

## CRS Board Elections 2023 – Positioning Statement

**Position:** Director at Large

**Name:** Ryan Donnelly



**Position:** Professor of Pharmaceutical technology at Queen's University Belfast

**CRS Roles:** Europe/Africa Editor of Drug Delivery & Translational Research, Editorial Board Member of Journal of Controlled Release, Member of the Newsletter Committee

I attended my first CRS Annual Meeting in 2003 in Glasgow and have always looked forward to attending these meetings ever since. It's always great to see the latest science presented, not only by experts from industry and academia, but also young scientists. Over the years, I have learned about the broader work of the society in developing networks of collaborators, supporting personal development of countless scientists and furthering scientific knowledge for the benefit of patients, be they human or animals. As a Director-at-Large, the main focus of my 3-year tenure would be engagement. This takes in three key areas, namely, public engagement, scientific engagement and personal engagement.

### Public Engagement

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the huge volume of potentially dangerous misinformation, fake news and lack of understanding with respect to health and medicines that is currently prevalent, much of it propagated by social media. As a learned society, CRS can help address this through our own social media and You Tube channel, contributing to news and current affairs programming and engagement with patient advocacy groups. I will lead a campaign to solicit suitable high quality content from our members and, where necessary, other scientists, provide news outlets with an "experts directory" of members who are willing to engage with the media on key topics, in addition to leading discussion with patients.

### Scientific Engagement

I would like to see more engagement between industry and academia. In the UK we have the annual Interpharm conference, where leading academics and industrialists come together to talk about the latest in scientific development and challenges to be overcome in a safe, non-confidential environment. We could develop some workshops at the Annual Meeting to replicate this, but with young as well as established scientists being full participants. Encouraging our industrial members to act as mentors for PhD student and post-doc members should also ensure they are well-informed about career possibilities and how to progress.

### Personal Engagement

My research group in Belfast comprises 46 members, from 16 different countries, several of whom have protected characteristics and more than half of whom are women. I would like to work closely with the Women in Science, Young Scientists and EDI Committees to help all members progress their careers and achieve their ambitions. I would also seek industrial sponsorship to support attendance at the CRS Conference by researchers from developing countries, with 10 scholarships to be funded each year. I will encourage all established members to act as mentors and role models for our young members.

Finally, I'd like to engage all members with Belfast as the host for the CRS Annual Meeting in the near future. I can assure you of a superb conference venue, a vibrant, friendly and well-connected city, as well as a *cead mile failte* and plenty of good *craic*!