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United Nations Institute for Training and Research

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CIFAL York - First Symposium on Crowd Management and Safety in Mass Gatherings

People

Deadline: 18 Aug 2026

Type:	Other
Location:	York, Toronto , Canada
Date:	19 Aug 2026
Duration:	1 Days
Thematic Area:	Disaster Risk Reduction
Website:	https://www.yorku.ca/cifal/crowdmanagement/
Price:	\$0.00
Event Focal Point Email:	cifaldirector@yorku.ca

BACKGROUND

With the arrival of the 2026 FIFA World Cup™ in Toronto, the critical importance of crowd management and safety at mass gatherings has been thrust into the spotlight. Mega-events of this scale bring together staggering volumes of spectators, creating complex movement flows that demand seamless, multi-layered coordination across various public safety and urban operation sectors. Recent global experiences have clearly demonstrated that major sports and

entertainment gatherings extend far beyond recreation; they present profound challenges for emergency management and risk mitigation. In these high-stakes environments, even minor oversights in crowd flow design or venue operations can yield far-reaching consequences.

To navigate these complex urban challenges, the first Symposium on Crowd Management and Safety in Mass Gatherings provides a premier platform for uniting scientific research, practical application, and professional training. Jointly organized by CIFAL York, Responsible AI Lab, AIMLAB, and ADERSIM, this event brings together experts, researchers, and on-the-ground practitioners to share actionable insights and lessons learned directly from the planning and execution of the world's largest sporting events.

By focusing on the intersection of crowd dynamics, behavioral modeling, transportation mobility, and multi-agency communication, this symposium goes beyond theoretical discussion. It is designed to equip attendees with the advanced knowledge, operational strategies, and risk assessment tools required to transform vulnerabilities into highly coordinated safety measures—ensuring future mass gatherings are safe, enjoyable, and inclusive for all.

EVENT OBJECTIVES

The main goals and objectives of this one-day symposium are:

- Crowd Dynamics and Behavior – Understanding and managing large-scale crowds
- AI-Driven Crowd Solutions – Leveraging smart analytics for real-time predictive modeling and behavior analysis
- Drone-Powered Crowd Monitoring – Utilizing aerial surveillance to enhance situational awareness and rapid response
- Mass Events Planning and Operations – From strategic planning to on-the-ground execution
- Risk Assessment and Mitigation of Mass Gathering Events– Identifying risks and implementing mitigation strategies
- Transportation and Mobility Management – Moving millions safely and efficiently
- Multi-Agency Coordination and Communication – Working together for a safe event and addressing the challenges of hosting mass gatherings

CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

Opening Session

Welcoming Address

Session 1: Crowd Management in Toronto: Some Observations

Session 2: Coordinating Major Planned Events: The Role of Toronto Emergency Management in Multi-Agency Coordination and Situational Awareness

Protecting Major Events and Mass Gatherings: The Drone and Counter-Drone Landscape

Impacts of Mobile Phone Use on Movement Behaviours during Stadium Events

Heat-Related Crowd Behavior Detection at Mass Gatherings: *Case of Toronto World Cup 2026*

Session 3: Drone-based Crowd Monitoring Technologies

An Agentic AI Human-in-the-Loop Framework for Public Health Surveillance at Mass Gatherings: A FIFA World Cup Case Study

From Cameras to Crowd Intelligence: Using Behavioral AI to Enhance Safety and Operational Awareness at Large-Scale Events

Session 4: Nudging Crowd Dynamics: Leveraging Leader Credibility for Effective Emergency Evacuation

Crowds in Motion: Simulating Behavior, Built Environments, and Emerging Interactions

Modeling Sport Stadium Crowd Disasters in Africa

TARGETED AUDIENCE

- Faculty members of different disciplines
- Researchers
- Public safety and emergency response professionals
- Graduate and undergraduate students
- Policy makers

- Representatives of NGOs