

RNA Society

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RNA Journal

<http://www.rnajournal.org/>

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From the Desk of the President, Anna Marie Pyle

For a scientist who likes to be continually surprised and challenged, the RNA world is the best possible place to inhabit. RNA science moves faster than almost any branch of science, producing stunning new discoveries about the natural world, novel technologies and major medical innovations at an unprecedented pace. It's therefore humbling to have been elected RNA Society President, and I hope that I can serve this remarkable community in ways that keep it vibrant and inclusive. For that to happen, I welcome advice from my fellow RNA enthusiasts on how we can best move our field forward and support our community. In this letter I will describe some priorities that I envision, but I look forward to hearing your voices about the best ways to guide and build The RNA Society. (cont p.2)



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I will begin by extending my heartfelt thanks to outgoing President, **Juan Valcarcel**, who transformed the society through initiatives that have engaged RNA scientists worldwide. These include such diverse initiatives as the Mentoring program which he initiated and is being sustained with much

my own priorities stem from my perceptions of the challenges we face as RNA investigators and as members of the greater scientific community

help from **Nancy Greenbaum** (see p 18). During Juan's leadership time, there has been expanded support for RNA clubs and salons that facilitate

interactions between local groups of investigators worldwide (see p 19). He supported efforts to establish new awards that showcase the talent of our new and mid-career investigators (see p 6). These are just a few of the initiatives that came to fruition with Juan as president and I hope they continue to grow and support collaboration among our members. But the President can accomplish little without the efforts of the RNA Society Board of Directors, and I therefore want to thank three outgoing directors, **Kathy Hall, Haru Siomi, and Chris Smith**, who have completed their terms and who now pass the torch to our newest directors, **Mihaela Zavolan, Greg Matera, and Jörg Vogel**. I also want to thank

I will attempt to identify ways for us to foster and reward advocacy so that it is considered a key part of our roles as RNA scientists.

Jim McSwiggen for his wisdom and many efforts on behalf of the society as he completes his final year as CEO. Finally, I want to thank **Evelyn Jabri** (CFO), **Brenda Peculis** (Secretary), **Tim Nilsen** (Co-editor, RNA Journal), **Eric Phizicky** (Co-editor,

RNA Journal) and the 3 returning Board Members (**Jeff Coller, Wendy Gilbert and Stepanka Vanacova**) for their continued and tireless work on behalf of our community.

In addition to supporting the existing initiatives that are already thriving in our Society, my own

priorities stem from my perceptions of the challenges we face as RNA investigators and as members of the greater scientific community. I will describe two of them here and welcome comment from the community.

First of all, our biggest strength is also one of our biggest challenges: RNA Science moves very fast. It is therefore difficult to ensure that appropriate expertise is available for the review of our grant proposals, for our submitted manuscripts, and for our innovations. As RNA scientists, we often speak a language and use technologies that people in other fields do not yet understand. As the chair of an NIH study section, and in my experience as a journal editor, I have watched an increase in proposals and manuscripts from members of the RNA community, but a struggle in filling study sections and boards with qualified individuals who understand our field

as President, I will be exploring mechanisms by which we can enhance award sponsorships, encourage philanthropy and grow an endowment on behalf of our membership

of research. During my term as President, I will therefore urge our members to advocate for innovative science by taking the time to serve on review and scientific advisory panels, to click that "agree" button when asked to review papers, and to show leadership in organizing meetings and local gatherings. Indeed, many of the most successful RNA clubs and mentoring initiatives are student-led, so members at all career stages have a role to play in our success as a community. As President, I will attempt to identify ways for us to foster and reward advocacy so that it is considered a key part of our roles as RNA scientists.

Second, as our field has become more successful, it has also grown and expanded to include investigators in all fields of research, from mathematics to clinical medicine. All this is happening at a time when science funding is increasingly threatened. To ensure that our community can advocate for itself, continue its high-impact trajectory, and enhance its diversity while still maintaining a sense of identity, I believe that,



like other large organizations, we need to expand our fund-raising initiatives and build an endowment that can support our efforts (see p 13). One example of the type of philanthropy that is possible—and that I wish to promote—is an extremely generous donation made to the RNA Society to honor **Elisa Izaurrealde**; more details about the award and future fundraising efforts will be announced in Kraków.

Over the years we have made great strides in creating new types of awards that recognize the accomplishments of our members at all levels, including the Early and Mid-career scientist awards (see p 6) as well as the Scaringe/RNA Society award for outstanding Graduate student and Postdoctoral research (see p 7). I would like to build on this success and grow the resources needed to fund more programs and awards that foster the outstanding work by our young investigators, that promote inclusivity, and which make travel and meetings more affordable to our students. Particularly as RNA

meetings are now held worldwide (see p 16), we must find a way to make them economically accessible to students and to investigators with limited funding. This takes financial resources, and as President, I will be exploring mechanisms by which we can enhance award sponsorships, encourage philanthropy and grow an endowment on behalf of our membership.

In closing, I thank you for reading this, for providing comment and for formulating your own ideas about how we can maintain a strong and vibrant RNA Society. I am fortunate to have the opportunity to work with you over the next few years, and I look forward to talking with you in Kraków, which promises to be yet another spectacular annual meeting of our RNA Society.

Anna Marie Pyle
(anna.pyle@yale.edu)

RNA Society Membership Chair opening

The RNA Society is accepting applications for a new Chair of the Membership Committee. The position is currently open and available.

We seek an individual who is committed to the success of the RNA Society, has an outgoing personality, works well with others, and enjoys meeting people. Ideas are welcome on how one might improve the member experience and increase member levels.

The responsibilities of the Membership Chair are outlined [here](#). The position will consume about 5-10 hrs of time per month, plus 1-2 trips per year (one of the trips being to attend the annual conference). As with all positions in the RNA Society, the Membership Chair is unpaid, although a small honorarium and some travel funds are associated with the position.

If you are interested in being considered for the position, or have questions, please contact **Jim McSwiggen** at ceo@rnasociety.org, or **Kristian Baker** at kristian.baker@case.edu.



RNA 2019
The 24th Annual Meeting of the RNA Society
June
Kraków, Poland

We are pleased to announce open registration for **RNA 2019**,
the 24rd Annual Meeting of the RNA Society
June 11-16, 2019, at the **ICE Kraków Congress Center** in **Kraków, Poland**.
<https://www.rnasociety.org/conferences/rna-2019/>

The deadline for abstract submission is 10 March, 2019 to be considered for an oral presentation, or 31 March, 2019 to submit a poster-only abstract. You must be registered for the conference prior to submitting an abstract.

For those not submitting an abstract, the early registration discount for Members is available until **March 31st**. You will need your Member Number to get your discount. Please note: *after 31, March 2019, registration fees increase!*

Book your lodging early! Kraków is a popular tourist destination, and lodging is expected to fill up. **Some of our reserved room blocks expire very early**, so don't delay!

The organizers are preparing a program that will hopefully appeal to everyone, regardless of career stage or specific field of study. The program includes three confirmed Keynote lectures to be given by:

Maria Carmo-Fonseca (Institute of Molecular Medicine, Lisbon, Portugal)

Tom Cech (University of Colorado, Boulder, USA)

Phil Sharp (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, USA)

As in previous years, the remainder of the RNA 2019 program will be developed from submitted abstracts. In the spirit of RNA society conferences, we strongly encourage graduate students and postdoctoral scientists to submit abstracts for oral presentation. The oral abstract submission deadline will be March 10, 2019.

Current session topics and corresponding chairs include:

- Splicing: **Magda Konarska & Woan-Yuh Tarn**
- Translation: **Andrea Berman & Nahum Sonenberg**
- RNA Modification & Editing: **Chuan He**
- Regulatory RNAs (coding & non-coding) and RNPs: **Julia Salzman & Yuki Tomari**
- Synthesis and Processing of RNA: **Karla Neugebauer**
- Interconnected RNA Processes: **Andrzej Dziembowski**
- RNA localization & transport: **Jeff Chao**
- RNA turnover: **Oliver Muehlemann**
- RNA in disease & therapy: **Matt Disney**
- RNA catalysis, folding & structure: **Rick Russell**
- New research trends and technologies: **Jernej Ule**

Register today – and see you in Kraków! -The Organizers



From the Organizers of RNA 2019 Registration for RNA 2019 is open!

Kraków, the former capital of Poland, is one of the most important political, cultural, and economic centers of Central Europe. It is a charming city with many beautiful medieval, renaissance, baroque, and art nouveau buildings and city districts. It is also home to many impressive museums and galleries, as well as of the oldest Polish University, the Jagiellonian University (founded in 1364). Kraków is a very popular tourist destination and is easy to reach by direct air connections from major European cities. More information on the city of Kraków can be found at <http://www.Kraków.pl/english>

The RNA 2019 Meeting will be held in a modern [ICE Congress Centre](#), located on the banks of the Vistula River, across from the Royal Castle, one of the landmarks of Kraków. The Center offers spacious lecture theatres to accommodate scientific sessions and workshops, and also spaces for poster sessions and social mixers. Many hotels are available, most within walking distance from the Congress Centre, at a range of affordable prices to enable everybody to participate. We encourage you to book hotel accommodations early since Kraków is full of tourists that embrace different events in spring and summer.

Session topics may be modified depending on the abstracts received. In addition, the Mid- and Early-Career Award presentations (see p 6) and the Scaringe/RNA Society Award (see p 7) talks will be incorporated into appropriate sessions. This year, posters will be displayed during the entire meeting to provide ample opportunities to engage scientific colleagues and to win prizes for best posters in different categories.

We are planning several workshops to expand the breadth of the scientific program. For example, workshops on RNA granules and liquid-liquid phase separation; on computational analyses of RNA and RNPs (computational structural biology as well as analyses of high-throughput sequencing data) are planned for this year. In this regard, *we welcome suggestions of rapidly developing areas* that would be suitable for this format. Final topics will depend on the abstracts received. Please contact the Organizers with ideas and send your abstracts!

This year we will include a Podium Panel Discussion on “RNA research and RNA therapeutics: past insights and future prospects” moderated by **Tom Cech**. The confirmed panel participants include **Joan Steitz, Anastasia Khvorova, Anna Marie Pyle, Matt Disney, and Gideon Dreyfuss**.

There will be a variety of **Cultural events offered**. We want to make this meeting very memorable, combining the science with different cultural events including a recital of Chopin music by one of the best Polish pianists, and a performance by high-landers group from Tatra mountains at the Gala Dinner, and others.

The meeting will open on Tuesday, June 11 with a Keynote Lecture by **Phil Sharp** at 18:00, followed by an Opening Reception and Concert. The meeting closes on Saturday, June 15th, with the Award Ceremony followed by the Gala Dinner & Dance in the evening.

We look forward to welcoming you to RNA 2019 in Kraków.

On behalf of the organizers:

Brenda Bass, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, USA

Elena Conti, Max-Planck Institute of Biochemistry, Martinsried, Germany

Witold Filipowicz, Friedrich Miescher Institute, Basel, Switzerland (lead organizer)

Tetsuro Hirose, University of Hokkaido, Sapporo, Japan

Artur Jarmolowski, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland (local organizer)

Gene Yeo, University of California, San Diego, USA



Awards to be presented at RNA 2019

We are pleased to announce that **Adrian Krainer** has been awarded the **RNA Society's 2019 Lifetime Achievement Award**. Over his career, Adrian has made huge contributions to our understanding of splicing factors and their role in regulating alternative splicing. In a culmination of this success, he has identified ways to control alternative splicing patterns in order to correct defective gene expression in individuals with spinal muscular atrophy (SMA). The FDA has approved Spinraza, an antisense oligonucleotide that directs productive splicing in individuals with SMA, resulting in the first effective treatment for individuals with this disease. Spinraza is one of the first RNA therapeutics ever; Adrian and his co-workers are leading the RNA field into a new era of translational medicine.



Jim McSwiggen has been awarded the **RNA Society's 2019 Lifetime Service Award** for his dedication and ceaseless effort in keeping the Society running day-to-day while maintaining perspective and long-term focus. Jim will step down at the end of December 2019, after 9 years as CEO. He has worked to achieve seamless transitions and continuity across 7 different presidents, 3 CFOs and countless Board members. During his time as CEO, the number of Society members has doubled, the financial assets have more than doubled, and the Society has facilitated meeting attendance for Junior members by providing both travel awards and group registrations for larger labs. Other standing committees have been created to ensure the growth of the Society in depth as well as breadth; we, as a Society, have benefited much from these years of Jim as CEO.



The RNA Society is pleased to announce the winners of the **2019 RNA Society Early- and Mid-Career Awards**. Please join us in congratulating the two award recipients at RNA 2019 in Kraków.

2019 Early-Career Award Winner : Maria Barna

Dr. Barna is an Assistant Professor of Genetics and Developmental Biology at Stanford University in California, USA. She was nominated for her groundbreaking work on ribosome heterogeneity. Her work has created an entirely new field of research, which many labs are also beginning to pursue. Maria discovered heterogeneity in ribosomes at the level of ribosomal-protein (RP) composition and ribosome-associated-protein (RAP) composition. Collectively these appear to control the ability of diverse ribosomes to translate different mRNAs. She has demonstrated that translational specificity occurs at the level of ribosome heterogeneity and this diversity appears to be important for controlling key cellular decisions. She has been a full member since 2017 but has presented her work at several RNA meetings.



2019 Mid-Career Award Winner: Ailong Ke

Dr. Ke is a Professor in the Department of Molecular Biology and Genetics at Cornell University in New York, USA. A structural biologist by nature, his work can be broadly classified into three areas. His lab examines RNA-guided CRISPR immunity, a focus of his lab for over 10 years. He is also interested in structure-function of non-coding RNAs including T-box riboswitches and quaternary RNA ring structure. In addition, his lab works on RNA 3'-processing and degradation by the exosome complex—including 3D reconstructions of the yeast core exosome. He has been a full member of the RNA Society since 2006.

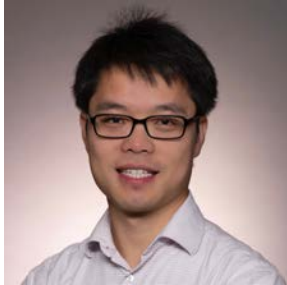


The RNA Society Announces Winners of the 2019 Scaringe Awards

The RNA Society is pleased to announce the winners of the 2019 RNA Society/Scaringe Awards. There were three awardees this year; one post-doctoral recipient and two graduate student recipients. Please join us in congratulating the award recipients at RNA 2019

RNA Society/Scaringe Post-Doctoral Award

Xuebing Wu is a postdoctoral researcher who has just completed his postdoctoral work in the lab of **David**



Bartel at the Whitehead in Cambridge, MA, US. He received his BS and MS at Tsinghua University, Beijing, China. He received his Ph.D from MIT in the lab of Phil Sharp. Since 2010 he has been examining RNA-centric gene regulation in mammalian systems using integrated experimental and analytical approaches including the roles of RNA structure, roles of RNA processing signals in transcriptome regulation, targeting mechanisms used by the CRISPR machinery and most recently has developed a new framework for sequence-motif analysis.

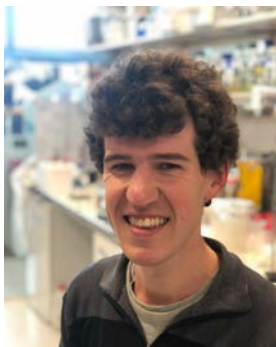
RNA Society/Scaringe Graduate Student Award

Michael C. Chen was a graduate student working with both **Professor Sir Shankar Balasubramanian** at the University of Cambridge and with **Dr. Adrian R. Ferré-D'Amaré** at the National Institutes of Health in the US. NIH. He received his PhD degree from the University of Cambridge. He received his B.S. degree working in the laboratory of Nicholas Hud at Georgia Tech. His doctoral work examined the biology and the molecular/structural biology of G-quadruplexes (G4), the ubiquitous four-stranded, G-rich secondary structures that are enriched in regulatory elements throughout the human genome and transcriptome. His work represents the first structure of a helicase-G4 interaction and characterizing this is the first critical step in understanding its role in biology.



RNA Society/Scaringe Graduate Student Award

Max E. Wilkinson is a graduate student working on his doctorate with with **Kiyoshi Nagai** at MRC Laboratory in Cambridge, UK. He received his B.Sc. and performing research with **Peter Fineran** and **Kurt Krause** at University of Otago, New Zealand. His undergraduate work helped him understand the power of combining crystallography, bacterial genetics and biochemistry to understand molecular mechanisms of recognition. His graduate work has applied cryo-EM to understanding the structure of the spliceosome immediately after the branch-formation step of splicing. Recent work with cryoEM have allowed us to visualize the dynamic nature of the spliceosome indicated by biochemical methods including the RNA and snRNA structural alterations and roles of the associated proteins that drive spliceosome remodeling are critical for efficient splicing.



RNA 2019 Travel Award Application

We are pleased to announce that travel awards to our annual meeting are once again available. **RNA 2019**, the 24rd Annual Meeting of the RNA Society, will be held **June 11-16, 2019**, at the **ICE Kraków Congress Center** in beautiful **Kraków, Poland**. We want to give maximum opportunities for people to attend.

The RNA Society provides travel fellowships in support of researchers who are constrained financially from attending our annual conference. In most cases the fellowships will be made in the form of reduced or waived registration fees, although it's possible that some contribution toward travel costs could be made in addition to the fee waiver. Travel awards, if granted, will be made either by waiving registration fees or through refunds and/or payments from the RNA Society shortly after the close of the conference (generally 4-6 weeks). Please note:

- Fellowships are restricted to RNA Society members. To become a member, go to: <http://www.rnasociety.org/become-a-member/>.
- To renew your membership, go to: https://www.rnasociety.org/members/members-only/?url=arssainvpay.pay_page
- Abstracts submitted with this travel fellowship application will NOT be entered into the conference registration system. You will need to make a separate conference registration, followed by a separate abstract submission once you have registered for the conference.
- The application for travel fellowships should be submitted by **February 25, 2019** for those who want to be notified in time to make the orals application deadline **or want to be considered in the first round of funding**. We will continue to accept applications after this date, until **March 15th**, but available funds are likely to be diminished substantially in a second round.

Questions can be addressed to travel@rnasociety.org.

If you wish to apply for a fellowship, please complete the application at the following link:
<https://www.rnasociety.org/conferences/rna-2019/travel-fellowships/>

We look forward to seeing you in **Kraków** next summer.



Group Registration Incentive

Dear Colleague,

The RNA Society wants to encourage as many members as possible to attend our annual meeting. To that end, we are offering a discount to our members who bring three or more lab members to the conference.

Here are the requirements:

- This offer is only for **overseas** labs (i.e. outside of Europe) whose lab head is an RNA Society member. To become a member go to: <https://www.rnasociety.org/become-a-member/>. To renew your membership, go to: https://www.rnasociety.org/members/members-only/?url=arssainvpay.pay_page

- There must be at least **three** paid registrations from the same lab—excluding individuals who receive travel fellowships from the Society—and the **lab head must be a conference attendee**. We want to encourage participation by more senior researchers, as well as gradstudents and post docs.

- Only one registration refund per lab – the lowest of the three or more paid fees will be refunded. Travel fellowship recipients cannot be included among the three.

- Refunds will be in the form of a check when you arrive at the conference, or as a credit card reimbursement or electronic funds transfer shortly after the close of the conference.

- Due to foreign exchange fluctuations, the refund received may vary somewhat from the original payment sent. We will, however, make every effort to minimize the difference.

- This offer **expires on May 1, 2019**. Three participants must be identified, registered and paid prior to May 1, 2019 for the lab to be eligible for a refund.

We look forward to seeing you in Kraków this summer.

Sincerely,

Jim McSwiggen, CEO

The RNA Society



News from the RNA Society Junior Scientists

Pre-meeting event: Tour of the famous Wieliczka Salt Mine

The morning prior to registration, join RNA Society's junior scientists on a Tour to the famous "Wieliczka" Salt Mine, an exceptional monument on the UNESCO's World Cultural and Natural Heritage List since 1978. With its magnificent chambers chiseled out in rock salt, amazing underground saline lakes, majestic timber constructions and unique statues sculpted in salt, it is one of the most valuable monuments of material and spiritual culture in Poland. Not surprisingly it is visited each year by more than one million tourists from all over the world. This is a great way to get to know fellow Junior Scientists and explore one of Poland's main attractions!



Junior scientists social

The Junior Scientists Committee will once again be hosting a social gathering one evening during the meeting. This year, we will also include some loosely RNA-related trivia! Come out and join us for a fun filled evening where you will be able to get to know your fellow junior scientists, test your knowledge, and maybe even win some prizes!

Workshop – Publishing and the Editorial process

This year the Junior Scientists committee will be hosting a great group of editors, from a wide variety of scientific journals, for a panel discussion on "Publishing and the Editorial process". Speakers will give an overview of their experiences and provide insights in regards to publishing. This will be followed by a panel discussion where the floor will be opened to questions from the audience. Topics that will be touched on include differences in the review process between different journals, manuscript review transparency, dilemmas regarding unpublished pre-prints and peer-reviewed articles, differences between open access and standard subscription-based publications.

You can keep in touch with us throughout the year via email (junior_scientists@rnasociety.org) or social media. Our contact information is also posted on the RNA website.

RNA Society Junior



@jrRNAscientis



RNA Society Junior



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From the desk of the CEO Jim McSwiggen

Welcome to 2019! This year is my ninth and final year serving as the RNA Society's CEO. I'm going to miss this work when my tour is over, but I suspect



I won't miss coming up with something new to write for this newsletter—this being my 17th time. I still have the August piece to deal with, however, so I'll reserve my farewell song for that one. For now, I'll regale you with Society arcana

about the volunteers who serve in the Society.

But first, if you're wondering who will replace me as CEO, I'm happy to report that **Kristian Baker** was selected by the board to become the next CEO beginning in 2020.

Many of you will already be familiar with Kristian, either from her scientific research https://genetics.cwru.edu/page.php?page_id=5&LN=Baker&FN=Kristian or from her service to the Society. Kristian is the current chair of our Membership Committee and has helped to increase our membership levels by almost 500 members over her five-year term. She also manages our small conferences grants program and has worked to establish—with **Ute Wieden-Kothe**—the highly successful and popular RNA Salons program. Along with **Olivia Rissland**, she has also worked to establish a more robust social media presence for the society, including the popular member highlights articles. Kristian has been a long-time member and tireless supporter of the society. I'm confident that she will make an excellent CEO and that the transition will be seamless when I step down at the end of this year.

Kristian has been participating in the CEO activities as an observer since the beginning of the year and will do so throughout 2019. In that way, she can become familiar with all of the activities that take place throughout the year. This appointment leaves an opening for a new Membership chair as well. An

announcement for the position can be found on page 3 of this newsletter. Please read it and consider volunteering for this critical role in the Society. If you have questions about the position, don't hesitate to contact either me or Kristian.

As most of you probably know, the Society has both a President and a CEO (Chief Executive Officer), but some might not know how those roles differ. With my upcoming exit from this role, I thought it would be helpful briefly to review those roles, as well as the make-up of the Board of Directors. That way you'll know where to send your complaints.

The President is essentially the policy head for the Society. For the next 2 years, Anna Pyle will be the one who chairs the Council, the policy making body of the Society. She also presides over the annual meeting, appoints members to our various committees, and approves contracts—all with the oversight and consent of the Council. Society members elect a new President every other year for a two-year term. The president actually serves first as President-Elect for ~7 months (from the election in the Spring to the end of that year), then becomes President at the beginning of the new year (for two years), and finally serves as Past-President until a new President-Elect is named. Thus, the position stretches out to about four years in total. It's a hard job, but it's been invaluable for maintaining continuity.

The CEO (Chief Executive Officer) is the business head for the Society. The CEO is responsible for the daily affairs of the Society, such as preparing the annual budget, approving disbursements, developing new business proposals, negotiating with contractors, signing contracts (with the approval of the President), and managing the Society's publications activities—again, all with the oversight and consent of the Council. Thus, the CEO's responsibilities are to keep the Society running on a day-to-day basis.

The Council, or Board of Directors, is the governing body of the Society. It's made up of the President (currently **Anna Pyle**), President-Elect (none until



next year's presidential election), Past-President (**Juan Valcarcel**), CEO (me), CFO (or Chief Financial Officer, **Evelyn Jabri**), Secretary (**Brenda Peculis**), and six additional Directors (**Stepanka Vanacova, Jeff Coller, Wendy Gilbert, Mihaela Zavolan, Jörg Vogel, and Greg Matera**). The President(s) and Directors are elected to the Board by the membership; the CEO, CFO and Secretary are appointed by the Board. The bylaws specify that three of the six Directors be elected each year to overlapping two-year terms. This, again, provides the continuity needed for effective policy making.

Elections for Directors (and every other year, for President) are carried out in the Spring, from mid-April to mid-May. Candidates for office are currently being sought by our Nominating Committee—one of several committees whose members are appointed by the President. We're looking for at least four candidates to run for the three open positions. If you would like to serve as a board member, please let Anna or me know; we would be happy to pass your name on to the nominating committee.

For completeness, I should mention the various standing committees of the Society. The Membership Committee—currently chaired by **Kristian Baker**—is charged with looking out for the interests of the membership and keeping them engaged. The Meetings Committee—chaired by **Benoit Chabot**—is charged with selecting venues for our annual meetings. The Business Development Committee—chaired by **Gianpiero de Leva**—is seeking ways to increase both corporate sponsorship and attendance at our meetings. We also are working on establishing a committee dedicated to seeking other types of donations, but that committee is just being planned. If you think you might like to serve on one of these committees, please let us know. We always looking for new volunteers.

As always, if you have questions, comments, concerns or commendations regarding the RNA Society, please let me know. I am always happy to hear from our members (and happy, as well, to hear from non-members who want to become members).

Jim McSwiggen, CEO CEO@rnasociety.org



From the desk of the CFO Evelyn Jabri



It's great to be back volunteering with the Society as the CFO! This role serves as the main point of financial contact for the Society officers, chairs the Finance Committee, and manages various financial activities throughout the year (detailed on [here](#)). The CFO now also partners with the President and CEO to assess and establish a financial framework for Development & Fundraising efforts which got off the ground this year with an anonymous major gift for a new award.

In 2018, two financial projects addressed the long-range sustainability and scalability of the Society. These were:

1. Review and update investment policy with the Finance Committee and the Society's external investment advisor
2. Migrate the financial process to new a new Financial Management System (FMS) with the Society's management partner FASEB

Updated Investment Policy: In 2014, the Board of Directors established an Investment Policy Statement to govern the management of the of Society's three funds: Operating (day-to-day), Emergency (1 to 3 years stability) and Investment (long-range sustainability) funds. The funds are described below in the *'Did you Know this about the Society's Finances?'* a new section of my report in which I will answer your questions about the Society's financial operations and policies.

Why did the Society need to update the investment policy? First, the guidelines call for a thorough review every two years. Importantly, a lot has changed in the financial sector since 2014, and we needed to confirm that the investment guidelines and risk tolerance of the portfolio still kept the Society on a sustainable financial footing.

What changed? In October of 2018, after consultation with our external investment manager, the Finance Committee recommended and the Board approved: 1) revise the objective to emphasize maintaining the investment fund purchasing power ahead of growth due to volatile markets; 2) explicitly define the Society's risk tolerance to state 'The portfolio will have a goal of limiting potential negative returns to not more than 20% in any 12-month period'; and 3) expand the asset allocation to include a the minimum, target and maximum percentage of stocks, bonds and cash within the portfolio to match the updated objectives and risk tolerance measures. If you are interested in the details, I would be happy to share the full policy with you.

What happens in 2019? The CFO, Finance Committee and our financial advisor will continue to monitor the volatile financial market and, if warranted, make any necessary changes to the emergency and investment portfolios before another full review in 2020.

New FMS system: A financial management system (FMS) supports the Society's business by providing a means to pay bills, track revenues, monitor expenses against the budget, and generate reports for the Board and other tax and audit entities. In late 2018, the Society, with help from FASEB and their financial consulting partner Raffa, migrated to a scalable cloud-based financial management system (SAGE-Intacct) and a web-based accounts payable system (Bill.com). Along the way, the expense codes were updated to industry standards, the department structure was modified to allow for the addition of Development & Fundraising, and program processes were updated to improve their financial tracking.

Why did the Society need to update the FMS? In short, the old system, a proprietary FASEB platform, was not flexible enough to support the Society's growing financial needs which increased in complexity and expenditures



(to > \$1.4M in 2018). Furthermore, the old system was a ‘black box’ from which the Society would receive only quarterly financial reports making the cash flow management across the growing number of programs challenging. The Society needed both a flexible, easy to update and transparent FMS that allowed immediate visibility into the financial processes and preferably one that took full advantage of technology to streamline processes.

What changed? Each request for payment is now visible in Bill.com throughout the process. Furthermore, the dashboard and reports within the Intacct FMS provide an immediate view of department and program financial standing. In short, the Society now has the financial transparency it desired within electronic systems that are easily updated as new programs emerge.

What happens in 2019? The Society will continue to refine the financial processes, including the electronic reimbursement request form introduced in 2018, to streamline its operations.

Questions and suggestions? Feel free to email me at cfo@rnasociety.org.

Did you know this about the Society’s finances?

The Society has three pools of funds with specific purposes defined in the Investment Policy. These are:

- **Operating Funds**
 - Purpose: to provide sufficient cash to meet the financial obligations
 - Accounts: The funds are maintained in FDIC insured checking and savings account.
 - Revenue Generation: none.
 - Accessibility: Immediately to pay bills as they arise.
 - Balance: maximum \$500K and \$350K at the start of 2019.
- **Emergency Funds**
 - Purpose: to pay for expenses occurring as the result of unanticipated activities.
 - Accounts: funds are invested in CDs that mature within 1-2 years.
 - Revenue generation: Currently earning 2.5% dividends.
 - Accessibility: The CDS are cashed in a cash emergency - when operating funds have been depleted. The emergency funds are re-stocked to the designated minimum level when cash is available.
 - Balance: Minimum of \$300K and \$375K at the start of 2019.
- **Investment Funds**
 - Purpose: to maintain the financial sustainability of the Society and enhance the purchasing power of the funds.
 - Accounts: invested in stocks and bonds as specified in the Investment Policy.
 - Revenue Generation: Depends on the market. When the market is strong, the investments provide significant revenues for the Society, but when the market is volatile, the returns are unpredictable and usually low. For example, in 2017, the investments produced \$135K in revenues versus \$0 in 2018.
 - Accessibility: Low as they are intended to be used in the event of a catastrophic event that necessitates spending all of the Society's operating and emergency funds and hence places the Society in a situation where it must release its investments to stay in operation. The Board can vote to spend its investments should other funds be insufficient to develop new programs.
 - Balance: \$1.6M at the start of 2019.



Chair of Business Development Committee Gianpiero Di Leva



Over the last couple of years, we have seen a great number of exhibitors and sponsors attending our Annual Meeting, providing a variety of networking opportunities to our attendees in the exciting and informative atmosphere of the meeting. But every year the big dilemma is how can we help the RNA Society to organize affordable meetings for all scientists? Clearly, we want to organize the best event possible but we have to face the financial fork at the end of the road: do we annually increase the fees to pay for the year-to-year pricy locations we choose for our event or do we pay for the expenses and try to find the perfect sponsors that will help us? Surely there is no doubt about the choice we took as demonstrated by the fact that the registration fees has not significantly changed for many years. Thus, the next important step in creating an affordable and great experience for all attendees is how to attract sponsors? Surely, approaching potential sponsors via Email has not been productive; since I took on the position of CDB, I have sent couple of thousands of emails and get few replies. And no one can blame on them: “Would you ask to marry someone on your first date?” or better “Would you give \$25,000 to some scientists because they say they know what a ribosome does, or how splicing works?”.

Since that approach has had only limited effect we are in the process of trying a completely new approach. However, I’m completely open to suggestions from our Membership, so please feel free to contact me (address below) and we can discuss alternative methods for better ways to request corporate meeting support.

This upcoming year, with the hope to secure more sponsors, we have started to make some changes in our “sponsors rush” approach. The first step we undertook is the introduction of a brand new sponsorship prospectus that we have designed in collaboration with the Simple Meetings team to provide a highly structured and visual overview of our Annual Meeting event in Kraków. Mainly, the sponsorship prospectus aims to reinforce our long-term sponsors’ presence and win credibility that will lead to trust with new sponsors that, to date, have not been involved or present at our conference. We have created a prospectus that provides:

- Information about the RNA2019, dates and location, plenary and concurrent sessions, satellite events.
- Relevant demographics information about attendees and list of past sponsors.
- Sponsorship opportunities ranging from poster presentations to sponsored seminars.
- A refreshed sponsorship form.

The largest change in the prospectus is represented by tiered sponsorship package options that will provide a quick and easy opportunities to potential sponsors to participate to our annual conference or other events. Designed as Gold, Silver and Bronze sponsorship packages, they will give an opportunity to the companies to showcase their products while increasing their company’s visibility and additional marketing and branding opportunities. However, we are willing to offer a more personalized opportunity to sponsors and discuss opportunities beyond what is specified in the prospectus. On that, please pass the information to any relevant Companies or Institutions that you can think interested in sharing their brand and connecting with our people. **Your help for identifying new sponsors and possibilities to support our annual events are welcome.**

If you would like to discuss sponsorships opportunities please contact me via email at bd@rnasociety.org or our Simple Meetings organization team at RNA2019@rnasociety.org



Chairman of the Meetings Committee Benoit Chabot

We are moving with great anticipation towards the next RNA Society meeting to be held **June 10 to 16, 2019** in **Kraków, Poland** at the ICE Kraków Congress Centre. **Witek Filipowicz** is the lead organizer for this meeting. His team of co-organizers includes **Brenda Bass** (Salt Lake City, USA), **Elena Conti** (Martinsried, Germany), **Tetsuro Hirose** (Sapporo, Japan), **Gene Yeo** (San Diego, USA) and **Artur Jarmolowski** (Poznan, Poland). Kraków is a truly inspiring city. [Registration](#) is open.



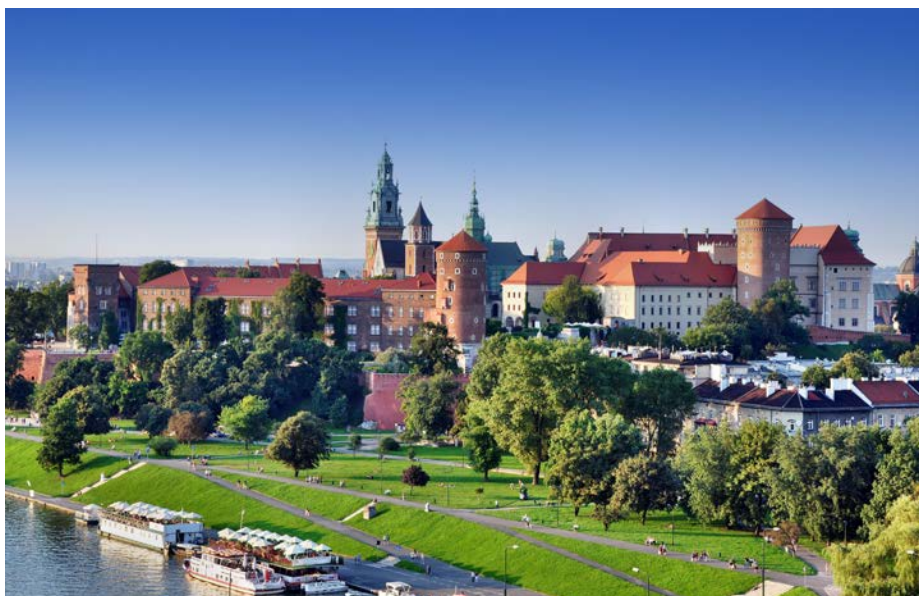
Vancouver is set as the venue for the **25th RNA Society meeting in 2020 (May 26-31)**. **Sarah Woodson** (lead organizer) and **Stephen Rader** (local champion) will join forces with **Oliver Mühlemann**, **Ling-Ling Chen**, **Alain Laederach** and **Michaela Frye** to organize what I am sure will be a memorable meeting on the Pacific coast of Canada.

Finally, we are now in the final stage of selecting the venue for **Asia in 2021**, and we are already analyzing options for venues in the **USA in 2022**. So check out the next Newsletter for the venue in Asia selected for 2021!

I am most grateful to members of the Meetings Committee for their efficient contributions in the often difficult task of selecting continents, venues and organizers for our meetings. Members of the committee now include **Florian Heyd** (Germany), **Andrei Korostelev** (USA), **Shinichi Nakagawa** (Japan), **Rui Zhao** (USA), **Maayan Salton** (Israel), **Marie Öhman** (Sweden), **Katrin Karbstein** (USA), **Karla Neugebauer** (USA) and **Yukihide Tomari** (Japan).

As always, we continue to welcome suggestions from members willing to champion their institution or city as possible future venues.

Best wishes to all for a productive New Year 2019!
Benoit.Chabot@USherbrooke.ca
Chair of the Meetings Committee



From the desk of the Junior Scientist Representatives

The Junior Scientist Committee works throughout the year to plan workshops and events for the annual RNA Society meeting. With our two new incoming members this year, Malgorzata and Anzer, we are busy planning for RNA 2019 and are very excited for this year's activities and workshops!

Malgorzata Rogalska – Incoming Postdoc Representative

I am a Postdoctoral Researcher in the laboratory of Juan Valcárcel Juárez at the Centre for Genomic Regulation (CRG) in Barcelona, Spain studying regulation of pre-mRNA alternative splicing during cell differentiation, development and disease. My research project uses transcriptome-wide sequencing merged with network analysis and biochemical studies in order to deepen our understanding of the molecular mechanisms of splicing regulation.



The thing that inspires me the most about the RNA Society is the true sense of community among its members. As part of Junior Scientist Committee, I am looking forward to joining the network of young scientists and enhancing the exchange of ideas between the professionals from all over the world and at different stages in their careers.

Anzer Khan – Incoming Graduate Student Representative

I am from India, I did my undergraduate studies from University of Delhi and postgraduate studies from South Asian University. I joined Prof. Mary O'Connell lab in 2016 as a doctoral student at Central European Institute of technology (CEITEC), Brno. My doctoral thesis is focused on role of RNA editing enzyme (ADAR) in Drosophila development and immunity. I have been actively involved in many student initiatives at CEITEC. I have also learnt about the importance of networking. As part of the RNA Society's junior scientist committee, I would like to connect with more people who are working in the field of RNA biology, and organize some interesting activities during the upcoming annual meeting of RNA society.



Eleonora de Klerk – Returning Postdoc Representative

I am currently a postdoctoral fellow at UCSF (University of California, San Francisco - USA), in the laboratory of Dr. Matthias Hebrok. Hebrok's Lab focuses on pancreatic alpha and β -cell biology, with an interest in signaling pathways that affect the function, proliferation and/or survival of insulin/glucagon producing cells, and those that promote the formation of alpha and β -cells from uncommitted stem cells. I am currently working on stem cell-derived beta cells, specifically performing CRISPR screenings to uncover positive and negative regulators which can overcome two main bottlenecks in the generation of stem cell-derived β -cells: limited amount of insulin producing cells and dedifferentiation of β -cells over time, with the long-term objective of generating hESC-derived and hiPSC-derived β -cells that can be used to treat diabetic patients in the near future.



I've been part of the Junior Scientist Committee for over a year, with the main goal of helping connecting PhDs and Postdocs working in the RNA field, hoping to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and to create bridges between labs. Last year in Berkeley we definitely had a great time and I am already looking forward to seeing you all again in Kraków, Poland this spring!

Julie Loiselle – Returning Postdoc Representative

I am currently a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Ottawa in Ontario, Canada in the lab of Dr. Kristi Adamo. My current research focuses on determining the molecular mechanisms through which physical activity during pregnancy influences placental health. Specifically, I am examining how placental alternative splicing and miRNA expression are influenced by physical activity, and the downstream consequences of these changes. As part of the RNA Society's Junior Scientist Committee, I am most excited to be involved in engaging junior scientists and providing important career development and networking opportunities. Looking forward to meeting everyone in Kraków, Poland this spring!



If you're interested in joining the Junior Scientist Committee, please find a representative at RNA 2019 and tell us how you can contribute!

Update on the Society's Mentoring Program

Nancy Greenbaum

The second round of the RNA Society's new Mentoring Program is now in action. This program, launched soon after the 2017 Annual Meeting by (then President) Juan Valcárcel was created to provide individual mentoring for a period of ~one year to junior scientists at critical points in their careers (PhD students, postdocs, Assistant Professors) by a senior Society member with complementary expertise. This mentoring is not intended to replace the traditional intra-institutional mentoring typically provided to trainees or junior faculty members starting independent positions, but to enhance that experience by filling gaps with research field- or career path-specific mentoring. Research advisors and faculty colleagues may not have topic-specific experience, or an independent perspective, to offer.



In our first year of the program (Nov. 2017 - May 2018), 20 mentor-mentee pairs were set up. Mentees submitted applications to be in the program, seeking guidance on topics including career direction, grant proposals, narrowing focus, preparation for future positions, relationships with colleagues and networking skills. Each was matched with a mentor from the Society's senior membership. Participants were provided with information about mentoring goals/tools, but with no imposed structure about mode or frequency of communication.

The results of an end-of-year evaluation seeing feedback from mentors and mentees indicated that some of the mentees would benefit from more direction and support. In addition, the mentees need to be proactive in contacting, and communicating with, their mentors. Both mentors and mentees indicated it would be helpful to be provided with more advice or structure for mentoring interactions. Also, mentor-mentee pairs may benefit from suggestions to define their own optimal protocol for discussion of relevant goals and evaluation of progress in meeting those goals. These improvements are being incorporated into the current round of mentor-mentee pairing.

In this second year of the program, we once again have 20 pairs of mentors and mentees. This time, in addition to inviting some individuals from the membership to serve as mentors, we sought communication from Senior Members willing to participate (eight volunteered). We were able to pair most of those offering their time and expertise with mentees. In addition to providing each pair with more complete information and suggestions for a more effective and fulfilling interaction, we have also extended the mentoring period to continue through the



end of 2019 (up to 12 months of mentoring). As in the previous round, we will continue to evaluate our approach and protocol, and are open to any comments or suggestions.

If you have benefited from the experience of asking questions on specific issues at one of the annual Career Mentoring Lunches, or any other mentoring events, or if you have enjoyed providing answers or suggestions to those seeking help, you may want to build on that activity by requesting to be a mentee, or serve as a mentor, (respectively) in our next round of the Mentoring Program. Stay tuned for information about it in the coming months!

Nancy L. Greenbaum (nancy.greenbaum@hunter.cuny.edu) and
Juan Valcárcel (juan.valcarcel@crg.eu)

From the desk of Membership Chair Kristian Baker



It has been an exciting five years serving the RNA Society as Membership Chair and I am once again delighted to update you on all the news and initiatives the Membership Committee is busy working on to enhance your experience in the Society.

MEMBERSHIP REACHES ALL TIME HIGH

The RNA Society continues to grow and attract RNA researchers from around the world. At the end of 2018 we achieved a new level of engagement by surpassing 2,000 members. This achievement represents a 35% increase in membership since 2014 and signifies that the RNA Society is achieving its goal of providing a beneficial social and scholarly community for RNA scientists. I want to thank our long-standing members for their continued commitment and participation in the organization and extend a warm welcome to our newer colleagues – who I invite to take advantage of the many benefits the Society has to offer and encourage to take frequent opportunity to interact and engage with your new peers.

RNA SALONS – CONTINUED GROWTH AND FUNDING

In its third year, the RNA Salon initiative continues to flourish and garner ever-greater enthusiasm and involvement by our members. For the 2018/2019 series, the RNA Society has partnered with 48 Salon hubs (an increase of 11 from last year) to provide financial support to foster RNA research and the professional development of Salon participants. New for 2018/2019 was an increase in RNA Salon funding to \$1,500 USD, made possible through an exclusive partnership with our industry co-sponsor Lexogen. While I would like to thank the dedicated Society members who organize Salon events and to all of the enthusiastic participants, it is vital to acknowledge that this program would not be possible without the dedication and commitment of Dr. Ute Kothe, who single-handedly leads and administers this Society initiative. Please contact Ute at RNASalon@rnasociety.org if you have questions or are considering launching an RNA Salon group in your area.

We are excited to continue to provide sponsorship for a number of established RNA Salons - which grow in their participants and activities – and welcome new Salons in Canberra and Sydney (Australia), Berlin and Würzburg (Germany), Umeå (Sweden), Barcelona (Spain), Vienna (Austria), Czech Republic, Sussex (UK), Montréal (Canada), and at Johns Hopkins University, Texas A&M University, the University of California at Davis, Western Massachusetts (Pioneer Valley), Rockefeller University, and Southern Illinois University (USA). We are busy this month working with Salon organizers to present participants with a special offer to join the RNA Society, and couldn't be more pleased to learn that this year the RNA Salon program supports over 5,500 RNA researchers around the globe! To learn of 2018/2019 RNA Salon events near you, please visit the RNA Society website at <https://www.rnasociety.org/rna-salons/>.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT SERIES CONTINUES IN FULL FORCE FOR 2019

I want to thank everyone for the positive feedback on our **Member Spotlight Series** – an initiative Dr. Olivia Rissland and I launched last spring to highlight the outstanding lives and accomplishments of our members. We are excited in 2019 to continue to profile both a Student/Post-doc and a Full RNA Society member each month and to share their amazing stories on the Society website. Please watch your in-boxes every month for notices and links to new Spotlights.

Olivia and I would also like to acknowledge the overwhelming response to our recent invitation to assist in interviewing and writing member profiles. We are delighted to have the following Society colleagues join the Spotlight team for 2019: **Kristin Koutmou** (University of Michigan, USA), **Chun Kim** (Loyola University, USA), **Homa Ghalei** (Emory University, USA), **Sara Nik** (Albert Einstein College of Medicine, USA), **Ha An Nguyen** (Emory University, USA), **Estafanía Sánchez Vásquez** (IIB-INTECH, Argentina), **Giriam Mohana** (Institute of Molecular Biology, Germany), **MJ Paulines** (Merck, USA), **Sushant Bangru** (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, USA), **Hamza Taufique** (University of Toronto, Canada), **Nandini Kundu** (Texas A&M University, USA), **Sarah Arcos** (Vanderbilt University, USA), **Francisco Garcia** (Universidad de Chile, Chile), **Carla Columbano de Oliveira** (University of Sao Paulo, Brazil) and **Corbin Black** (University of Northern British Columbia, Canada). Be fair warned, an e-mail from any of these RNA Society members might mean that the next Spotlight will be on you!

To recommend Society members with compelling personal or professional journeys, please contact Olivia at RNASpotlight@rnasociety.org, and be sure to visit the RNA Society website to ‘meet’ both past and present Spotlightees.

I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to my colleagues on the Membership Committee for all of their hard work, and to all of the members of the RNA Society for making this a fantastic community to be a part of. I look forward to seeing you all in Kraków!



RNA Society-supported meetings

Reports from recent RNA meetings supported by the Society

2018 TRENd

July 31st, 2018

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Toronto RNA Enthusiasts' Day (TRENd) is a student-led and trainee-focused scientific forum for a diverse group of RNA researchers held, this year, on July 31st at the Peter Gilgan Centre for Research and Learning (PGCRL) at The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto. This year's organizing committee included (left to right in photo starting from back row) Faculty Mentor and small RNA biologist, Dr. Julie Claycomb (Assoc. Prof. and Assoc. Chair, Dept. of Molecular Genetics), Amanda Charlesworth (PhD student, Claycomb Lab, Dept. of Molecular Genetics), Lauren Ostrowski (PhD student, Mekhail Lab, Dept. of Lab Medicine and Pathobiology), Dr. Geraldine Seydoux (Keynote Speaker), Dr. Matthew Hildebrant (Postdoctoral Fellow, Ellis Lab, Dept. of Molecular Genetics), Eesha Sharma (PhD student, Blencowe Lab, Dept. of Molecular Genetics), Nevraj Kejiou (MSc student, Palazzo Lab, Dept. of Biochemistry), and Amanda Hall (PhD student, Mekhail Lab, Dept. of Lab Medicine and Pathobiology; not pictured).

TRENd has become a vital part of our local RNA community, providing trainees with valuable scientific communication opportunities, encouraging new interactions and collaborations, and enabling exposure to new ideas and techniques. The only non-trainee presentation of the day was that of our keynote speaker, Dr. Geraldine Seydoux (Johns Hopkins University), who gave an outstanding talk on RNA granules in the *C. elegans* germline. The rest of the day consisted of 12 talks, 7 one-minute poster pitches, and over 40 poster presentations from postdoctoral, graduate and undergraduate trainees, covering a vast swath of RNA biology, highlighting the following topics: Transcription, RNA Processing, Splicing Regulation and Mechanisms, Small and Non-coding RNAs, RNP, Post Transcriptional Regulation, Translation and the Ribosome, and RNA Structure and Computational Methods for RNA Data Analysis. This year, TRENd brought together nearly 200 scientists from all over the Greater Toronto Area, Ontario, Quebec, Ohio, and Western New York. A new addition to the 3rd annual TRENd was a "Lunch and Learn" career development seminar run by U. of Toronto Dept. of Biochemistry and Immunology's own Dr. Nana Lee (Assistant professor, teaching stream). This workshop focused on building personal development plans and soft skills that enable more successful careers trajectories. Because of the generous support from the RNA Society, TRENd awarded prizes for the people's choice best talk won by Dalia Ghoneim (Matthews lab, University of Rochester) and judges selected best posters with Graduate student winners: Matthew Berg (Brandl Lab, University of Western Ontario), Joseph Samuel (Marsden Lab, University of Toronto) and Undergraduate student winner: Jimmy Ly (Smibert Lab, University of Toronto). Overall, TRENd2018 was a smashing success, and because of continued support from the RNA Society and other sponsors, we will hold TRENd2019 on July 30th, 2019, featuring Dr. Tracy Johnson as our keynote speaker.



Nucleic Acids, Immunity and Genome Defense

September 4th – 6th, 2018

Brno, Czech Republic

The third and final conference in a series of three on Nucleic Acids and Immunity was held September 4th, 5th, and 6th in Brno, in the Czech Republic. The aim of these conferences was to bring together researchers working on nucleic acids with those interested in sensors and innate immunity. This conference hosted approximately 80 attendees this year mainly from Europe. This conference series was funded by European Union's Seventh Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration under grant agreement No 621368 to the ERA Chair.

The keynote speaker this year was Gunther Hartmann, University Hospital Bonn, Germany who is one of the world's leading researcher in innate immunity. The conference organizers were Liam Keegan and Mary O'Connell and they are very grateful to the RNA Society for providing sponsorship for all three conferences, which included two posters awards this year. The awardees this year were both from CEITEC, Masaryk University, Czech Republic and are Neha Shukla (left in photo) from the group of Karel Riha, and Helena Covelo-Morales (right) from the group of Stepanka Vanocova.



2018 Meeting of the LARP Society

September 10th – 13th, 2018

Tauber, Germany

The LARP Society (LARPSOC) hosted its 5th biennial meeting at the historic site of *Wildbad*, Rothenburg-ob-der-Tauber, Germany from September 10th - 13th, 2018. The LARP society comprises scientists from many disciplines with a shared interest in the RNA biology of La-motif containing proteins (LARPs) and its RNPs. We welcomed more than 50 researchers from Europe, USA, Canada and China that presented their research on LARPs and beyond. Keynotes were delivered by Renee Schroeder (University of Vienna, Austria), Nahum Sonenberg (McGill University, Canada) and Jack Keene (Duke University, USA). Talks covering all aspects of LARP-biology were selected from submitted abstracts and presented mostly by PhD students and postdocs. A poster session and a lively social program including a tour with the night watchman through the historic town of Rothenburg complemented the program. The meeting was concluded by a talk by our former president, Rich Maraia (NIH, USA). We highly appreciated the generous support of the RNA Society for this meeting whose sponsorship was used to support three selected young scientists (who each gave excellent presentations at the meeting).



EMBO Workshop on piRNAs and PIWI proteins

September 12th – 15th, 2018

Montpellier, France

The EMBO Workshop on piRNAs and PIWI proteins was held over 3.5 days in the Congress Center of Montpellier, France. This Workshop, organized by Martine Simonelig (IGH, Montpellier), Julius Brennecke (IMBA, Vienna), Haifan Lin (Yale Stem Cell Center, Yale) and Kazufumi Mochizuki (IGH, Montpellier) was



the second of the EMBO Workshop series specifically dedicated to Piwi-interacting RNA (piRNA) biology. The piRNA field is still new and the aim of the workshop was really to cover the entire field.

The workshop brought together senior and junior scientists from across the world and covered all aspects of piRNA biology. The program included sessions on piRNA biogenesis and on the various functions of piRNAs: in genome defense; epigenetic regulation; genome rearrangements; regulation of endogenous gene expression

programs; stem cell biology; development; and cancer and other diseases. Most speakers presented unpublished work and each talk was followed by lively discussions. The open atmosphere of the workshop, as well as its small size and the organization of two "Meet the speakers" sessions allowed extensive discussions between all participants. The support of the



RNA Society allowed us to sponsor four prizes: three poster prizes awarded to Lynsey Carroll (University of Glasgow), Rebecca Halbach (Radboud University, Nijmegen) and Robert Kofler (University of Vienna), and one prize for the best discussion and question following talks, awarded to Julia Batki (IMBA, Vienna). All prizes included membership for one year to the RNA Society.

2018 tRNA Meeting

September 23rd – 27th, 2018
Strasbourg, France

The 27th international tRNA conference - "tRNA at the cross road" - took place in Strasbourg, France this past September. The meeting brought together ~300 researchers from 29 countries who study various aspects of



tRNA biology. As emphasized at the meeting, tRNA biology continues to reveal new and surprising findings. Emerging technologies allow researchers to address new biological questions and to identify novel tRNA functions. Notably, while tRNA biology is essential to understand translation regulation, for synthetic biology, for systems biology, and to understand the world of small RNAs, it is also of major societal importance as the number of diseases such as cancer, Alzheimer, myopathies, are being revealed to involve tRNA dysfunction.

Altogether 72 talks, 24 flash talks and 130 posters were presented at the meeting in scientific sessions focusing on tRNA biology in evolution, tRNA modifications, tRNA in translation, tRNAomics and synthetic biology, functions of tRNA fragments and non-canonical functions of tRNA, aminoacyl tRNA synthetases, and tRNA biology and diseases. Notably, research involving a diversity of model organisms including bacteria, archaea and representative eukaryote species (e.g. human, yeast, plants and protozoa) was presented. Emphasis was made on the support of young scientists, with the help of the RNA Society. Seven poster awards and 3 young scientists' oral presentation awards were also attributed. Finally, it was announced that the 28th tRNA Conference will be held in 2020 in Columbus, Ohio, USA.



RiboClub 2018

September 24th – 27th, 2018
Orford, Quebec, Canada

The 19th Annual Meeting of the RiboClub opened up this year with a keynote presentation by Matthias Hentze (EMBL, Heidelberg, Germany) entitled ‘Hidden treasures of the RNA world: RBPs from moonlighting to riboregulation’, while Maria Barna (Stanford University, California, USA) was the students’ choice keynote discussing Ribosome heterogeneity in translating the genetic code. The flavor of the year was "RNomics: Big data, analysis and mechanism of action". In addition to oral presentations, two interactive poster sessions showcased the work of students and post-docs. Thanks to the support of the RNA Society, two RNA Society Travel Awards were offered on a competitive basis to Anthony Khong (University of Colorado, USA; left) and Joseph Ross (University of Lethbridge, Canada; right).



Complex Life of RNA

Oct 3rd- Oct 6th, 2018
EMBL, Heidelberg, Germany

The 4th EMBO|EMBL Symposium on the Complex Life of RNA, co-sponsored by the European Molecular Biology Organization and the European Molecular Biology Laboratory, was held at the Advanced Training Centre (ATC) of the EMBL. It continued the rich tradition of bringing RNA enthusiasts from around the world working on a variety of topics such as transcription, splicing, translation, RNA localization, RNA decay, etc. To reflect the increasing participation of researchers working on noncoding RNAs, RNA modifications and small RNAs, the organizers changed the original ‘mRNA’ in the title to simply ‘RNA’. The symposium opened with two outstanding Keynote lectures that set the stage for further scientific discussions throughout the meeting: *Cryo-EM snapshots of the spliceosome* (Reinhard Luhrmann) and *RNA granule dynamics* (Geraldine Seydoux). A third Keynote lecture on *Single mRNA tracking* (Robert Singer) kept the tempo high on the subsequent days.

To increase participation of younger members of our community, the organizers invited (from submitted abstracts) a large number of students, postdocs and junior faculty to present their work as short talks. Some of these were rated the best presentations by meeting participants in an online survey. Hinting at a move towards an increasing mechanistic understanding of RNA-related processes, a number of talks highlighted structural insights obtained by application of the state-of-the-art Cryo-EM methods. Another highlight was the poster sessions along the A- and B-helices of the ATC, with intense discussions in a relaxed atmosphere. Many further opportunities for scientific and social exchanges arose during pre- and post-dinner drinks.



Using the generous support provided by the RNA Society, the meeting organizers were able to award five poster prizes: Heather Drexler (Churchman Lab), Rayner Queiroz (MedImmune), Suzan Ruijtenberg (Tanenbaum lab), Salma Sohrabi-Jahromi & Katharina Hofmann (MPI), Frank Tippmann (Bukau Lab).

True to all ATC meetings, the meeting ended with a memorable Conference Party that included live band music and dancing late into the night. Judging by the meeting feedback, the participants eagerly look forward to another installment of this meeting in 2020.

2018 RNA Biology and Processing Meeting (in Memory of Professor Yossi Sperling)

October 8th, 2018

Mainz, Germany

The 2018 RNA Biology and Processing Meeting in Memory of Prof. Yossi Sperling was a one day event held at Bar-Ilan University, Ramat Gan, Israel on October 8, 2018. The meeting was attended by 200 junior and senior scientists from the entire Israeli RNA community. The organizers were Gil Ast, Eran Hornstein and Yaron Shav-Tal. Keynotes were delivered by Reinhard Lührmann (Max Planck Institute for Biophysical Chemistry, Göttingen, Germany; pictured at right) on “Novel mechanistic insights into the inner workings of the human spliceosome by combined biochemical and Cryo-EM studies” and Dónal O’Carroll (MRC Centre for Regenerative Medicine, The University of Edinburgh, UK) on “RNA modification in development and disease”. The meeting touched upon the many aspects of RNA biology and processing. In addition to the 14 talks by Israeli scientists, there were 16 selected flash talks given by students and postdocs, and a poster session with additional presenters. The support of the RNA Society was highly appreciated and allowed us to present 4 poster prizes to the following students: Rina Ben-El (Technion), Rakefet Ben-Yishay (Bar-Ilan University), Roni Haas (Technion), Shalom Hillel Roth (Bar-Ilan University); and two prizes to these students who gave flash talks: Ruti Balter (Tel-Aviv University), Shani Gal-Oz (Ben-Gurion University).



EMBO Workshop on RNA and Genome Maintenance, Cooperation and Conflict Management

October 10th – 13th, 2018

Mainz, Germany

The major objective of this Workshop was to establish a first-of-a-kind international scientific event focusing on the emerging links between DNA repair and RNA metabolism. Recent discoveries in this field have unambiguously demonstrated the importance of non-coding RNA and RNA metabolism in the maintenance of genome stability. This conference provided a unique platform for scientific exchange between established scientists across both disciplines while also educating and networking young scientists who are beginning to work at the interface of both topics.



The workshop was held over four days and involved 23 speakers, 2 keynote addresses, 15 short talks, and 2 poster sessions. The talks were balanced between RNA biologists and those representing the DNA damage response field and

incorporated 15 talks by early career scientists. The talks were spread over five main sessions - Session 1: RNA regulation and genome integrity, Session 2: Replication-transcription conflicts and R-loops, Session 3: RNA-binding proteins and genome stability maintenance, Session 4: Non-coding RNA in the DNA damage response,

Session 5: Interplay between DNA damage and RNA metabolism. In addition, participants were given the chance to interact with the speakers directly through two dedicated “meet the speaker” sessions as well as during the conference excursion.

The funds kindly provided by the RNA Society were allocated to providing a travel grant for Sofiane Mersaoui from the Lady Davis Institute for Medical Research, Montreal, Canada. Dr Mersaoui was selected from over 60 applicants for travel fellowships and presented an excellent poster detailing her work on BRAC1 and BRCA2 and their triggering of R-Loop formation.

Rustbelt RNA Meeting (RRM) 2018

October 26th and 27th, 2018

Columbus, Ohio, USA

The 20th RRM, an annual conference that brings together scientists from the midwestern states and surrounding regions within the USA to present and discuss new developments in the RNA field, was held at the Renaissance hotel in downtown Columbus. This year's RRM, organized by Co-chairs Guramrit Singh (Ohio State Univ.) and Auinash Kalsotra (Univ. of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign) encompassed the largest meeting in RRM's history. The 325 participants included 149 graduate students, 43 undergraduates, 63 postdoctoral fellows and staff, and 70 principal investigators.

Following a rich tradition, the 2018 meeting highlighted cutting-edge research through 23 oral presentations by undergraduate, graduate and postdoc trainees, as well as 123 poster presentations. The meeting included two talks from junior principal investigators - Dr. Heidi Dvinge (Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison) and Dr. Daniel Dominguez (Univ. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill) - and a Keynote Lecture entitled "RNA processing impacts disease through multiple mechanisms" delivered by Dr. Tom Cooper (Baylor College of Medicine, Houston).

Unique features of the 2018 meeting were two pre-conference workshops: one an undergraduate-focused workshop on “How to prepare graduate school applications” and the other on “RNA Structure and visualization”, and a lunch focusing on career-related issues faced by trainees featuring representatives from multiple scientific career tracks. These events provided a high caliber intensive experience for participants and fostered collaborative interactions between trainees and PIs across traditional disciplinary boundaries. Support from the NSF facilitated the participation of 14 trainees from underrepresented groups and partially defrayed the cost of attendance for all trainees.



Awards for outstanding presentations were made possible through the generous support of the RNA

Society (indicated by italics below) and CSHL Press. The organizers also acknowledge the many academic and corporate sponsors for their generous support.

Oral Presentation Award recipients: Undergraduate students: *Alicia Bao and Lauren Peltier* (OSU), Davidnhan To (Kent State Univ.); Graduate students: *Samantha Dodbele* (OSU), Qinyu Sun (Univ. of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign), Xuan Guo (Case Western Reserve Univ.); Postdocs: *David Mitchell III* (Penn State Univ.), Chaitali Misra (Univ. of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign), Vishal Nanavaty (The Cleveland Clinic). **Poster Presentation Award Recipients:** Undergraduate students: *Whitney Bergman* (Kent State Univ.), Maggie



Thomas (Univ. of Kentucky), Lisa Yoder (Allegheny College), Madeline Su and Anna Chee (Denison Univ.); Graduate students: *Sushant Bangru* (Univ. of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign), Armend Axhemi (CWRU), Manasses Jora (Univ. of Cincinnati), Nathan Howell (OSU.); Postdocs: *Kunal Chatterjee* (OSU), Elizabeth Delaney (The Cleveland Clinic), Jagjit Singh (The Cleveland Clinic), Aiswarya Krishnamohan (Univ. of Chicago).

RNA and Disease

November 18th – 20th, 2018

Uppsala, Sweden

A three-day conference organized by Anders Virtanen, Mary O'Connell and Marie Öhman focusing on different RNA-dominant diseases was held in the Swedish university city of Uppsala. The conference was attended by ~150 delegates. The 7th Lennart Philipson Memorial Lecture was given on the opening evening by Professor Joan Steitz and it was followed by a reception hosted by Uppsala University. On the second day Professor Adrian Krainer presented the SciLifeLab Svedberg Seminar. The majority of the invited speakers were Swedish PIs, many early in their career. Their inspiring presentations demonstrated that the RNA community in Sweden is very vibrant. Approximately 60 poster abstracts were submitted and out of those eight were selected for short talks. This conference was supported by the RNA Society and part of this funding was given as two poster prizes presented to Frances Tilley (INSERM - Institute Imagine, Paris; left) and Maciej Ciesla (Lund University, Lund, Sweden; right). The remainder of the funding was used for a reduction in registration for junior scientists. This conference was also supported by The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences through its Nobel Institute for Chemistry, the SciLifeLab unit in Uppsala, the Swedish RNA Society and MEDGENET Twinning project via the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 692298.



Bay Area RNA Club 2018 Symposium

December 12th, 2018

University of California San Francisco, USA

The Bay Area RNA Club (BARC) held its annual one-day symposium on December 12th, 2018 at Genentech Hall on the UCSF campus and brought together over 280 RNA scientists from surrounding institutions including UC Berkeley, Stanford, UC Santa Cruz, Gladstone, UC Davis, UC Merced, and UCSF. This event provided an unprecedented opportunity for junior researchers to share and discuss data and to showcase new junior faculty from these institutions. In total, the event included 17 talks by students and post-docs, a selected young faculty presentation by Hani Goodarzi (UCSF), a series of lightning talks, and 54 posters. A wide range of topics in RNA biology were presented including non-coding RNAs, RNA helicases, direct RNA editing and sequencing, RNA structure, ribosome function, microRNA processing, RNA in immunity, mRNA decay, transposon and retrotransposon regulation, quantitative approaches for RNA binding models, single-cell RNA-seq, and RNA proximity labelling and localization.

For the first time, organization of the event involved post-docs and included Kathrin Leppek (Stanford), Duygu Kuzuoglu Öztürk (UCSF) and Audrey Lapinaite (UC Berkeley). Working together with senior faculty organizers their participation was



critical in enhancing the organization of the symposium and in teaming up with the RNA Society and Bay Area biotech companies to sponsor poster and oral presentation prizes and a mentoring lunch. Outstanding presentations by post-docs/students were chosen by a scientific committee; awards for oral presentations were awarded to (pictures above, from left to right) Kathrin Leppek (1st place, Stanford), Furqan Fazal (shared 2nd, Stanford) and Alex Padron (shared 2nd, UC Berkeley), and Azra Lari (3rd, UC Davis,). Poster prizes were presented to (pictured right from left to right) Celeste Riepe (1st, UC Berkeley), Andrew Modzelewski (2nd, UC Berkeley), and Bryan Teefy (3rd, UC Davis).

2019 Ribosome Meeting

January 6th – 10th, 2019

Mérida, Mexico

The International Conference “Ribosome 2019: Structure and Function” took place January 6th -10th in Mérida (Mexico). The purpose of the meeting was to promote scientific exchange among researchers working in the field of protein synthesis and inform participants about the recent progress in studying the molecular mechanisms of translation and translation regulation. More than 260 participants attended the meeting organized by Alexander Mankin and Nora Vázquez-Laslop (both from the Univ. of Illinois at Chicago) and Karissa Sanbonmatsu (Los Alamos National Laboratory). Daniel Wilson (Univ. of Hamburg) and Scott Blanchard (Weill-Cornell Medical School) assisted in compiling the scientific program and selecting speakers for 64 oral presentations. The presentations illuminated significant advances in understanding ribosome assembly and function, as well as on the protein-coding capacity of the genome and mechanisms of gene regulation. Additionally, a number of presentations focused on ribosome rescue and its impact on protein synthesis in cells under stress. The role of the ribosome as a drug target and the impact of ribosomopathies on human health were also discussed.

More than 170 posters were presented during two sessions. The meeting closed with the plenary talk of Joachim Frank, the 2017 Nobel Prize winner in Chemistry, whose research has significantly advanced the understanding of the ribosome structure and function and has



advanced methodologies to study other cellular macromolecular complexes. Sponsorship from the RNA Society enabled organizers to award 4 best poster presentations by graduate students (pictured left to right) to Alba Herrero del Valle (University of Bordeaux, France), Celeste Riepe (UC Berkeley, USA), Yousuf Khan (University of Cambridge, UK), and Mariia Klimova (Max Planck Institute for Biophysical Chemistry, Göttingen, Germany). Sponsorship from New England Biolabs made possible 4 poster awards in the post-doctoral category and a grant from the National Science Foundation supported the participation of 22 students.

Upcoming RNA meetings of interest

Upcoming RNA meetings of interest

VIII National RNA Meeting: ptRNA 2019

January 24th and 25th, 2019

Porto, Portugal

We are pleased to invite you to the VIII Portuguese Meeting: ptRNA2019. The meeting will bring together national and international scientists interested in RNA, and aims to promote scientific discussions and synergy in the most recent advances and cutting-edge technologies in RNA, gathering established and young scientists from around the country, and showcase leading international guest speakers. The meeting will feature talks from invited speakers and from young scientists, as well as talks selected from submitted abstracts, a poster session, awards to best poster and short talk, and also activities to promote discussion and interaction between the participants. The topics will include RNA and chromatin dynamics, RNA processing, RNA modifications, RNA stability and decay, non-coding RNAs, tRNAs biology, RNA function in gene expression regulation in health and disease. Please visit the meeting website <https://www.i3s.up.pt/content/event?v=52> for more information.

2019 Swiss RNA Workshop

January 25th, 2019

Bern, Switzerland

The 20th edition of the Swiss RNA Workshop will take place on January 25th, 2019, in Bern with keynote speakers Eric Miska (University of Cambridge, United Kingdom) and Alena Shkumatava (Curie Institute, Paris, France). Up to 15 short oral presentations will be selected from submitted abstracts and a poster session will be held. Organizers include Frédéric Allain, Marc Bühler, Oliver Mühlemann and Françoise Stutz. Funds from the RNA Society will be used to support the attendance of PhD students and postdocs. Meeting website with links to registration can be found at: <http://www.swissrnaws.dcb.unibe.ch/>.

Austrian-Swiss RNA Retreat

January 30th - February 3rd, 2019

Salzburg, Austria

A joint meeting of the Swiss NCCR RNA & Disease and the Vienna RNA Biology Network will be held at Fuschlsee, Austria, from January 30th – February 3rd, 2019 and aims to promote stimulating scientific exchange and collaborations between established and junior scientists from the Vienna and Swiss RNA communities. The meeting will cover a broad spectrum of topics related to RNA biology including RNA structure & folding, RNA Translation, Transcription, Bioinformatics, Regulatory RNAs, non-coding RNAs, RNA processing, RNA surveillance, RNA transport, and Epigenetics & Gene expression. The format of the meeting will provide young scientists the opportunity to present their research to an audience of peers and established principal investigators in their field. The meeting program, size, and location will provide plenty of opportunities for networking and discussions. Registration is open to NCCR RNA & Disease and Vienna RNA Biology Network lab members who received an invitation by the organizers. The funds from the RNA Society are used to support the travel of PhD students. Please contact meeting organizers (Andrea Barta, Michael Jantsch, Oliver Mühlemann, Frédéric Allain) for more information or visit the meeting website at <https://nccr-rna-and-disease.ch/about/network/austrianswissmeeting2019/>.

Keystone Symposia: Transcription and RNA Regulation in Inflammation and Immunity

February 2nd – 5th, 2019

Lake Tahoe, California, USA

Recent technical advances in genomics and single-cell analyses have brought new ideas and perspectives to investigation of the regulation of gene expression, and our understanding of the mechanisms and regulatory networks that operate in the



immune system is advancing at an unprecedented rate. This conference will be important to define the most impactful open questions and future challenges in the field of transcriptional and post-transcriptional control of immune cells, and it will bring together rapidly expanding and evolving communities. Short Talks will be chosen from abstracts submitted by the abstract deadline and posters are accepted until six weeks before the symposium start date. Please visit our website <http://www.keystonesymposia.org/19B1> to view the full meeting program including invited speakers and deadlines for scholarship application, abstract submission and registration.

Fusion Conferences: 6th Nucleic Acids

February 13th – 16th, 2019

Nassau, Bahamas

Understanding processes involving DNA and RNA at the molecular and chemical level is the central theme of this conference, with a marked structural and mechanistic perspective. The meeting will provide a platform for researchers to discover and discuss the latest advances in the field of nucleic acids, DNA and RNA, with exciting opportunities to share and receive feedback on unpublished data. Discussion topics will include DNA replication, DNA repair, DNA recombination, RNA structure and function, Translation and the ribosome, Silencing, CRISPR/Cas and genome editing, Gene regulation and riboswitches, and RNA catalysis. Please visit <https://www.fusion-conferences.com/conference87.php> to view the program and for further information such as student opportunities.

Bermuda Principles – Impact on RNA Processing and Disease

February 20th – 24th, 2019

Southampton, Bermuda

The 3rd annual Bermuda Principles – Impact on RNA Processing and Disease meeting will be held at the Fairmont Southampton Hotel on the exotic island of Bermuda. We are glad to announce that with the support of the RNA Society we are able to offer travel fellowships for early-career researchers (PhD and post-docs) for those who otherwise would not be able to attend the meeting for financial reasons. Applications will be accepted until funds run out. More information can be found at the Bermuda Principles Conference website at <https://www.bermudaprinciples.org> or by contacting the chief organizer - carika.weldon@bermudaprinciples.org.

Keystone Symposia: RNA-Protein Interactions

February 24th – 28th, 2019

Whistler, British Columbia, Canada

This conference will address some long-standing problems as well as emerging paradigms in the field of RNA research. It will bring together leaders in RNA research to brainstorm around novel concepts, share new technology developments, and explore new disease mechanisms. The conference will be highly mechanism-oriented, rather than centering on a specific biological process or disease theme, which will bring together scientists across multiple fields. Since individual regulatory RNAs must enlist specific RBPs to execute their biological functions, coupling the conference with another on “Long Noncoding RNAs: From Molecular Mechanism to Functional Genetics” will thus present a cohesive theme focused on RNA biology and medicine. Short Talks will be chosen from abstracts submitted by the abstract deadline and posters are accepted until six weeks before the symposium start date. Please visit our website <http://www.keystonesymposia.org/19X1> to view the full meeting program including invited speakers and deadlines for scholarship application, abstract submission and registration.

Keystone Symposia: Long Noncoding RNAs – From Molecular Mechanisms to Functional Genetics

February 24th – 28th, 2019

Whistler, British Columbia, Canada

Although emerging evidence points to the critical importance of the long noncoding transcriptome in human physiology and pathology, the clinical potential of long noncoding RNAs (lncRNAs) as therapeutic and prognostic targets remain largely unexplored. This conference aims to communicate the latest available technologies and developing methodologies for lncRNA functional genetics, promote collaborations and new research directions to bridge the already thriving lncRNA mechanistic and basic research to the clinical need for novel, effective diagnostic, prognostic and therapeutic targets,



contribute to attracting the attention of biotech and pharmaceutical industry and clinically-oriented funding agencies to the lncRNA field, and integrate lncRNA research into other biological fields through the joint pairing with the conference on “RNA-Protein Interactions.” Short Talks will be chosen from abstracts submitted by the abstract deadline and posters are accepted until six weeks before the symposium start date. Please visit our website <http://www.keystonesymposia.org/19X2> to view the full meeting program including invited speakers and deadlines for scholarship application, abstract submission and registration.

AsiaTIDES 2019

February 26th – 28th, 2019

Tokyo, Japan

We are pleased to invite you to the AsiaTIDES meeting taking place February 26-28, 2019 in Tokyo, Japan. AsiaTIDES is the only event in Asia bringing together science, technologies, and partners to accelerate oligonucleotide and peptide molecules to market. By joining us, you will meet 250+ oligonucleotide and peptide scientists and executives to fast-track your research to the clinic and beyond by collaborating with leading pharma, biotechs, academia and solution providers from North America, Europe, and Asia. In addition, you will hear case studies, best practices and lessons learned from global oligonucleotide and peptide developers currently in phase 2/3 clinical trials, and ensure product approval by hearing regulatory guidance and roadmaps to successful IND/IMPD submissions from industry leaders. You will also connect with 20+ global technology leaders in the exhibit hall who will assist you with improving your process development, analytical and manufacturing efforts. Hear from world-renowned speakers like Jesper Lau of Novo Nordisk A/S, Thazha Prakash of Ionis Pharmaceuticals, Mano Manoharan or Alnylam Pharmaceuticals, and Chandra Vargeese of WAVE Life Sciences. For more detailed information and to register, visit: www.AsiaTIDSEvent.com. For a \$200 savings, use VIP code ‘RNASociety200’ at checkout.

6th Annual RNA Symposium – The Language of RNA in Disease and Development

March 21st and 22nd, 2019

Albany, New York

The RNA Institute’s 6th Annual RNA Symposium is entitled ‘The Language of RNA in Disease and Development’ and brings together scientific experts, students and industry professionals who conduct basic, applied and translational research in RNA. Topics will include RNA modifications, Toxic RNA, RNA structure, RNA chemistry, RNA phase transition, and non-coding RNA. The RNA Symposium provides a forum for faculty, students and industry representatives to present their findings and network with colleagues. Optional hands-on workshops include Nanoswitch-mediated detection of micro-RNAs, Gradient Fractionation, RNA Simulations, Epitranscriptomics, Sequencing Technologies. Registration open and Abstracts are due January, 25. Details can be found at <https://www.rna.albany.edu/6th-annual-rna-symposium/>

Keystone Symposia: Protein Replacement through Nucleic Acid Therapies

April 7th – 10th, 2019

Steamboat Springs, Colorado, USA

Protein replacement therapy based on recombinant protein has so far been limited to genetic diseases in which the mutated protein acts extracellularly. Nucleic acid therapies such as gene therapy and messenger RNA enable replacement of intracellular proteins, or extracellular proteins too complex to manufacture. This opens the potential to treat many previously unapproachable diseases. After early setbacks in gene therapy, a new generation of therapeutics is showing progress in the clinic. This conference brings these communities together to discuss common challenges and complementarities, providing an opportunity for cross-fertilization. Short Talks will be chosen from abstracts submitted by the abstract deadline and posters are accepted until six weeks before the symposium start date. Please visit our website <http://www.keystonesymposia.org/19L3> to view the full meeting program including invited speakers and deadlines for scholarship application, abstract submission and registration.



RNA Biology 2019

April 11th and 12th, 2019

Bethesda, MD, USA

RNA biology has emerged as one of the most influential areas in modern biology and biomedicine. The discovery of numerous new classes of RNAs and their function in a wide spectrum of biological processes has revolutionized molecular biology and has profound implications for clinical sciences. Key areas of current research include the elucidation of RNA biogenesis and structure, the identification of functions for various classes of RNAs, establishing the role of RNA in disease and the exploration of RNA-based and RNA-targeted therapies. Organized by the [CCR Initiative in RNA Biology](#), this symposium will bring together internationally renowned experts in the field of RNA biology, with the focus on RNA Processing, RNA Structure and Mechanism, Non-classical RNAs, and RNA Therapy. The symposium offers the opportunity to learn more about the current status of RNA biology in development and disease, share research, network with leading figures in the field and discuss the use and implications of these advances for clinical applications. Please visit the website for more information and to register: <https://ncifrederick.cancer.gov/events/conferences/CCRRNABIOLOGY2019>

Keystone Symposia: Small Regulatory RNAs

April 14th – 18th, 2019

Daejeon, South Korea

This conference brings together scientists studying diverse animal and plant model organisms, which will offer an opportunity to understand the mechanism and function of small RNAs in an evolutionary and physiological context. The symposium will also bridge the gaps between fundamental knowledge, clinical needs and technical development by addressing issues such as small RNA involvement in diseases, in vivo delivery of RNA and technical challenges in RNA detection at single-molecule and single-cell levels. This RNA conference is unique in that it focuses on small regulatory RNAs, yet it is highly diverse in research approaches and biological systems. It will serve as a central forum for the small RNA community. Short Talks will be chosen from abstracts submitted by the abstract deadline and posters are accepted until six weeks before the symposium start date. Please visit our website <http://www.keystonesymposia.org/19D7> to view the full meeting program including invited speakers and deadlines for scholarship application, abstract submission and registration.

Keystone Symposia: Positive-Strand RNA Viruses

June 9th – 13th, 2019

Kerry, Ireland

The meeting provides an international forum for research on human, animal, insect, plant and bacterial viruses with +RNA genomes. This group of viruses contains many clinically relevant and well-known pathogens (e.g. poliovirus, hepatitis C virus, Dengue and West Nile virus). Furthermore, the enormous diversity of +RNA viruses in animals and insects, combined with their evolutionary and adaptive potential following a species-jump, poses a threat to the human population as demonstrated by the growing list of emerging viruses such as MERS-CoV, Chikungunya and Zika virus. Detailed insight into the “virophere”, the “virome”, virus evolution, as well as in the molecular details of virus replication and spreading, tissue tropism, and virus recognition by the host immune system is critical to understand virus transmission, viral pathogenesis and to develop novel therapeutic and preventive measures. Short Talks will be chosen from abstracts submitted by the abstract deadline and posters are accepted until six weeks before the symposium start date. Please visit our website at <http://www.keystonesymposia.org/19E2> to view the full meeting program including invited speakers and deadlines for scholarship application, abstract submission and registration.

mRNA Turnover: Mechanisms, Regulation and their Implication in Infectious and Age-Related Disease

June 25th – 28th, 2019

Montréal, Québec, Canada

Co-Chairs Jeff Wilusz (Colorado State University) and Imed Gallouzi (McGill University), along with the Organizing Committee, would like to invite you to partake in this gathering for RNA Stability researchers.

Montréal is the proud host city for the 8th meeting of this international series. In addition to our 33 Invited Guest Speakers, the Scientific Program will include 15 short oral presentations along with 10 flash presentations, which will be selected from submitted abstracts. Two poster presentations along with morning workouts and our not-to-be-missed Gala will



create plenty of opportunities for networking and promote the latest discussions in RNA Stability. Topics will include: Mechanisms of RNA Turnover and Stability, RNA Translation, RNA Localization/Subcellular Localization of RNA Decay, Splicing, Biological Ramifications of Regulated RNA Turnover (including in Aging and Stress Responses), and Biological Implications of 3' UTRs and miRNA Interactions. Important Deadlines include January to February, 2019 for Early Bird Registration and Abstract Submission, March to June 15, 2019 for Regular Registration and Abstract Submission and April 25, 2019 (Abstract Deadline) and June 15, 2019 (Registration Deadline). Sponsorship funds received from the RNA Society will go towards student presentation awards. For more information, please contact Nancy Dufour Zitzmann – Event Coordinator at nancydz@bell.net.

RNA Therapeutics Conference 2019: From Mechanisms to Therapy

June 26th – 28th, 2019

Worcester, MA, USA

We live in an exciting time for the RNA research community. Throughout the latter half of the 20th century, we believed that RNA's primary role was to intermediate between DNA and protein. Over the last three decades, those long-held beliefs have been shattered. From ncRNAs to RNAi, from CRISPR to circular RNAs, we have witnessed astonishing discoveries and equally amazing translation of these breakthroughs to therapy. Come and join the discussion as we explore the era of RNA therapeutics. More information including abstract, registration submission links and how to apply for available family support and travel awards: <https://www.umassmed.edu/RNATx/>. Please note Oral Abstract Deadline: March 1, 2019, Early Registration Deadline: April 1, 2019, and Poster Abstract Deadline: March 15, 2019.

EMBO Workshop: Protein Synthesis and Translational Control

September 4th – 7th, 2019

EMBL Heidelberg, Germany

Translational control is a major focus of attention that extends to many fields, including developmental biology, neurobiology, cell physiology, disease, synthetic and systems biology, among others. In addition to messenger RNA translation, the conference will feature advances in the fields of epitranscriptomics and non-coding RNAs that influence the translation process. Data-rich high-throughput technologies and structural advances will also be central, as they are pushing the field forward in manners that were unthinkable only few years ago, and are helping to create a “systems” view of translation. Please see meeting website at <https://www.embl.de/training/events/2019/TRC19-01/> for more information.

EMBO/EMBL Symposium: The Non-Coding Genome

October 16th – 19th, 2019

EMBL Heidelberg, Germany

This symposium will explore the diverse, dynamic and multifaceted roles of RNA across a spectrum of cellular processes. It will provide an interdisciplinary discussion of the roles of non-coding RNAs in both prokaryotes and eukaryotes, with the aim of enhancing our understanding of gene regulation and function. Please see meeting website: <https://www.embo-embl-symposia.org/symposia/2019/EES19-10/> for more information.



Employment Opportunities

If you are a member and would like to have your employment opportunity listed on this page, follow the instructions on [this page](#) (you must log in to view the page). If you are interested in applying for a position, please contact the person listed in the advertisement. For the full ad and more information, please use the link provided below or see the [RNA Society's Jobs page](#). Sign up for our [jobs feed](#) and receive email notification when we post to this page.

Sign up for our [jobs feed](#) and receive email notification when we post to this page.

PhD Position in RNA Biology and Cancer

Posted on [January 8, 2019](#)

The control of the messenger RNA translation (mRNA) in human cells contributes to the accurate expression of genes in space and time. The overall goal of this PhD project is to investigate the role of an mRNA-binding protein highly expressed in cancer cells on the formation of an RNA nucleoprotein filament as well as its role in translation regulation in cancer cells.

For more information about this project, contact us directly at david.pastre@univ-evry.fr

Postdoc in Bioinformatics in the Gorodkin Lab – Application deadline Feb 10, 2019

Posted on [January 8, 2019](#)

A two-year Postdoc position is available in the Gorodkin lab (<http://ivh.ku.dk/bioinformatics>), The Postdoc position concerns bioinformatics analyses of transcriptomic data from neurodegenerative diseases. The position is available from 1 March 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter.

. All applications must be submitted via the University of Copenhagen's website:

<https://employment.ku.dk/faculty/?show=148717>

POST-DOCTORAL POSITION to study molecular defects in fragile X syndrome and other neurodevelopmental disorders.

Posted on [January 7, 2019](#)

A Post-Doctoral Position is open in the Maquat lab at the University of Rochester Medical Center in Rochester, NY. The goal is to study post-transcriptional defects in axon guidance, synaptic function and other neurologic processes in fragile X syndrome, autism spectrum disorders, and other neurodevelopmental diseases.

Please submit applications to: Liz Leverenz at elizabeth_leverenz@urmc.rochester.edu

Maquat Lab: <https://www.urmc.rochester.edu/labs/Maquat-Lab/>

Postdoctoral Training Position Available in the Laboratory of Yunsun Nam, UT Southwestern Medical Center

Posted on [January 7, 2019](#)

A postdoctoral training position is currently available in the laboratory of Yunsun Nam, in the Cecil H. and Ida Green Center for Reproductive Biology Sciences at UT Southwestern Medical Center to study the RNAs that regulate gene expression, especially those important for human diseases such as cancer. Interested individuals should send a CV, statement of interests, and a list of three references to: Yunsun Nam, Ph.D.

Yunsun.Nam@utsouthwestern.edu

Postdoctoral Research Fellow: Function and Structure of Specialised Ribosomes in *Drosophila melanogaster*

Posted on [January 7, 2019](#)

Applications are invited for a BBSRC-funded postdoctoral research fellow position, to dissect the function and structure of specialised ribosomes. This exciting, timely and transformative research project has the potential to



provide a step-change in our understanding of protein synthesis. To apply:

<https://jobs.leeds.ac.uk/Vacancy.aspx?id=13818&forced=2>

[Postdoctoral Position Available in the Lab of Dr. Paul F. Agris, Duke University Department of Medicine](#)

Posted on [January 3, 2019](#)

A postdoctoral position is available in the Lab of Dr. Paul F. Agris recently established at Duke University Department of Medicine. Applicants are sought with expertise in cellular and molecular biology/biochemistry with experience in RNA and protein expression and mammalian cell culture. Applicants must provide a complete curriculum vitae with publication list, three names and contact information for references, and a cover letter summarizing the experience with RNA molecular/cellular biology. Email: Paul.Agris@Duke.edu
Phone: 919-681-1218

[Two Post-doctoral Positions at Boston University Medical Campus](#)

Posted on [January 3, 2019](#)

Two Postdoctoral Scholar positions are available in the laboratory of Dr. Ruslan Afasizhev at the Department of Molecular and Cell Biology, Boston University Medical Campus. Our NIH-funded program focuses on mechanisms of RNA processing in trypanosomes. To apply, please send a letter of intent, CV and contact information for three references to ruslana@bu.edu.

[Post-doctoral Position, Group of Dr. Giulia Palermo University of California Riverside \(UCR\)](#)

Posted on [December 12, 2018](#)

Post-doctoral position is available in the group of Dr. Giulia Palermo at the University of California Riverside (UCR) in computational biophysics. The appointee will apply a variety of computational methods, spanning from conventional Molecular Dynamics (MD) simulations, enhanced sampling methods, ab-initio MD and emerging cryo-electron microscopy (cryo-EM) refinement/processing methods. To apply, please email your CV and contact information for 2-3 references to gpalermo@engr.ucr.edu More information:

<https://palermolab.com>

[Cancer Postdoctoral Fellowship Position, National Cancer Institute](#)

Posted on [December 10, 2018](#)

The Protein-Nucleic Acid Interaction Section in Structural Biophysics Laboratory, National Cancer Institute, invites applications for a Cancer Postdoctoral Fellowship position. The postdoctoral fellow recruited for the position will work on exciting RNA biotechnology and cancer immunotherapy projects and have opportunities to train and learn multiple techniques for the research projects. To apply, please send a cover letter and a curriculum vitae. In addition, please arrange three reference letters to be sent to wangyunx@mail.nih.gov on behalf of applicants.

[Faculty Positions Available, Center for RNA Biomedicine, funded by the \\$150M University of Michigan Biosciences Initiative](#)

Posted on [December 10, 2018](#)

The newly founded Center for RNA Biomedicine solicits applications for faculty positions at the assistant professor level, but appointment at a more senior level is possible for applicants with suitable experience. The faculty position will be tenure track or tenured with a university year appointment starting September 1, 2019 or January 1, 2020.

For more information, contact us directly at mjerant@umich.edu or 734-615-8213

Learn more about the Biosciences Initiative at University of Michigan: biosciences.umich.edu



[RNA Biochemist position\(s\), Sixfold Bioscience, London](#)

Posted on [December 3, 2018](#)

At Sixfold we're building a better way to deliver cures and need people to Lead the development and optimization of RNA for therapeutic use. We see the huge potential of gene therapies being limited to how effectively they can be systemically delivered in people. **Find out more** see: <https://www.sixfold.bio>
Informal enquiries email: careers@sixfold.bio To apply: <http://bit.ly/sixfold-job-app>

[Postdoctoral Fellow Position Available, Department of Biomedicine in the group of Professor Ruth Brenk](#)

Posted on [December 3, 2018](#)

In the group of Professor Ruth Brenk (<http://www.uib.no/en/rg/brenk>) a full-time (100 %) position as Postdoctoral Fellow is available for a period of 3 years. The position is part of the project "Exploration of the TPP riboswitch as a new target for antibiotics" More information can be found here: <https://www.jobbnorge.no/ledige-stillinger/stilling/161277/postdoctoral-fellow-3-years-for-hit-discovery-for-riboswitches>

[Ph.D. Studentships, Dept of Molecular Genetics, University of Groningen \(the Netherlands\)](#)

Posted on [November 29, 2018](#)

Applications are invited for two 4-year Ph.D. studentships, starting April 2019, in the newly established research group of Dr. Danny Incarnato (embedded in the department of Molecular Genetics, headed by Prof. Dr. Oscar Kuipers) at the University of Groningen (the Netherlands), to study in vivo RNA folding dynamics. Please refer to the official job announcement of the University of Groningen with further details on the appointment and remuneration and apply online at: <https://www.rug.nl/about-us/work-with-us/job-opportunities/overview?details=00347-02S0006PLP>

[Seeking an Experienced RNA Computational Biologist with a strong RNA biology background](#)

Posted on [November 26, 2018](#)

Panorama Medicine is seeking an experienced RNA Computational Biologist with a strong RNA biology background to analyze large-scale RNA data at their Philadelphia office. Interested applicants should send a cover letter and a CV to hr@panoramamedicine.com.

[Postdoctoral position at the Very High Field NMR Center \(CRMN\) in Lyon](#)

Posted on [November 16, 2018](#)

Project: The work will focus on visualizing RNA conformational dynamics and interactions at very high resolution using NMR spectroscopy. This position is provided in the context of a recently accepted ERC project and will be centered on the development of new RNA synthesis to obtain uniquely informative RNA for NMR spectroscopy.

Application: Interested candidates are welcome to contact me for further information. Application should be submitted via the web interface: <http://bit.ly/2BaYm8t> and include a cover letter and a CV with a publication list and three references.

[Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Cardiac RNA Biology \(University of Illinois at Chicago\)](#)

Posted on [November 14, 2018](#)

A postdoctoral position is immediately available in the laboratory of Dr. Sang-Ging Ong in the Department of Pharmacology and the Center for Stem Cell and Regenerative Medicine at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Using mouse models, patients' samples, and patient-specific induced pluripotent stem cells, the Ong lab seeks to understand the molecular and biological mechanisms underlying various cardiovascular diseases through cellular, genetic, and biochemical approaches. Interested candidates should submit a CV with the names of three referees to Dr. Sang-Ging Ong (sangging@uic.edu). The position is open immediately until filled.



Lab Manager, University of Michigan

Posted on [November 14, 2018](#)

Our laboratory studies basic mechanisms in RNA biology and RNA defects in neurologic diseases. We are particularly interested in how RNA structure and sequence regulate cell function. Applicants with at least 5 years of work experience in a molecular biology laboratory and familiarity with bioinformatics are required. Candidates should have a Ph.D. or M.D. Please send a cover letter, curriculum vitae, including names and contact information for at least three references to: Vivian G. Cheung, MD HHMI/ University of Michigan vgcheung@umich.edu

Postdoc Position: Bioinformatics of Long Noncoding RNA Functional Elements

Posted on [November 8, 2018](#)

The “Genomics of Long Non-Coding RNAs in Disease” Laboratory (GOLD Lab) at the University of Bern has an opportunity for a Bioinformatics Postdoc. The Project: Understanding how long noncoding RNA (lncRNA) functions are encoded in their sequence is a great challenge in biology. Our goal is to discover, classify and characterize lncRNA functional elements by means of an integrative bioinformatic / experimental approach. For more information about us: gold-lab.org / twitter.com/goldlab_bern To apply: Please send a motivation letter, publications list, list of references, and CV to rory.johnson@dbmr.unibe.ch with subject title: “Job application Bioinformatics Postdoc”. Informal enquiries are also welcome.

Postdoctoral Position, Dr. Zhipeng Lu lab at USC School of Pharmacy, Dept of Pharmacology and Pharmaceutical Sciences

Posted on [November 7, 2018](#)

A postdoctoral position is immediately available in Dr. Zhipeng Lu lab at USC School of Pharmacy, Department of Pharmacology and Pharmaceutical Sciences. Our research is focused on “RNA machines” in living cells

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1GXibPeUUGQ>). A more complete description of our science can be found at <http://zhipenglulab.org>. To apply, please send a cover letter discussing your interests in the position, your CV, and contact information for three references to zhipengl@usc.edu.

Postdoctoral position to study RNA-protein complexes and non-coding RNA in New York

Posted on [November 5, 2018](#)

Postdoctoral positions are available immediately in the laboratory of Dr. Alexander Serganov at New York University School of Medicine. We are looking for enthusiastic, highly motivated and creative individuals with a strong interest in applying multidisciplinary approach and cutting-edge methodology to study RNA-mediated gene expression control.

Interested applicants should submit a detailed CV, brief statement of research interests with description of previous research experience and contact information (email addresses and telephone numbers) of three references to Dr. Alexander Serganov at alexander.serganov@NYUMC.org. Consideration of submitted applications will start immediately and continue until positions are filled.

