

Hello dear Friends and Colleagues,

My name is Paolo Decuzzi, and I currently serve as a Senior Scientist at the Italian Institute of Technology and as Adjunct Faculty in the Division of Oncology at Stanford Medicine.

It is a true honor to be considered for the role of Director-at-Large of the Controlled Release Society.

***If elected, my focus will be twofold: strengthening the ties between academia and industry, and further advancing inclusion within our Society.***

CRS is home to extraordinary science. Each year, we hear junior and senior scientists from across the globe present groundbreaking technologies that address critical unmet medical needs. Delivering outstanding presentations and publishing in high-impact journals are essential milestones in a scientific career. Yet I believe we also carry a moral responsibility, and a tremendous opportunity, to ensure that our discoveries do not stop there. ***They must become products that improve the lives of patients.***

Access to information, capital, and infrastructure, however, remains uneven worldwide. We all recognize that in some regions, our colleagues can step outside their offices and immediately connect with professionals who can help move their ideas all the way to the clinic. In many other parts of the world, progress is slower, and success may depend more on access to networks than on the strength of the science itself. ***I believe CRS can help level this playing field.***

Last year at CRS 2025 in Philadelphia, we launched the first Translational Research Panel, highlighting successful spin-off companies emerging from our community in Europe, the United States, and Australia. This momentum should not be episodic: it should be institutionalized.

***I propose creating a structured and sustained forum for translation:*** regular webinars and dedicated annual sessions focused on the practical aspects of bringing research to market, from securing funding and building multidisciplinary teams to designing translational studies and engaging with regulatory agencies.

This initiative would also ***strengthen the engagement with our pharmaceutical partners*** (AstraZeneca, Merck, Sanofi, and others) and expand participation in initiatives such as the Biotech Showcase.

My second priority is inclusion. Inclusion is often discussed. ***I believe inclusion is not a statement: it is a measurable outcome.*** At CRS Bologna, where I had the privilege of organizing the first CRS meeting ever held in Italy alongside an outstanding team, we achieved the largest attendance, the most diverse plenary speaker roster, and the highest number of podium presenters in the meeting's history. That success was not accidental; it was intentional, driven by broad outreach, equitable representation, and active engagement across geography, career stage, gender, and sector.

As Director-at-Large, I will bring these ideas and spirit to the Board and help CRS thrive and grow even more.

I look forward to earning your vote and, most importantly, to seeing you all in Portugal this July.

Thank you.

Paolo Decuzzi

