

RNA Together



Dr Kehinde Ross

Chair of the RNA Society Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee

Reader in Molecular and Cellular Biology, School of Pharmacy and Biomolecular Sciences

Diagnostics and Therapeutics Interest Group Leader, Institute for Health Research

Liverpool John Moores University o.k.ross@ljmu.ac.uk X @KehindeRoss

RNA Together



Kehinde Ross



Mrityunjay (Jay) Gupta



Neena Grover



Natoya Peart



Ivan Martinez

RNA Society Annual Meeting DEI Themes

- RNA Everywhere All at Once: From Awareness to Action (2023)
- Creating and Preserving a Welcoming Environment (2024)
- RNA for All (2025)
- RNA Together (2026)

RNA Society
Annual Meeting

RNA Society
Mission

Broader
Academic
Ecosystem

RNA Society Annual Meeting



YOU SAID	WE DID
Robust scientific discussion should be blended with respectful behaviour.	The RNA Society now has a Code of Conduct on our website https://www.rnasociety.org/society-code-of-conduct .
Support for parents with young children is appreciated.	The RNA Society Childcare, Dependent-Care and Disability Allowance Program continues to be the preferred mechanism
More support for the LGBTQIA+ would be appreciated.	We now offer Affinity Zones covering First Time Attendee, LGBTQIA, neurodiverse and primarily undergraduate institution (PUI) communities.
In relation to neurodiversity.	
More effort could be made to make new attendees feel welcome.	

Creating and preserving a welcoming environment

Raising Awareness: Creating resources that deliver RNA knowledge to **Affinity Group Coffee Sessions**

- First Time Attendees
- Neurodiverse scientists
- LGBTQIA
- RNA Educators (e.g. primarily undergraduate institutions; post-1992 universities)
- Plant RNA Biologists

Action #1: join the Affinity Group session or stop by to say “Hello”

When: Wednesday, Thursday and Friday AFTERNOON refreshment breaks

Creating and preserving a welcoming environment

- Remember that there are people who might have come to the RNA Society meeting on their own
- **Action #2:** If someone is on their own during coffee, invite them to join your group/conversation





About the
Society

Membership

Awards

Spotlights

Meetings

Salons

Diversity



Society Code of Conduct

Details are at: <https://www.rnasociety.org/about-the-society/society-code-of-conduct/>

Commitment to Respect and Inclusion

The Code of Conduct ensures a safe, welcoming environment promoting mutual respect and inclusion among all event participants.

Zero Tolerance for Harassment

Discrimination, harassment, or intimidation of any kind are strictly prohibited to protect participants and foster comfort.

Encouraging Positive Engagement

Participants are encouraged to collaborate openly, support early-career scientists, and engage in respectful, constructive discussions.

Clear Reporting and Accountability

Safe and confidential reporting procedures ensure accountability, with protections against retaliation and fair investigation processes.

RNA Society Mission



RNA Society Value Statements

Adopted by RNA Society Council, March 17, 2026

Value statements serve to define the RNA Society's core principles, acting as a compass to guide behavior, culture, and decision-making. These pillars are not listed in order of importance; all pillars are considered to have equal weight and priority.

1. Innovation, discovery, and knowledge

The RNA Society values the relentless pursuit of scientific discovery and the acquisition of new knowledge. We believe in supporting the scientific ecosystem that drives progress.

2. Collegiality, collaboration, engagement, and education

The RNA Society prioritizes sharing of the collective wisdom and experience of our members with each other and within the broader scientific and public communities. We support and promote science education and the open exchange of ideas.

3. Integrity and accountability

The RNA Society values rigorous and reproducible science practices. We oppose the manipulation of data and the proliferation of false and inaccurate information.

4. Respect, equity, and inclusiveness

The RNA Society values the dignity, worth, and contributions of all individuals within the scientific community.

5. Sustainability

The RNA Society values the long-term sustainability and health of the planet and the fostering of biological systems.

Collegiality, collaboration, engagement, and education
The RNA Society prioritizes sharing of the collective wisdom and experience of our members with each other and within the broader scientific and public communities. We support and promote science education and the open exchange of ideas.



Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Fund

The Society is [committed](#) to the principles of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and to creating a community and culture in which they are embedded across all activities.

This fund provides support for Members to run activities that address these principles.
£1000



Inclusion and Diversity fund:
£5000



AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR BIOCHEMISTRY AND
MOLECULAR BIOLOGY

Science ▾ Advocacy ▾ Professional Development ▾

Education

Home > Home > Science outreach > Science Outreach and Communication Grant



Science Outreach and Communication Grant

\$1000

The 2026 application will open in October.

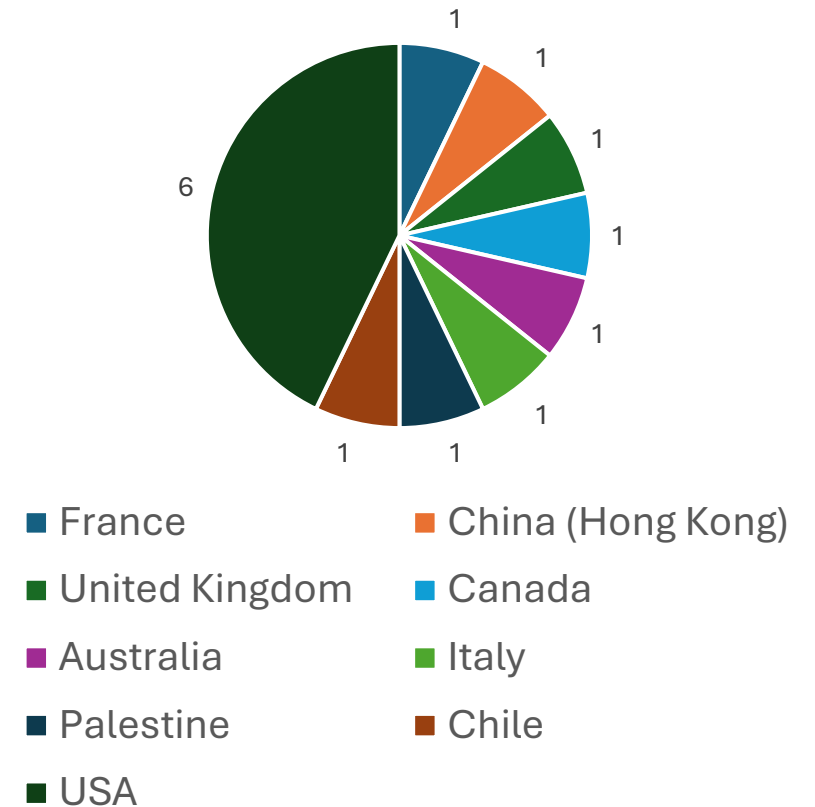


EDI and Outreach Grants provide grants of up to £1,000 to strengthen inclusion and participation within the molecular biosciences.

Action #3: Apply for funding!

RNA for All™

- **Launched in partnership with the RNA Society Education Committee**
- **Raising Awareness:** Creating resources that deliver RNA knowledge to new and emerging RNA science communities.
- **Outreach and Recruitment:** Developing and implementing strategies to attract new stakeholders to the world of RNA science, including but not limited to partnerships with community organizations or schools.
- **Networking:** Establishing programs that connect individuals and communities with RNA-focussed institutions for guidance and knowledge exchange. For example, programs with public engagement officers at institutions with RNA-related activities may enhance the public's appreciation of how scientific advances improve lives.
- **Youth Engagement:** Enabling young people to access RNA science.
- **Accessibility:** Improving support and accessibility for RNA scientists with disabilities



SPREADING THE MESSAGE

Notre Dame's 'RNA For All' Initiative



University of Notre Dame 'Spreading the Message'

This project seeks to lower barriers to entry into RNA science for students, educators, and early-career researchers who lack formal RNA training. **By combining visual storytelling, public exhibitions, public lectures, and short educational videos**, the project will provide multiple entry points tailored to different learning styles and levels of prior knowledge.



Dr. Saurja DasGupta
Assistant Professor of
Chemistry and Biochemistry



Dr. Kate Biberdorf
Professor for the Public
Understanding of Science



Taylor Opolka



Natalie Kotlin

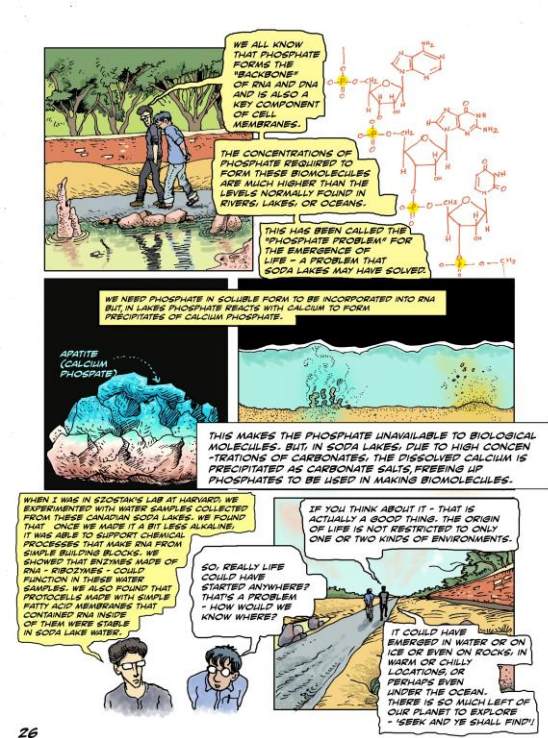
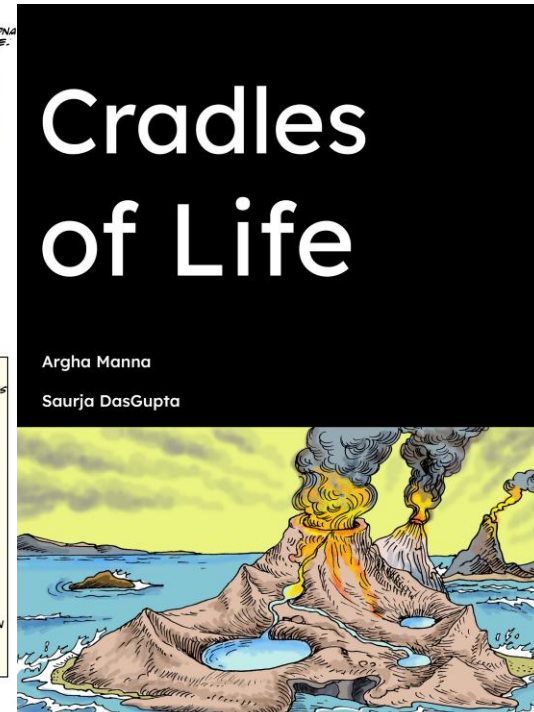
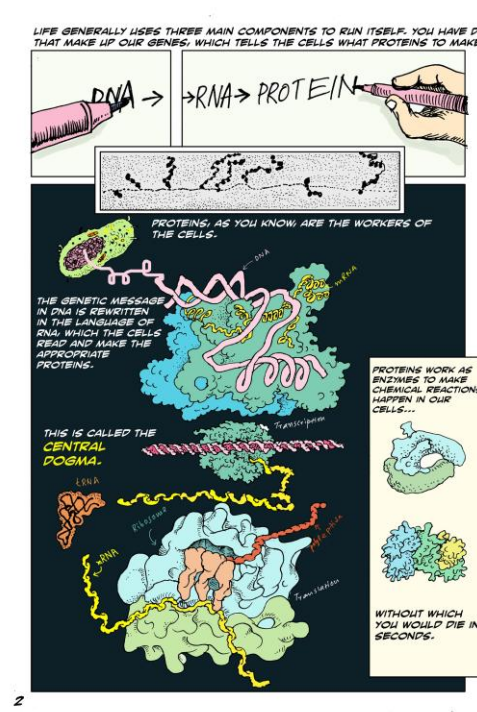
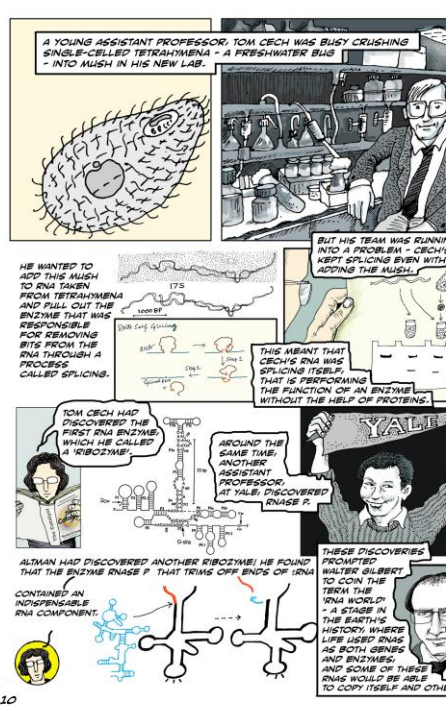
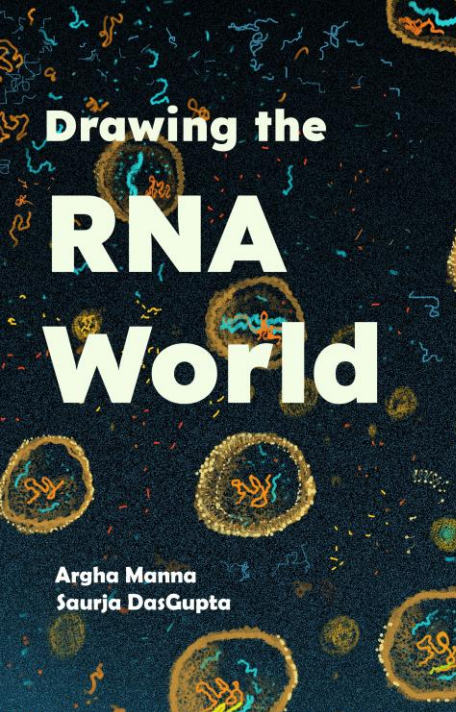


Nicholas Colorito

Planned and ongoing programming

- Public Lectures: 1) South Bend Public Library (St. Joe County Public Library), 2) Fulbright IEA lecture to Fulbright awardees (administrators at emerging and established academic institutions in India) **COMPLETED**
- Science-Comics Exhibitions : 1) 'Cradles of Life', South Bend Public Library (St. Joe County Public Library) **COMPLETED**, 2) 'Drawing the RNA World', Beauty of Understanding Showcase at Notre Dame (public event scheduled on June 4)
- Nobel Acts in RNA Science: A short (~90 s) video series on Nobel-winning discoveries in RNA Science. (To be launched in August 1 – RNA Day). This will include original artwork and student speakers.

Notre Dame's 'RNA For All' initiative and RNA Salon (ND RNA) work synergistically for maximum impact. sites.google.com/nd.edu



Some examples of the exhibition panels and exhibitions



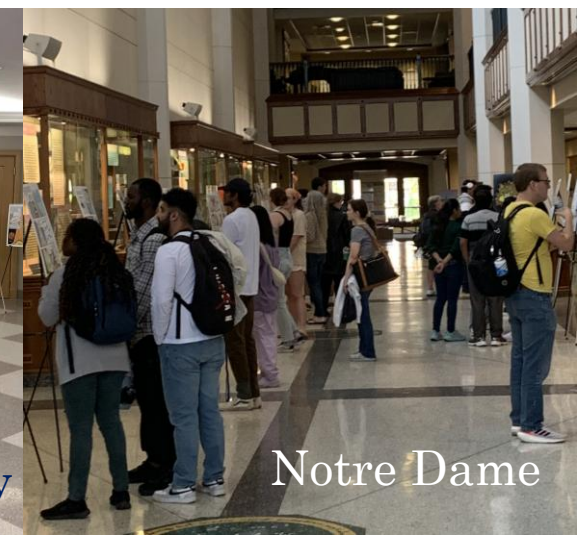
IISER Pune, India



IISc Bangalore, India



Sound Bend
Public Library



Notre Dame

Name and institution: Crystal Young-Erdos, Associate Professor of Chemistry & Biochemistry at Eckerd College, Florida (I'm a team of one! My pictures is below.)

Project Title: Molecular Science for Growing Scientists

Motivation/vision: It's never too early to excite our next generation of (RNA) scientists! This project expands ongoing molecular science efforts at an elementary school in a socioeconomically challenged neighborhood in St. Petersburg, FL. Teaching these ~375 elementary students to be scientists is accomplished through cooperative activities, hypothesis-driven experiments, and dissemination of their knowledge through the school's specialty: cultural arts.



Worksheet for
graphing M&Ms
with
kindergarteners

 **M&M Graphing #1**
How many of each color are in your bag?

Graph of your data:

8					
7					
6					
5					
4					
3					
2					
1					

Number of M&Ms

RED YELLOW GREEN ORANGE BROWN BLUE

Number of each color:

Which color had the greatest number? (circle one)

RED YELLOW GREEN ORANGE BROWN BLUE

Which color had the least number? (circle one)

RED YELLOW GREEN ORANGE BROWN BLUE

Worksheet for
dissolving candy
canes with third
graders

 **Candy Cane Science**

Experiment Predictions
How does the surface area of candy canes impact their dissolving rates?

Some definitions:
Surface area:

Dissolving:

Rate:

We are going to compare whole vs. broken vs. crushed candy canes.
Let's make hypotheses!

Which do you predict will dissolve the fastest? Why?

Which do you predict will dissolve the slowest? Why?



**Surface area and
dissolving rates
with third
graders**



**Lego volcanoes
with mixed ages
cluster.**

**Lego volcanoes
with mixed ages
cluster.**



**Rainbow
reactions
(vinegar + baking
soda) with
kindergarteners.**



**Dissolving
M&Ms to make
rainbows with
kindergarteners.**



**Graphing M&Ms
by color with
kindergarteners.**



UNIVERSIDAD
DE CHILE

Epitranscriptome Workshop: Modifying the chilean RNA

Workshop targeted towards undergraduate and master's students in biological sciences

community

Goals

1. To promote RNA research among early career scientists
2. To strengthen the chilean and south american RNA community
3. To communicate the importance of RNA research to adults and children.

Theoretical and practical sessions

- Theoretical sessions led by chilean PIs researching the epitranscriptome
- Keynote lectures with chilean speakers as well as from South America.
- Practical sessions covered by senior PhD students/postdocs

Social outreach activities for local public

- A wet lab experience with school students
- An open public science fair to celebrate RNA international day.



Plaza Ñuñoa, Santiago, Chile

EPITRANSCRIPTOME COURSE & WORKSHOP: MODIFYING THE CHILEAN RNA COMMUNITY

JULY 21-24, 2026

FREE REGISTRATION

FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS,
UNIVERSIDAD DE CHILE, SANTIAGO

SAVE
THE DATE

Key Topics:

- Introduction to RNA world
- mRNA modifications and its impact on translation
- Modifications of tRNA in different biological contexts
- Emerging roles of lncRNA and snRNA

PRONTO MÁS
INFORMACIÓN

¡ Síguenos !

RNA4all_Chile

Dudas al rnaforallchile@gmail.com

Patrocinan



Facultad de Ciencias
UNIVERSIDAD DE CHILE



Instituto Milenio
INMUNOLOGÍA E
INMUNOTERAPIA

Organizing Team:

- Dr. Assaf Katz (Faculty of Medicine, UChile)
- Dr. (c) Valentina Muñoz-Madrid (Faculty of Sciences, UChile)
- Dr. (c) Deborah Cuper (Faculty of Sciences, UChile)
- Maximiliano Véliz (Faculty of Sciences, UChile)
- Dr. (c) Juan Pablo Silva (Faculty of Chemical Sciences, UChile)

Confirmed speakers (for now):

- Dr. Assaf Katz (Faculty of Medicine, Uchile)
- Dr. Álvaro Glavic (Faculty of Sciences, UChile)
- Dr. Ricardo Soto-Rifo (Faculty of Medicine, UChile)
- Dr. Roberto Munita (Faculty of Chemical Sciences, Uchile)
- Dr. Rodrigo Aguilar (Faculty of Medicine, Universidad Andrés Bello)
- Dr. Sebastián Riquelme-Barrios (Faculty of Biology, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München)
- Dr. Jenny Fiedler (Faculty of Chemical Sciences, UChile)
- Dr. Aracelly Gaete-Argel (Faculty of Medicine, UChile)

Broader Academic Ecosystem

Action 4: Continue inclusive actions that are allowed

(67) DEI Activities Still Legal in USA #Shorts #BetterAllies – YouTube

- Diversifying networks
 - Pay equity reviews
 - Structured interviews*
 - Karen Catlin, Better Allies
- *Provide the questions in advance?
- Supports neurodiverse scientists



Diversifying Networks: The RNA Society Speaker Referral List

The **RNA Society Speaker Referral List** is a resource from which conference organizers, seminar inviters and educators can easily identify potential speakers with expertise in a wide range of RNA science topics and as a means **to ensure researchers from diverse geographical locations and backgrounds are considered**

[Back to RNA Society](#)[Back to RNA Society site](#)

RNA Society Speaker Referral List

[Join the](#)

Join the RNA Society Speaker Referral List

[View the Speaker List](#)

Show 10 entries									
Search:									
Speaker	Career Stage	Institution	Country	Research Keywords	Website	Gender	Race	Special Need	LGBTQ
Aaron Hoskins	Full Professor	University of Wisconsin-Madison	United States	single molecule, spliceosome, splicing, biophysics	https://hoskins.biochem.wisc.edu	Male	White		Gay
Adam Norris	Assistant Professor	University of California, Riverside	United States	Splicing, Neurons, Alternative Splicing, C. elegans, RNA binding proteins	thenorrislab.org	Male	White		Not Applicable
Aikaterini Gatsiou	Assistant Professor	Lancaster University	United Kingdom	RNA modifications, RNA editing, gene expression, human biology, human disease, mRNA vaccines, single molecule multi-omics, clinical genomics, immunology, blood vessel biology, inflammation, precision medicine	https://www.research.lancs.ac.uk/portal/en/people/aikaterini-gatsiou(b734198c-8161-4a14-b2f7-32abe71c223a).html	Female	Prefer not to disclose		Not Applicable
AJ te Velthuis	Assistant Professor	Princeton University	United States	Influenza virus, RNA polymerase, innate immune, aberrant RNA	https://tevelthuislab.scholar.princeton.edu	Male	White	None	Not Applicable

Please add your name and contact information below to sign up for the RNA Society Speaker Referral List. The list will be viewable as a resource from which conference organizers, seminar inviters and educators can easily identify potential speakers with expertise in a wide range of RNA science topics and as a means to ensure researchers from diverse geographical locations and backgrounds are considered. Inclusion on the RNA Society Speaker Referral List is intended to increase your scientific profile and help expand the reach of RNA research globally. Only current members of the RNA Society can add their name to the list and profiles will be reviewed annually.

First Name*

Last Name*

Email*

RNA Society Membership Number (must be current member to register)*

Research Keywords (please separate topics by a comma)*

Career Stage

Institution*

Country



We have 190 speakers but we want more!

Action 5: Reduce Bias in Research Opportunities

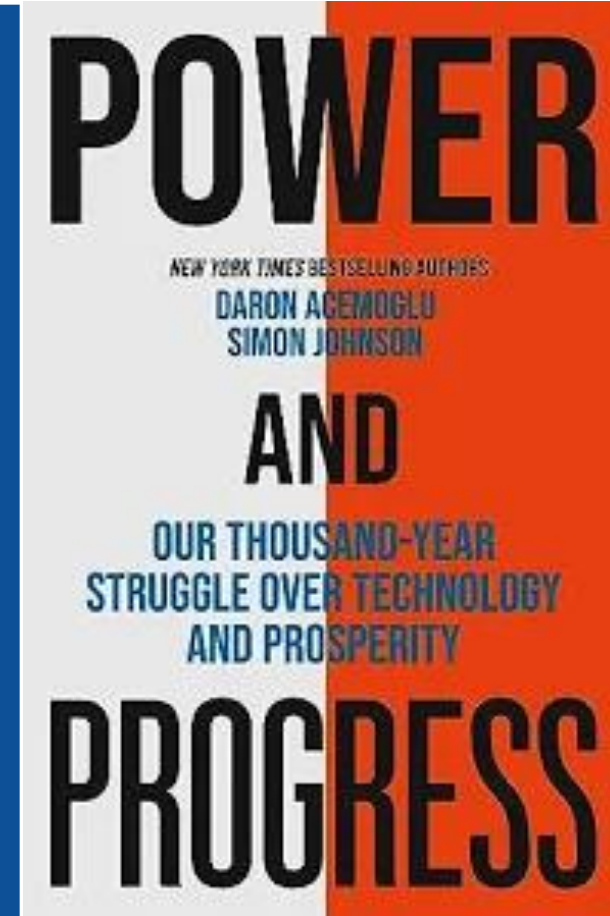
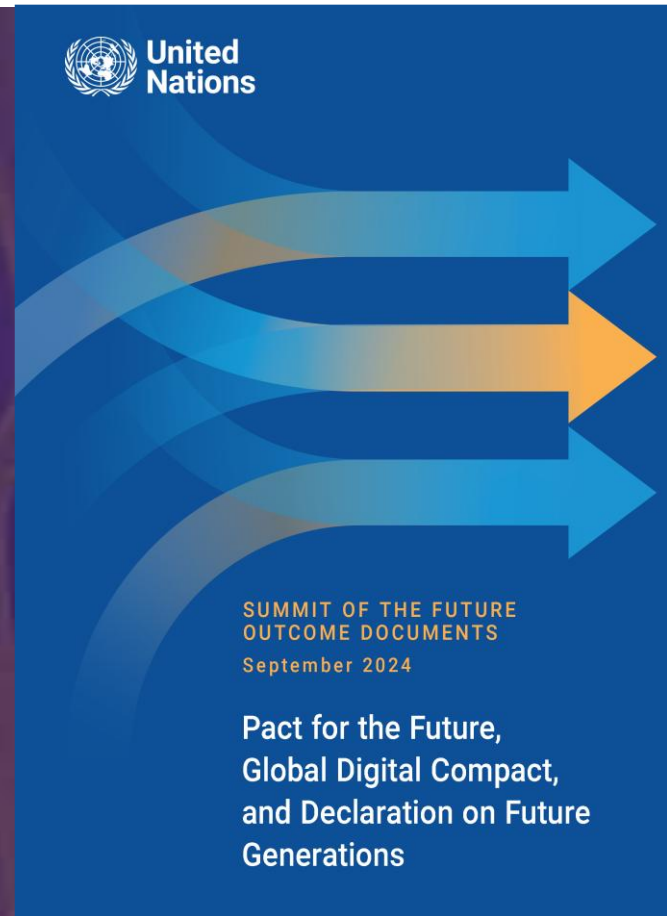
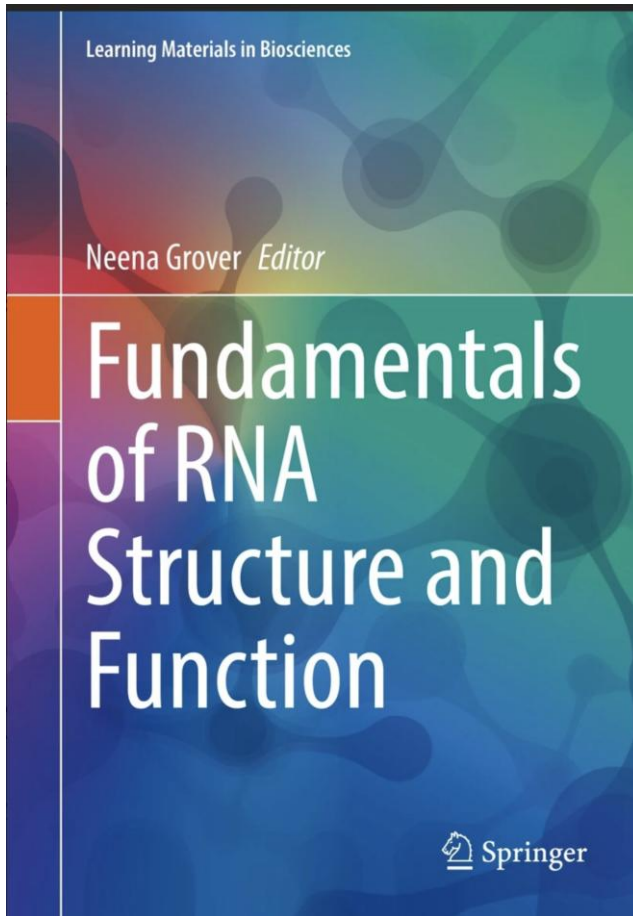
- Access to research positions is often informal and can unintentionally favour certain students.

Therefore:

- Advertise research assistant positions openly to all students.
- Use transparent selection criteria for internships or lab placements.
- **Encourage students** who might not usually apply
- **Impact:**
Improves fair access to research and career development opportunities.



Action 6: Share Materials that Inspire!



The RNA Society Present in ABRCMS

FINAL PROGRAM



ABRCMS 2023

November 15–18 | Phoenix, AZ

ANNUAL BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH CONFERENCE
FOR MINORITIZED SCIENTISTS



www.abrcms.org



NOVEMBER 13 – 16 | PITTSBURGH, PA | CONFERENCE PROGRAM



**Build Community,
Share Your Research,
Fuel Your Passion for STEM**



Sujatha Jagannathan
University of Colorado



ABRCMS 2025

November 19–22, 2025 | San Antonio, TX



Summary

Action 1: join the Affinity Group session or stop by to say “Hello”

Action 2: If someone is on their own, invite them to join your group/conversation

Action 3: Apply for funding to support activities that promote RNA for all

Action 4: Continue inclusive actions that are allowed in your context

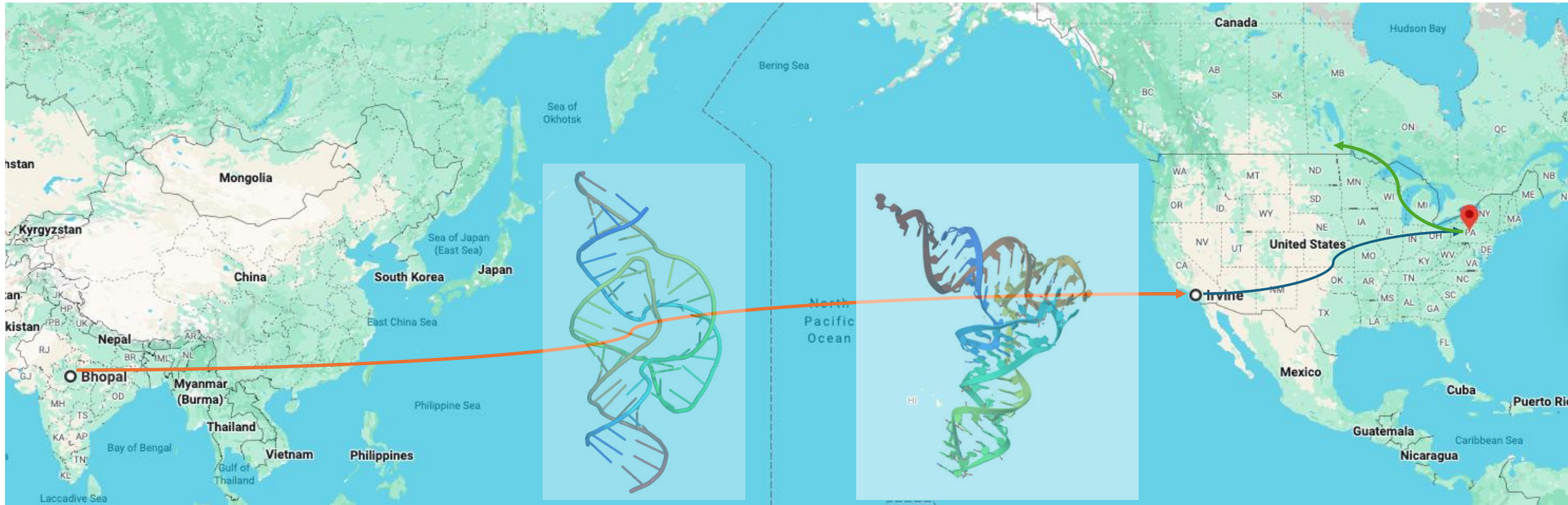
Action 5: Reduce Bias in Research Opportunities

Action 6: Share materials that support and inspire others

Remember: Affinity Group coffee sessions

Wednesday, Thursday and Friday AFTERNOON refreshment breaks

Introduction – Mrityunjay (Jay) Gupta



My EDI interests –

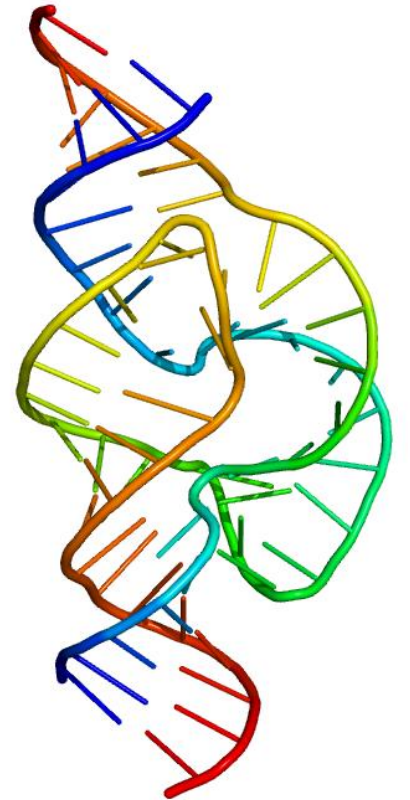
1. Inclusive environments for international scholars
2. Reducing barriers for entry into RNA research for all

Past experiences –

1. Peer mentorship with international graduate students
2. UG research mentorship with diverse set of students

Tips for inclusive research environment for international scholars

- Language is only a tool for communication – patience with accents and synonyms goes a long way
 - Provide resources for understanding new science and terms (or jargons)
- International students may celebrate different festivals – be considerate and take an interest in their culture
 - Examples – Chinese new year, Diwali, Eid, Passover etc.
- Last but not the least – be approachable and share your enthusiasm for RNA!



Empathetic Leadership

Neena Grover
Professor, Chemistry and Biochemistry
Colorado College

RNA Together
RNA Meeting, Montreal, 2026

People First

Success depends on building up

- All humans appreciate being recognized for what they can do

Students (undergraduate, graduate) and postdocs need reinforcement in their strengths before being told what they could do better.

- *Inclusion and positive reinforcement matter.*

Life comes first – our purpose is to live a meaningful life first

- Good science becomes great science if we feel valued

RNA Educators

Communities are important

Salons serve as a community
(RNA Salons, RNA@PUI salon)

Local, regional, national,
international partnerships are
important

RNA Community is getting bigger –
beyond a few big-name labs – lets
support everyone

Building the tools of education
together

- Link between RNA Education and DEI community
- Choose both - education and research - they go hand-in-hand
- Be a better teacher – don't undervalue your growth as a teacher

Define Success Via Meaningful Work

Success is more than
recognition, papers, and
funding

Our impact on each other
matters

Be kind first

Make the time for a full life

Include your family

Expand the definition of
life and work

Don't use busyness as an
excuse for being absent
from important things

Model good behavior

RNA Together

Questions?

