

Toronto
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Synthesis

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Mind the Gap

EgonZehnder

Leaders & Daughters Toronto, 2018

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On the “leaky pipeline”

Janice Fukakusa: “To get movement at the higher levels, we as women have to be ok with discomfort, especially around stretching into a role that may not be initially comfortable. Get a sponsor that can give you a safety net, and commitment at the individual level. The objective is that when people look up, they see the diversity so that they are not afraid to make that leap, because you know it’s possible.”

Brian Tobin: “I have realized from experience that it makes a substantial difference [to have women advance] to people who don’t feel like they’re getting a chance to participate, regardless of who they are.”

On women focusing on their skill / experience gaps rather than their potential

Heather Munroe-Blum: “Men think they have 100% of what’s advertised, and women think they have 60%. They don’t even put themselves forward. When it comes to self-appraisal, you need to be very attentive of where there is capacity for development.”

Heather Tobin: “I was told from a very young age that I could accomplish anything – it was a great preparatory step for me to have conviction in my ideas. It has been foundational, and I think it’s absolutely critical that as parents we instill those values.”

On quotas and targets

Janice Fukakusa: “Initially, I was never in favour of quotas. But if you look at boards, you see a certain amount of similarity bias, and that plays into board selection. Pair it with collegiality, and the overweighting of males vs. females becomes self-perpetuating. At Canada Infrastructure Bank, we built a board from scratch, and it represents our country. The dynamic and diversity of thought is fantastic – if we could do all boards like this and start from scratch, would we have the same result?”

Heather Munroe-Blum: “How we develop job profiles has to change. If you define a professional in a field as it’s always been defined, you’re going to keep looking for the same type of person you always have.”

Brian Tobin: “I don’t think there is a consensus about quotas, but I do think we have to put a harder, more ambitious number down with consequences – because I don’t think we’re getting there fast enough.”

Janice Fukakusa: “I believe targets change the picture, but unless you have a fundamental plan for change and work to ensure the success of the people who sit in those seats, you’re never going to accomplish anything.”

On mentorship and sponsorship

Heather Tobin: “The two concepts are very different to me – sponsors have a seat at the management table and give you air cover to take risks, which is both rewarding and a differentiator.

Heather Munroe-Blum: “One of the things that has been enormously rewarding to me as a sponsor is listening hard and learning from those we are sponsoring. Personally, I received some very valuable advice from a sponsor at an early age – after a major meeting where I hung back, he told me ‘when you enter a room, always sit at the front, and never go in without thinking about what you want to say and why you want to say it.’ I’ve never forgotten it.”

Melissa Belbeck: “My former firm had a reverse mentoring program – younger females were paired with older males in a safe space. It was an opportunity for us to talk about some of the more nuanced things we experienced day-to-day.”

On #MeToo

Brian Tobin: “I think the impact has been positive, despite the ugliness. People are now stopping and pausing about the way we relate to each other – particularly men in positions of power. It’s not just about harassment, it could be about respect and listening better.”

Heather Munroe-Blum: “You don’t get solid change without a little messiness. Those who want it to be neat and tidy do not understand how change happens.”

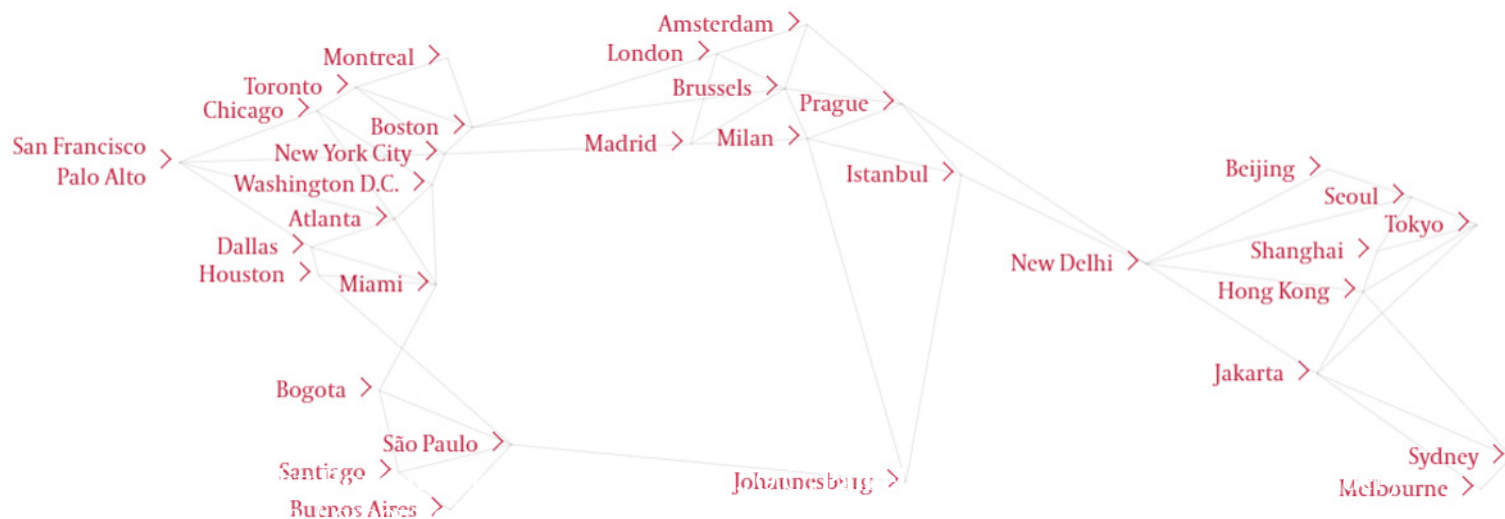
Our panelists

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From left to right: **Honourable Brian V. Tobin, P.C., O.C.**; **Pamela Warren** (Moderator, Egon Zehnder); **Janice Fukakusa**, Corporate Director and Chair, Canada Infrastructure Bank; **Heather Tobin**, Director, Office of the CEO, CPPIB; **Melissa Belbeck**, Group Product Manager, BMO; **Heather Munroe-Blum**, Chair, CPPIB

Our Toronto event was one of 40 held in major markets across the globe, convening more than 5,000 attendees



Leaders & Daughters around the world

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