

World Congress 2020 in Toronto

S 28 Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises

Small Business in the Connected Age – Symposium and Panel Discussion

Studies indicate that exposure to workplace hazards combined with limited resources to mitigate those risks leaves workers who are employed by small businesses in a more vulnerable position than those employed in larger businesses. Workers in small businesses often face critical injury rates and higher fatality rates than their counterparts in large business. Health and safety solutions designed for larger businesses often have limited positive effect on smaller business.

This symposium will highlight the key issues that inhibit small business' ability to improve health and safety outcomes. It will also include methods and tools that have demonstrated results in improving OSH with a special focus on overcoming challenges from digital transformation in the connected age.

Approach:

The symposium will feature a panel discussion facilitated by a moderator and will include perspectives from the research community, small business owners and health and safety practitioners as follows:

Research Community:

- Current occupational health and safety performance comparison of small businesses to larger businesses
- Explore current research efforts to better understand the underlying issues
- Identify strategies to remove the barriers faced by owner/operators/self-employed

Small Business Owner/Operators: (on stage or by video)

- Will speak to their current business environment including experience and challenges
- Share best practices in health and safety they have adopted
- Share stories of success in their business journey

Health and Safety Professionals:

- Present tools and methods currently being used by small businesses
- Provide examples of field work and initiatives used to assist small businesses
- Preview examples of websites specifically targeting small business, such as
 - www.safety-work.org
 - www.wsps.ca/SmallBusinessCentre/Overview

Outcomes:

1. Use the discussion and findings resulting from the symposium to help improve the overall OSH outcomes for small businesses in a sustainable way through international cooperation in a globalized world of work
2. Collect and publish the appropriate tools and methods, further advancing our mission of **Vision Zero**