



2022 Conference: Call for Presentation Proposals

The Ordre des traducteurs, terminologues et interprètes agréés du Québec (OTTIAQ) is accepting proposals for presentations at its upcoming annual conference, to be held on **Friday, October 14, 2022 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.** at Montréal's Palais des congrès. It should be noted that 2022 marks OTTIAQ's 30th anniversary.

The annual conference is OTTIAQ's marquee event. It is attended by hundreds of language professionals, students, and other experts in translation, terminology, and interpretation. OTTIAQ is the largest body of language professionals in Canada and the authority on translation, terminology, and interpretation in Quebec.

This year, the Conference Program Committee is seeking proposals on the following theme:

Language Professionals at the Forefront of Social Change

Recent years have seen our societies change drastically, more so than ever since 2020 and the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of these changes reflect the impact of lasting social phenomena— inclusion, diversity, immigration and Indigenous experiences—both in Canada and abroad. Through it all, we can trace many fascinating examples of language change.

The pandemic alone gave rise to scores of neologisms that were rapidly adopted into the everyday vocabularies of many languages. *Anti-vax* is now a mainstay of English, along with *covidien*, *anticovid* and *covidiot* in French. German has *Öffnungsdiskussionsorgien*—literally, “reopening discussion orgies”—while Spanish has added to its vernacular *balconzi*, a pejorative portmanteau for those who pass judgment on their neighbours' comings and goings from balcony watchtowers, as well as *coronadivorcio*, a term for lockdown-induced divorces during the crisis.

Another driver of language change is the diversification of gender expression and the ways it is described. Norms regarding inclusive language are changing, with formally marginalized forms of gender-neutral language, such as the “singular they” or the French pronoun *iel*, gaining recognition from authoritative language resources. These situations are evolving, and language professionals must adapt in kind. Some of us may be tempted to resist language change and abide by tradition, or merely to avoid engaging in the debates and discussions that arise around these vital shifts. But these conversations are exactly where language professionals must be present if we are to take up our essential role in society, as we navigate the spectrum between promoting and advocating for new terminology, remaining neutral and arguing against it. We must reconcile the necessary linguistic neutrality to which we aspire and the openness that our professional practice requires.

In terms of technology, the widespread adoption of machine translation and new digital tools means that we all must adapt continually to new environments and functionalities, learning as we go. Soon, more in-depth technological skills may well become indispensable, with language professionals training in such areas as programming, open-platform content editing, communication and content management tools, textual database maintenance and corpus linguistics.

In spite of these challenges, change can also open the door to new opportunities. We need only ask ourselves what new needs we will be able to meet as language professionals, and what new roles we will be able to play.

We who still work in the realm of human translation must face challenges at once ethical and technological, social and environmental. What professional approach can we take when confronted with misleading or unverified content, or even rampant propaganda? The dangers of misinformation—or fake news—looms large over those tasked with communication, language professionals included. Meanwhile, increased productivity comes at the risk of compromising our content and translation management. These new realities will test us, pushing us to the conceptual, spatial and temporal limits of our roles as consultants providing an added-value service.

As they navigate these changes, language professionals as well as all communications professionals risk losing their way from time to time. But our professionalism will be the beacon that ultimately guides us in the right direction. We are singularly well-positioned to keep our skills and knowledge sharp, deftly integrating new technologies into our practices and finding the best ways to use them. Much like professionals in other industries, we understand the ethical quandaries and challenges that come along with societal change.

The following questions are intended to help guide speaker proposals for our conference:

- With the growing prevalence of neologisms, do our changing societies need to make more space for terminology?
- Should we always be neutral in matters of neology? What qualifying criteria should apply when adopting a new term?
- Besides linguistic and stylistic creativity, what do human translators have to offer over machine translation (MT)? How can we better use MT to showcase our own role and value?
- How can we contribute to language protection and better clarity of communication amid lightning-fast societal change?
- We must remain on the cutting edge of knowledge. What tools and means are at our disposal to keep us up to date and help us find the truth?
- What rights and obligations do language professionals have regarding marginalized or unconventional content?
- Should we agree to translate documents containing misleading or unverified content that could contribute to public misinformation, propagandic documents inciting readers to commit illegal or reprehensible acts, or texts that are racist or otherwise discriminatory?
- Do we have a responsibility to report the practices of unscrupulous companies that use machine translation without post-editing and pass off the results to clients as translation proper?
- What are the repercussions of such practices on the status of language professions, and what impact could this have on the next generation?

Potential speakers

- Certified translators, certified terminologists and certified interpreters
- Self-employed and salaried professionals
- Professionals from other sectors of activity (CPAs, lawyers, CHRPs, journalists, etc.)

- University teachers and researchers, graduate students
- People of influence from various professions

Target audiences

- Language professionals of all ages, backgrounds and fields of practice
- Managers (language services, translation firms and agencies)
- Researchers, academics, and students in translation, terminology, or interpretation

Preferred formats

- Interaction with the conference participants
- Dynamic approach
- Situational exercises, discussions, semi-structured workshops

Presentation languages

- French
- English

Length

- 60-minute timeslots, including a question period at the end

Selection criteria

- Level and quality of interaction and audience participation
- Relevance of the proposal to the theme
- Relevance to all three professions

General information

The Conference Program Committee reserves the right to accept or refuse any proposal without having to justify its decision.

As per its policy, OTTIAQ will cover the registration costs for one (1) speaker per proposal on the conference days. At its discretion, the Conference Program Committee may also recommend that OTTIAQ cover registration for a second person.

To submit a presentation proposal

- Complete the registration form in [English](#) or [French](#)
- Include a colour portrait photo (high resolution)
- Email your proposal to the attention of the “Conference Program Committee” at communications@ottiaq.org by **4:00 p.m. on Friday, April 22, 2022.**

Sponsors and exhibitors

Individuals and companies interested in sponsoring the OTTIAQ conference or exhibiting their products or services during the conference are invited to send an email to communications@ottiaq.org.

We look forward to receiving your proposals!