# Welcome and Introduction to the Big IDeA/CanHack 150 Design Challenge Hackathon

On behalf of the Inclusive Design Research Centre and OCAD University, I'd like to welcome you here today to this design challenge and hackathon.

Designing inclusively challenges us to change—to change how we see ourselves, our work, and the world. It's about changing the persistent and unexamined assumptions we bring with us into the creative process. It's a change in our focus, a change in what we pay attention to, a change in how we value things. Here, it's not just the most popular or the fastest or the most lucrative things that capture our imaginations as designers and hackers. Instead, it's the under-explored ideas and the all-too-often unheard voices within of our society and environment that drive us.

Inclusive design is a *practice*, not just a philosophy or a rhetoric but something that emerges from doing—from what we make and how we make it. And this isn't a practice reserved only for experts or professionals, but for anyone who has ever imagined a world that fits them and others a little better. Really great, really inclusive designs come from constantly engaging with diverse perspectives, from thinking through the weird and unfamiliar, from taking our time, and from being willing to get a little lost, to stray off the well-worn path and explore the margins with our sketchbooks, our code editors, and our conversations. The margins are germane: they're creative spaces, sites for social innovation, opportunities to build communities and to discover new ideas.

Today's activities, I hope, are a chance for us all to grow and change our inclusive design practices together—to meet new people, challenge each others' perspectives, and to find new ways to make our physical and digital worlds more open, more just, and more creatively engaging for all. And don't forget, the little things count! This is our chance to not just disrupt the world, but to gently change and expand its possibilities—one hack or sketch or little (or big!) idea at a time. Good luck, and I can't wait to see what you make!