11th Annual Supply Chain & Logistics Management Symposium, 2026

DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY | Centre for Research in Sustainable Supply Chain Analytics

Human-Centric Supply Chains:
Balancing AI, Sustainability, and Workforce Resilience

Time: 2 November 2026 (Monday); 8:30–16:30
Location: Rowe Building, Room #3089, 6100 University Ave., B3H 4R2, Halifax, NS, Canada

Dalhousie University operates in the unceded territories of the Mi'kmaw, Wolastoqey, and Peskotomuhkati Peoples. These sovereign nations hold inherent rights as the original peoples of these lands, and we each carry collective obligations under the Peace and Friendship Treaties. Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 recognizes and affirms Aboriginal and Treaty rights in Canada. We recognize that African Nova Scotians are a distinct people whose histories, legacies and contributions have enriched that part of Mi'kma'ki known as Nova Scotia for over 400 years.

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A flagship event of CRSSCA (The Centre for Research in Sustainable Supply Chain Analytics) at Dalhousie University's Faculty of Management, the annual Supply Chain & Logistics Management (SCLM) Symposium, organized by Dr. M. Ali Ülkü, brings together leading academics, industry professionals, practitioners, and students to share emerging research, practices, and diverse perspectives on the changing world of supply chains. In a highly collegial setting, the symposium offers opportunities to exchange ideas, build connections, and bridge research, education, and practice, while also showcasing students' research accomplishments and industry-partnered experiential learning projects.

Program

8:30 - 9:00	**Registration and Coffee & Donuts**
9:00 - 9:40 **Welcome & Theme Intro**	**Dr. M. Ali Ülkü**, Professor, Dept. of Management Science & Information Systems, and Director of CRSSCA, Faculty of Management, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS, Canada ***Putting People Back Into Supply Chains***
9:40 - 10:20 **Talk #1**	**Dr. Fanny-Eve (FE) Bordeleau**, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Management Science & Information Systems and College of Digital Transformation, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS, Canada ***Decision-making Styles For Navigating Disruptions***
10:20 - 11:00 **Talk #2**	**Dr. Uday Venkatadri,** Professor and Department Head, Industrial Engineering, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS, Canada ***People and Machines: Rethinking Manufacturing for Industry 5.0***
11:00 - 11:20	**Break**
11:20 - 12:20 **Keynote**	**Dr. Wendy L. Tate**, Professor, Supply Chain Management, Haslam College of Business, University of Tennessee - Knoxville, TN, USA ***Designing Supply Chain Research for Good: Integrating Sustainability, Theory and Human Well-Being***
12:20 - 13:20	**Group picture, Lunch & Networking**
13:20 - 14:00 **Talk #3**	**Dr. Feyza G. Şahinyazan**, Associate Professor, Beedie School of Business, Simon Fraser University, BC, Canada ***Action Research in Humanitarian Operations***
14:00 - 14:40 **Talk #4**	**Kasinadhuni Shyama Krishna,** Planning & Capacity Engineer, Meta Platforms Inc., Menlo Park, CA, USA ***One Toolbox, Two Worlds: Optimization and AI in Retail and Data Center Supply Chains***
14:40 - 15:00	**Break**
15:00 - 16:00 **Panel**	**People, AI, and the Future of Supply Chains**: *Ten years from now, what will humans still do better than machines in SCM (profit and non-profit), and what should we be doing today to prepare for that future?* **Zachary Biersteker, Dr. Chantelle Falconer, Sean O'Hearn, Shauna Marshall, Kieran Stevenson, Madeline Wilhelm, Roberta Schultz** (moderator)
16:00-16:30	**Closing Remarks & Networking**

11th Annual Supply Chain & Logistics Management Symposium, 2026

Keynote Speaker



Wendy L. Tate, Ph.D. (Arizona State University, 2006), is the McCormick Endowed Professor of Supply Chain Management and the Ray and Joan Myatt Faculty Research Fellow at the University of Tennessee's Haslam College of Business in the Supply Chain Management Department. Her research focuses on strategic sourcing, financial impacts on supply chains, and sustainable supply chain design. She has published extensively in top-tier journals (including Journal of Operations Management, Journal of Supply Chain Management, Journal of Business Logistics, and others), serves on numerous editorial boards, and was recently honored with the 2024 Academy of Management (AOM) Distinguished Scholar Award. She is also Editor Emeritus and former Co-Editor-in-Chief for both JSCM and JPSM. She is also active in many academic communities, including AOM, Decision Sciences, CSCMP, and IPSERA. She teaches all levels, including undergraduate, MS, MBA, Executive, and Ph.D. students, in Strategic Sourcing, Cost Management, and Sustainability, both in person and online. An active global mentor and passionate about developing the next generation of supply chain scholars, Dr. Tate frequently travels internationally, most recently lecturing across India, Finland, and Brazil, to teach academic publishing and impactful research design. Outside of academia, supply chain is truly a family affair: both of her daughters, their husbands, and Dr. Tate herself all share a background in the field, leading to plenty of professional "shop talk" around the dinner table in Nashville (where her daughters live) and Knoxville (where Dr. Tate lives). These conversations often include discussions of cost savings and cost avoidance, both personally and professionally. A proud grandmother (her Grandson just celebrated his first birthday), an avid hiker in the Smoky Mountains and many other locations, gardener, pickleball player, and devoted college sports fan (football and basketball), Dr. Tate brings immense energy and passion to everything she does

Designing Supply Chain Research for Good: Integrating Sustainability, Theory and Human Well-Being

This keynote talk reconceptualizes supply chains from isolated efficiency engines into deliberate socio-technical systems that prioritize human well-being, sustainability, and equity. The proposed framework integrates three vital strands: Theory (to build cumulative, middle-range knowledge and solve true theoretical puzzles), Sustainable Design (embedding the triple bottom line—people, planet, and profit—from inception rather than retrofitting, utilizing physical, financial, and informational flows), and Human Well-Being (evaluating success through dignity, safety, agency, social inclusion, and quality of life). A central thesis of the discussion is that addressing "wicked problems" requires ecosystem-wide collaboration and effective orchestration of the needed resources. Rather than acting as top-down cost extractors, focal firms must partner with social intermediaries to bridge institutional voids and foster local capability development. Ultimately, the presentation calls on academic researchers and supply chain leaders to balance commercial metrics with human flourishing and ensure supply chains serve as catalysts for a sustainable and human-centric future.

Invited Academic Speakers



Fanny-Ève (FE) Bordeleau, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor at Dalhousie University whose research focuses on business processes, digital transformation, and data-driven decision-making. Their work examines how organizations can leverage operational data, process mining, and information systems to improve efficiency, coordination, and human-technology collaboration across complex operations and supply chains. Collaborating with industry and public-sector partners, FE's research addresses challenges related to process analysis, digital innovation, and organizational transformation. Their current work explores how process data and contextual information can be combined to identify bottlenecks in operational decision-making and support more effective decision-making in complex, data-rich environments. At Dalhousie University, FE teaches the Management of Information Systems, Digital Innovation, and Business Process Change and Automation. Through research, teaching, and student supervision, FE helps develop future professionals in information systems, business analytics, and digital innovation.

Decision-making Style to Navigate Disruptions

Navigating through a supply chain disruption places significant demands on organizational decision-making. Drawing on a longitudinal study of two Canadian electronics manufacturers before and after the COVID-19 pandemic, this talk examines how organizational learning influences the ability to create value from data during disruption and recovery. The findings show that learning approaches focused on operational discipline help sustain data-driven decision-making during periods of disruption, while more exploratory approaches support strategic adaptation during recovery. The presentation highlights how managers use data, experience, and organizational learning to navigate uncertainty and strengthen supply chain resilience.



Kasinadhuni Shyama Krishna, M.Sc., is a Planning and Capacity Engineer in Meta's Infra organization, where he works on capacity planning for the power and cooling equipment behind Meta's global data centers, including demand and supply planning, and forecasting under long lead times and uncertainty. Previously, he was a Senior Manager of Data Science, Supply Chain Strategy at Walmart, where he led the strategic roadmap for the next generation of distribution centers and fulfillment centers, securing multi-billion-dollar capital approvals for the network transformation. Earlier, he was a consultant at Opex Analytics, applying optimization and machine learning to supply chain problems for Fortune 500 clients. He is an IEEE Senior Member and a published researcher and reviewer. He holds an MS from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA, and a B.Tech from IIT Kharagpur, India. His interests span applied operations research and machine learning in large-scale supply chains. He visited Dalhousie University in 2015 as a Mitacs Globalink research intern.

One Toolbox, Two Worlds: Optimization and AI in Retail and Data Center Supply Chains

Two different supply chains rest on the same structure. Retail network strategy and data center power and cooling equipment planning are set years ahead, against forecast ranges that get revised over time; in both worlds, capital-intensive capacity arrives in increments, and returns arrive years later. This talk compares retail network strategy with demand and supply planning in data centers and draws parallels between the two. It shows how optimization and AI agents help, and what rests with human judgment. It draws on published research and public industry data.



Feyza G. Şahinyazan, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor in the Technology and Operations Management and Business and Society departments at the Beedie School of Business, Simon Fraser University. Her primary research focuses on humanitarian aid supply chains, particularly long-term issues related to food and energy access. She is also interested in socially responsible operations management practices. She is an inaugural member of SFU's Sustainability Advisory Council and an SFU delegate to the UN Convention on Climate Change (COP28). She serves as an associate editor for the Socio-Economic Planning Sciences Journal. Throughout her research projects, she has collaborated with public-sector actors and NGOs, including the UN World Food Programme, UNHCR Türkiye, the Montreal Children's Hospital, and the Turkish Red Crescent, on data-driven operations-management problems. She worked as a postdoctoral researcher at the Institute for Data Valorization (IVADO), the data science hub of HEC Montréal, after completing her Ph.D. in Operations Management at McGill University's Desautels Faculty of Management.

Action Research in Humanitarian Operations

Action research treats real-world challenges as problems to be solved with the people who live through them and aims to introduce change and generate knowledge simultaneously. This talk introduces action research as a methodology for humanitarian operations: its participatory, cyclical logic, and four working principles for fieldwork. The second half focuses on field cases from energy, food, and healthcare access to demonstrate how these working principles play out in real-life collaborations.



Uday Venkatadri, Ph.D., P.Eng., is a Full Professor and Head of the Department of Industrial Engineering at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. He has taught at Dalhousie University since July 2001. Before joining Dalhousie, he was a Lead Architect for supply chain planning products at Baan (now Infor Global Solutions Inc.). He also worked as a Research Associate at Université Laval in Québec City. He holds a Ph.D. in Industrial Engineering from Purdue University, a Master of Science degree in Industrial Engineering from Clemson University, and a Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from IIT (BHU) Varanasi, India. He teaches courses in inventory systems, facilities design, and supply chain management at Dalhousie and has broad interests in systems and implementations of engineering projects, including current trends in AI. His current research focuses on production and distribution systems design and operations in the context of Industry 5.0 and hyper-connected logistics. He is interested in the Physical Internet, production planning, and forward and reverse supply chain management using contemporary AI, ML, and Decision Analytics tools.

People and Machines: Rethinking Manufacturing for Industry 5.0

Lean, Six Sigma, and Operational Excellence emerged as responses to technological and social change, and they remain essential today. Nevertheless, the rapid shift in Manufacturing Systems from Industry 4.0 (technology-driven) to Industry 5.0 (people-centric) brings up a paradox: just as AI was expected to replace people, attention has returned to the human-in-the-loop. This talk outlines AI opportunities in manufacturing at the design, planning, and operational levels. It then explores how these disciplines must evolve so that human operators, planners, autonomous machines, and AI agents work together effectively, sustainably, and resiliently. It concludes with implications for skills development, education, and practice.

11th Annual Supply Chain & Logistics Management Symposium, 2026

Panelists



Zachary Biersteker oversees Contractor Safety Management at Irving Shipbuilding and brings a strong foundation in supply chain operations, logistics, and risk management. He holds a Bachelor of Commerce from Dalhousie University, where he was recognized with the Commerce Alumni Association Award and the CRSSCA SC&LM ISI Capstone Award. At Irving Shipbuilding Inc., Zachary has worked in inbound logistics, commercial contracts, and emergency management. His accomplishments include developing forecasting models for warehouse expansions, managing high-volume logistics with 99% on-time delivery, and implementing multiple governance frameworks across the organization. This combination of operational experience and safety leadership gives him a well-rounded perspective on the growing shipbuilding industry.



Chantelle Falconer, Ph.D., is a Research Facilitator at Dalhousie University, where she supports strategic research planning and research capacity development. She holds a PhD in socio-cultural anthropology from the University of Toronto and has a background in research, teaching, and applied social science. Alongside her university role, she provides consulting services that help organizations understand people's experiences and use research to inform program design and strategic decision-making. Her work spans Canada and Latin America and includes qualitative research, stakeholder engagement, and policy-oriented analysis. Through her work in research and higher education, she brings a human-centred perspective on the people, relationships, and knowledge flows that enable complex systems to function.



Sean O'Hearn is a commercial executive and Founder of 1915 Group, bringing decades of leadership across manufacturing, national distribution, healthcare operations, and facility services. Previously, having served as Vice President of Sales and Marketing at Charlotte Products and Director of Sales Operations at Diversey, Sean has extensive experience driving growth and managing complex distributor networks. Through his advisory practice, he partners with enterprises, purchasing groups, and distributors on market strategy, commercial execution, and category management. Completing his MBA at Dalhousie University, Sean offers deep expertise in supply-side operations and commercial supply chain solutions.



Kieran Stevenson, originally from Aurora, Ontario, completed his Bachelor of Commerce at Dalhousie University, majoring in Supply Chain and Logistics Management. During his undergrad, he was involved in DAL Chain and served as Grad Chair for the Dalhousie Commerce Society. He also completed three co-op placements with PepsiCo Foods Canada before returning to the company full-time after graduation. From 2024 to 2026, he worked as a District Sales Leader in Sudbury, Ontario, gaining experience in team leadership and distribution operations. Kieran has since returned to Dalhousie and is now pursuing the university's new Master of Management program, graduating in August 2027.



Shauna Marshall is a Human Resources Advisor in the Faculty of Management at Dalhousie University, where she supports recruitment, employee relations, staffing operations, and workplace development. With extensive experience navigating complex hiring processes, collective agreements, and employee needs in a unionized environment, Shauna brings a people-centered perspective to organizational effectiveness. She holds a Bachelor of Commerce and a Certificate in Human Resource Management from Saint Mary's University and is working toward her CPHR designation. She is passionate about workplace wellness, building positive work environments, and keeping the human element at the centre of how organizations operate.



Madeline Wilhelm is the Logistics Superintendent for the Diavik Diamond Mine Closure Project in the Northwest Territories. Her career has focused on logistics and supply chain operations across the northern mining industry, where she has led complex transportation initiatives in remote and challenging environments. Based in Yellowknife, she is currently pursuing an MBA at Dalhousie University. Through both her professional experience and graduate studies, she is interested in the opportunities and challenges shaping the future of northern development, particularly the role of logistics, infrastructure, and supply chains in supporting strong and resilient communities.

11th Annual Supply Chain & Logistics Management Symposium, 2026

Panel Moderator



Roberta Schultz is an Assistant Professor of Design at NSCAD University, where she teaches human-centred design, digital experiences, and contemporary design issues. She is currently pursuing a PhD in Management at Dalhousie University, exploring how design, systems thinking, and management can be leveraged to improve access to youth mental health services in Nova Scotia. Prior to academia, Roberta worked in marketing, communications, and design roles with organizations including Volta, Centennial College, and Royal LePage.

Symposium Chair and Organizer



M. Ali Ülkü, Ph.D., P.Eng., is a Full Professor of Supply Chain, Logistics, and Operations and Founding Director of the Centre for Research in Sustainable Supply Chain Analytics (CRSSCA) at Dalhousie University, Canada. He received his PhD in Management Sciences from the University of Waterloo. His research integrates supply chain management, sustainability, analytics, and operations to address challenges in logistics, manufacturing and service systems, sustainable production and consumption, and societal problems. His work has appeared in leading journals, including *Omega, International Journal of Production Economics, Journal of Business Research, Journal of Cleaner Production, Computers & Industrial Engineering, Annals of Operations Research,* and *Service Science*. He co-edited *Big Data Analytics in Supply Chain Management: Theory and Applications* (Taylor & Francis, 2021) and serves as Associate Editor of *INFOR: Information Systems and Operational Research*. His research and teaching have earned several distinctions, including the INFORMS Service Science Cluster Best Paper Runner-Up Award, the IEOM Distinguished Professor Award, the Management Research Star Award, and the Global Triple-E Education Champion Award. His research interests include sustainable supply chains, logistics, business analytics, optimization, transportation systems, and the role of cross-sector collaborations among industry, government, non-profit organizations, and communities in addressing complex organizational and societal challenges.

About CRSSCA (www.dal.ca/crssca)

The Centre for Research in Sustainable Supply Chain Analytics (CRSSCA), housed in the Faculty of Management at Dalhousie University, is a research hub dedicated to advancing sustainable supply chain management through analytics, interdisciplinary research, and collaboration. CRSSCA develops and shares innovative, data-driven approaches to complex supply chain and societal challenges through a quadruple bottom line (QBL) sustainability lens that encompasses economic, environmental, social, and cultural dimensions.

By bringing together faculty, students, industry, government, non-profit organizations, and community partners, CRSSCA connects rigorous research to real-world problems. Its work spans sustainable supply chains, business and supply chain analytics, green logistics and transportation, global trade, procurement, inventory and operations, sustainable production and consumption, and emerging technological and policy challenges. The Centre also addresses broader societal challenges at the intersection of supply chains, public policy, and humanitarian needs. CRSSCA translates this interdisciplinary work into knowledge, analytical tools, and practical insights that support better decisions, stronger and more resilient supply chains, responsible management, and positive economic, environmental, and societal outcomes.

CRSSCA welcomes undergraduate and graduate students from all disciplines interested in connecting research, ideas, and learning to real-world challenges. Through interdisciplinary projects, workshops, symposiums, case competitions, and collaborations with faculty, industry, government, non-profit organizations, and communities, students gain opportunities to learn beyond the classroom, contribute to meaningful research, and build valuable connections. In doing so, CRSSCA helps develop the next generation of professionals, researchers, and decision-makers prepared to tackle complex supply chain and societal challenges.

CRSSCA contributes to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) #8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 17.

