



Chemical Institute of Canada | *For Our Future*
Institut de chimie du Canada | *Pour notre avenir*

Chair's Report D. Grant Allen

I'm pleased to report on the activities of the Board of the Chemical Institute of Canada (CIC) for the past year (2019-2020).

At its core, the CIC exists to provide strategic guidance and oversight to the National Office of the CIC through its Executive Director (ED), so that it can effectively serve the members of the three constituent societies, the Canadian Society for Chemistry (CSC), Canadian Society for Chemical Engineering (CSChE) and the Canadian Society for Chemical Technology (CSCT). The CIC Board consists of a Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, the three society Presidents and the Past Chair (non-voting). This report will highlight a few CIC activities, realizing that most of the activities of the CIC reside within the three constituent societies and are therefore included in the reports of each society.

Overall, it's been an exciting year where we have moved forward on several initiatives and where we have also faced several challenges, not the least of which is the COVID19 crisis that we are currently in. In particular, the COVID19 pandemic necessitated the cancellation of the Winnipeg CCCE conference. I was very saddened by this cancellation knowing the impact it had on our members, the CSC Board, the conference organizing committee and the many people who had worked so hard to put the conference together. In addition, this year we addressed important and difficult financial and Human Resource related issues for the CIC, which revealed significant shortcomings in the way in which we operate as a collective. Despite these challenging times, I remain optimistic that the CIC and its constituent societies will continue to thrive in the service of our members.

CIC Priorities

At last year's AGM we launched the [CIC strategic plan](#) that the Board had been developing the previous year under the leadership of CIC Chair, Neil Burford. We continue to be guided by our vision, to be "a fully interconnected Canadian chemical sciences community that works together for the advancement of understanding, for sustainability, and for national prosperity." It continues to be our guide for a cohesive strategy amongst the CIC and its societies as we seek to become more relevant and valued in the chemicals sciences and engineering community in Canada.

Our specific priorities for the past year were: 1) Membership (growth); 2) Financial Sustainability and, 3) Capacity Building. Growing membership continues to be a priority for all of our constituent societies, one which requires even more focus in the coming year. With regards to financial stability, the National Office went through significant and difficult staff restructuring designed to reduce our structural financial deficit while also providing the flexibility to enhance our skills and capacity needed to meet the changing needs of the organizations. In addition, we managed to get out of a very costly long-term office lease through subletting our Ottawa Office and taking up a much smaller footprint and less costly one in the same building to maintain a corporate address. With the sublet effective April 1, the staff team migrated to a virtual office and when the COVID19 pandemic developed, the office was already fully functioning in a virtual mode. Our need to conserve cash will see the

office remain virtual through to the end of 2020. We have a plan to reopen the Ottawa Office in 2021 as COVID and financial conditions allow.

Moving forward, the CIC Board, in consultation with our constituent societies, has identified the following four priorities for focus in 2020 into 2021:

1. Financial Sustainability
 - a. Continuous Improvement of Operational workflows
 - i. Optimize office operations including financial systems
 - ii. Cost reductions to conserve our equity during and post the COVID19 pandemic
 - iii. Seeking new forms of revenue including government support for not-for-profits
 - b. Non-membership revenue planning in the new post-COVID reality
2. Membership Engagement
 - a. Member Resource Groups (MRGs)
 - i. Operationalise with policy development
 - ii. Expand portfolio of MRGs
 - b. Membership Engagement Strategy and Network System Development
 - i. Connecting virtually Subject Divisions, Local Sections, Student Chapters, MRGs to engage outside of conferences
3. Conferences/Events
 - a. CIC ViRTUAL; providing virtual options for current (e.g., CCEC in Ottawa, Oct 2020) and future conferences
 - b. Ensure success of current and future annual society conferences including exploring new models
4. Governance Task Force
 - a. To review the structure and organizations within the CIC and identify and recommend functional changes which could improve operational efficiencies, reduce decision making times, streamline costs, clarify accountability, and bring a renewed and refreshed operating model to the organizations.

Active involvement of our members and Boards across the three societies will be essential to insure success in all of these areas. The first three priorities will be 'operationalized' by the National Office under the leadership of the Executive Director (Ian Jobe), working with our Society Boards and members and reporting to the CIC Board. The fourth item will involve a separate task force that will take a hard look at the way we are organized with a goal of providing a simpler, more transparent and responsive structure that will provide effective services to all our members. Then Board feels that the time has come for us to rethink how do things to ensure our long-term success.

Bylaws Changes

We are proposing two bylaw changes for the CIC for approval at the 2020 AGM. The first will provide the opportunity for the development of Member Resource Groups (MRGs) within the CIC, providing members with an opportunity to form meaningful groups that are not related to specific subjects (Subject Divisions) or geographical areas (Local Sections). The first example is the Canadian Women in Chemical Science, Engineering and Technology (CWIC) Network a grassroots network that is already flourishing and that we expect will be formalized with a Policy this coming year. The second proposed bylaw change will allow for the appointment of a Director of the CIC who is not a member. This is consistent with the bylaws of the CSC, which allows for the flexibility to elect a Director with particular competencies that would benefit the Board; as an example, we could elect a Director with an accounting background for a Treasurer.

Closing Remarks

In closing, I would like to thank all the members of the CIC Board, Ian Jobe (Executive Director) and the CIC National Office for their support this past year. In particular, I'd like to thank outgoing Board members, Hugh Horton (Treasurer), Deborah Nicoll-Griffith (CSC President) and Neil Burford (Past Chair) for their outstanding service to the CIC. I look forward to working with Paul Smith as incoming Chair, Charles Jia (CSChE President), Tony Ciarla (CSCT President) and the rest of the new team on the 2020/2021 CIC Board (CIC Vice-Chair, CSC President, CIC Treasurer).

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