce emissions at a time when political polarization, particularly over climate action, is exceptionally strong both in Canada and abroad. The energy transition we need to undertake is deeply political, and to date the research linking social learning and democratic license has lagged behind more technical and economic approaches. The distributive impacts at a time of significant cost of living increases are key, but so too are the way these impacts are framed and felt by particular groups. This talk outlines the importance of thinking more deeply and democratically about the institutional foundations required for an effective energy transition, one that incorporates both the 'grassroots' level of community action and social networks and the 'treetops' of the policy and industrial ecosystem.

About Dr. MacArthur

Dr Julie MacArthur is an Associate Professor and the Canada Research Chair in Reimagining Capitalism at Royal Roads University and Resident Fellow in Energy Systems Transformation at the Cascade Institute. Her SSHRC and Royal Society (New Zealand) funded research investigates the political economy of low carbon transitions, with a particular focus on how grassroots and community-led initiatives can scale up to make radical democratic and transformative impacts to both adaptation and mitigation. She has published widely on community energy initiatives in Canada and Aotearoa New Zealand, on participatory policy design, Green New Deal politics, and equity and inclusion in the energy sector. She is the author of *Empowering Electricity: Co-operatives, Sustainability and Power Sector Reform in Canada* (UBC 2016), co-editor of *Environmental Politics and Policy in Aotearoa New Zealand* (University of Auckland 2022).