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CSC President's Report (2022 –2023) – AGM 2023

Dr. Jennifer Love

Dear colleagues:

I am pleased to provide a report as part of my role as President of the Canadian Society for Chemistry (CSC) during the past year. It is a privilege to have served in this role, despite the ongoing challenges with the COVID19 pandemic. I am particularly pleased to have worked closely with Dr Josephine Tsang, who began as Executive Director (ED) of the Chemical Institute of Canada (CIC) in February 2022, as well as the Board of Directors of both the CSC and CIC, and the CIC National Team.

I am delighted that the 2022 Canadian Society for Chemistry national meeting and exhibition, held in June 2022 in Calgary, was a success thanks to the Conference Organising Committee (Drs Roland Roesler, Belinda Heyne, Paul Hayes, and Robert Marriott) as well as the National Team. It was a tremendous challenge to have the first in-person CSC meeting since 2019. The CSC President's Event was held on Tuesday, June 14, and featured a panel discussion on "What is Innovation?" Appreciating that there are many definitions and interpretations of innovation, the panelists shared their perspectives on innovation and highlighted the significance, variety, and complexity of innovation as it relates to chemistry, the broader community, and the opportunities it provides. This event was hosted by Dr Zhongxin Zhou and moderated by Dr Tsang, with Drs Cathleen Crudden, Steven Holdcroft, Douglas Maclaren and Kazim Agha on the panel. At CSC2023 in Vancouver, the President's Event will be held on Monday, June 5, and will feature a panel discussion on "Accessibility in the Laboratory and Classroom". The event will be hosted and moderated by Dr Jennifer Love, and Drs Maria Matlinska, Sarah Styler, and Tanja Tajmel will be panelists. I would like to thank Drs Josephine Tsang, Belinda Heyne, and Stephanie MacQuarrie for their efforts in organising this event.

The CSC Board of Directors, along with the National Team, continue our efforts towards increased transparency, and commitment to Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA). The following is a brief summary of activities of the CSC Board in the past year.

Together with the CIC National Team we continue to promote bilingualism to ensure that francophone members can receive more communications in French. Notably, the agenda, President's report, and minutes from the 2022 AGM have been posted to the CIC website in both French and English.

Portfolios and Activities

Accreditation. Dr Chérif F. Matta had been appointed Interim Director of Accreditation in 2021, and was voted to join the Board as Director of Accreditation at the Annual General Meeting at CSC2022. Dr Matta has recruited a strong team of adjudicators to assist in accreditation activities of Canadian and international departments of Chemistry. The committee has a dedicated CIC National Team Member, Rose Katagiri, who is responsible for the administration and she is assisted by a student volunteer from UNB, PhD Candidate Faith Freake, whose responsibilities include keeping track of the stages of the different accreditation files.

The Accreditation Committee (AC) is composed of 9 members (4 women and 5 men – other than the chair) - who come from BC, ON, MN, NS, and QC - and a representative of the Federation of Canadian Professional Chemists (FCPC) as a non-voting member. As noted in last year's President's report by Dr Zhongxin Zhou, "*CSC accreditation (leads) to high quality recognized programs that provides comparator analyses required by quality assurance and helps attract students to these institutions.*" The workload for the Accreditation Committee (AC) has been enormous, due to the backlog resulting from the pandemic in addition to several "first timers" applicants for the CSC accreditation including several international ones. Over the period 2022-2023, the Accreditation Committee has worked assiduously through the backlog of accreditation, completing 10 successful accreditations, and will continue to do so in the coming years. The line-up of some ca. 35 universities has been triaged based on the expiry of their former accreditation into three priority groups, each of approximately a dozen universities, which translates into a dozen site visits by two members of the AC. In some instances, the help of colleagues who are not members of the AC but who have experience in conducting site visits have been sought for to fill-in gaps that could not be filled by regular AC members in view of the sheer number of the site visits. This has so far worked nicely. During the past year, all the committee documents and accreditation application status has moved on a web-based intranet accessible by all the AC members instead of the centralized system that was maintained by the Chair of the AC in the past. Since the beginning of 2022, all correspondence related to accreditation have been moved or at least cc-ed to a new CIC email account (accreditation@chemist.ca) to maintain the historical records of the committee rather than on the institutional email of the chair of the committee of its members and National Team member.

Awards and Recognition. Dr Christina Bottaro had been appointed as the Interim Director of Awards in October 2021, and was voted to join the Board as Director of Awards at the Annual General Meeting at CSC2022. The CSC Director of Awards handled many of the awards sponsored by the CIC. Given this workload, the CSC Board of Directors recommended that a sub-committee be formed at the discretion of the Director of Awards to lessen the burden of chairing adjudication of the awards. In addition, the CSC recommended that the CIC appoint a CIC Director of Awards: the CIC has appointed Dr Peter Loock in this role. Notably, Dr Loock is a previous CSC Director of Awards and is thus quite prepared to step into this role. The Canadian Chemistry and Chemical Engineering Award for Green Chemistry (Individual) no longer has external sponsorship. As this is a CIC award impacting CSC members, Dr Bottaro is working with Dr Loock to identify champions who will seek a long-term solution to the sponsorship concern. The Terms of Reference for awards continue to be updated, particularly with an eye on ensuring best practices in EDIA, with the assistance of Dr MacQuarrie, CSC Director of EDI and chair of the WIDE (Working for Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity) committee. Best practices to ensure awards are made in a fair and equitable manner have been identified and draft changes will be made to the Terms of Reference for the Analytical Chemistry Division Awards as an example (Dr Bottaro is the Chair of this division) to be shared with other divisions with awards. These divisions will be asked to review their Terms of Reference and make changes in time for the 2024 nomination deadline. Nomination deadlines have also been moved to August 1 to allow for promotion of the awards at the CSC annual meeting. In response to requests from external sponsors of awards for more exposure at the national meeting, the Director and the National Office team have been developing a protocol to ensure the sponsors of awards are acknowledged at symposia in addition to being highlighted at the awards night ceremonies.

Conferences. The 105th Canadian Chemistry Conference and Exhibition (CCCE2022) was held in Calgary (June 13 – 17, 2022). We were delighted to be together again for the first time in person since 2019. We thank the organizers under the leadership of Drs Roland Roesler, Belinda Heyne, Paul Hayes, and Robert

Marriot, supported by CIC National Team members, for making this conference a success. The CSC Board of Directors universally agreed to revert to the nomenclature of CSC instead of CCCE.

We look forward to the CSC2023 conference entitled “Chemistry at the Edge” in Vancouver June 4-8, 2023, under the leadership of Drs Robin Hicks, Irina Paci, Fraser Hof, Scott McIndoe and Alex Brolo from the University of Victoria. The opening plenary lecture will be given 2022 Nobel Laureate Dr Carolyn Bertozzi (Stanford).

The CSC is the host society for Pacifichem 2025 and the organizing team is being formed under the leadership of Dr Laurel Schafer. The theme of the conference is Building Communities to Address Global Challenges. The CSC is also actively participated with the core planning of the Atlantic Basic Conference on Chemistry (ABC Chem), which was held in Marrakech in December of 2022; Dr Alison Thompson was the CSC representative on the Technical Programming committee, and was joined at the conference by Dr Tsang, ED of the CIC.

Dr Tsang and I also attended the 2023 Congress of Commonwealth Chemistry, which was held in May 2023 in Trinidad and Tobago with Dr Cora Young (York) also present as a member of the congress organizing committee. We are pleased to announce that Dr Alison Thompson was elected to serve on the executive board of Commonwealth Chemistry.

The planning for CSC 2024 in Winnipeg June 2-6 is underway, chaired by Dr David Palmer (Saskatchewan) with Technical Program Chairs Drs Michel Gravel (Saskatchewan) and Tara Kahan (Saskatchewan) and Fundraising Chairs Drs Andrew Grosvenor (Saskatchewan) and Gregg Tomy (Manitoba). The theme of the conference is “The Central Science” and the call for symposia is already underway. We are looking forward to seeing everyone next year in Winnipeg.

We have also worked with Canadian Society for Chemical Engineers (CSChE) to have a concurrent conference with the CSC in Ottawa in 2025, agreed upon by the boards of the CSChE, CSC, and CIC. The early stages of choosing the organizing team are underway with both University of Ottawa and Carleton expressing interest.

The CSC won the bid for hosting IUPAC 2027 (51st IUPAC World Chemistry Congress and 54th General Assembly), which will be held in Montreal together with CSC 2027. The Conference Chair is Dr Fran Kerton (Memorial), the Technical Program Chairs are Drs Eli Zysman-Colman (St. Andrews, UK) and Jennifer van Wijngaarden (York) and the Chair of the Organizing Committee is Dr Mark Workentin (Western).

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity (EDI) 2023. Year 1 of implementing the WIDE Strategic plan, approved in 2022 included the following:

1. Continuation and improvements to the Self-Identification Questionnaire (SIQ) and continued data collection: WIDE is working with the board to find a solution for continued data analysis and improved uptake.
2. The Policy development sub-committee has drafted a well research Invited Speakers Guidelines to be approved by the CSC board in 2023. The development of these guidelines included input from several bodies including organizing committees, conference chairs and board members. Input is still being sought.
3. The Ableism Fighters sub-committee has generated a comprehensive policy for implementation of accessibility requirements for CSC related conferences and activities. WIDE would like this document to be approved in 2023.
4. CSC 2023 EDI Symposium: Several WIDE members assisted organizing committee members, Drs Lisa Willis and Owen Scadeng in coordinating the 3.5 day EDI symposium “Indigenous Relationships,

Inclusivity and Allyship in Chemistry”, which included a Pro-D workshop on EDI statements and an Industry Panel Discussion.

5. Spotlight Video With the efforts from many WIDE members and the financial support from the Chem Ed SD and the CSC, WIDE have worked on the development of SpotLight Videos that aim to reduce the barriers to entry for underrepresented groups into chemistry by increasing the visibility and accessibility of visible role models, and on the development of a website with the CIC National Team to host resources and improve visibility.
6. Website/Social Media: Website launched and updated regularly. WIDE is looking for solutions to housing important information/documents and is seeking input into what the community would like to see housed here. <https://www.cheminst.ca/communities/working-for-inclusivity-diversity-and-equity-wide-committee/>

Industry Liaison. Industry members were engaged in organizing special symposia and events at CSC 2022, including an innovation symposium, as well as professional development events, including culture of safety and an industry mixer. The board recognizes the ongoing challenge of securing adequate industrial engagement, as attracting industrial interaction from the industrial sector remains crucial. The value of CSC to this sector is not always clear, and identifying the relevant groups within the industrial sector is not easy. In November 2022, Marc Janes resigned from the CSC Board.

As part of CSC 2023, industry members, the National Team, and several CSC Board members have organized various special symposia and events. These include a professional development program that brings together students and industrial scientists with a diverse panel to explore careers outside the lab. This leads into a Meet and Greet Industry X Early Career Chemists, a technical symposium on "Start-ups and Their Successes," in support of this year's theme, "Chemistry at the Edge." The organizers have also arranged a workshop on "Enabling Greener Chemistry in Academia and Industry" in collaboration with Beyond Benign, as well as an industry tour to Powertech Labs. Furthermore, there will be a panel discussion on "Can a Culture of Safety Give You the Edge?" featuring panelists from both industries and academia. This event follows the successful panel discussion held at CSC 2022 and aims to provide opportunities for industries and academia to share best practices in laboratory safety management. The goal is to emphasize the importance and benefits of establishing a culture of safety in both industrial and academic settings and promote the idea that safety is for everyone.

Local Sections. As post-pandemic culture develops, both online and in-person activity at Local Sections has been on the rise. Notable mention goes to the CIC Toronto Local Section, CI Kingston Local Section and the CIC Montreal Local Section, and the Executives of these Local Sections, for the level of activity and engagement; and, in particular, the Kingston and Toronto Local Sections, which are now collaborating on planning events. With the Local Sections, a Career Fair or activities that engage with industry appears to be of significant appeal. Challenges with respect to funding and human resources remain, which may be mitigated by collaboration.

At the Director level, the local section Directors of the CSChE and CSC have developed an increased level of collaboration, including attending and being involved in their counterpart conferences. In addition, joint goals and objectives, with short and long term aims were established on working with the Local Sections and the National Team.

Going forward, the intent is to have regular engagement with Local Sections to develop communication between the Local Section, National Team and the Directors. In addition, work needs to be done to find a

replacement for the Director of the National Crystal Growing Contest and increasing Local Section engagement in the conferences.

Student Affairs. The mandate of the student affairs portfolio is to support and recognize the activities of the Student Chapters, including through Student Chapter Awards and the recently reinstated Student Chapter grants. At the CCCE 2022 Conference in Calgary we hosted a breakfast meeting which was attended by several Student Chapter leaders, who shared some of their challenges and successes, and gave suggestions for improving communications with the Student Chapters. In the coming year, we will be working to further engage existing Student Chapters, and will also be working with Chemistry Department Chairs to reach out to non-affiliated student groups. We will also increase promotion of funding and recognition opportunities for the Student Chapters.

Subject Divisions. Subject Divisions (SDs) are a key grass-roots element of the CSC, and the CIC more broadly. They reflect the communities of the CSC membership. The new Subject Division Sub-Committee (SDSC), which was created in 2022, and consists of representatives from the Analytical, Organic, Materials and Technologists and Technicians (TT) Divisions, as well as the Directors of Awards and Conferences, had its inaugural meeting this year. Topics of discussion included the source of funding for EDI initiatives (centrally vs. divisions), funding of the Green Chemistry Award and creation of a Member-at-Large within the Executive of each division. In addition, mentorship has been provided to several divisions with less-experienced Executives, particularly the new TT division. Key matters have included increasing membership numbers and engagement and running AGM. As part of inter-division mentorship, the President of the TT Division will attend the Analytical Division AGM in Vancouver.

Nominations. Following the appointment of Dr Shan Zou as interim Vice President of the CSC in late November 2022, the Board has recommended that I continue serving as President for a second term. The acclamation of Dr Shan Zou as Vice President will take place at the AGM scheduled for June 2023. The Nomination Committee Members have also worked hard to search for a Treasurer and a Director of Industry Liaison.

Membership & Finances. The CSC Membership has experienced a rebound in 2022/2023, largely attributed to the successful return of our first “post-COVID” in-person [Canadian Chemistry Conference and Exhibition \(CCCE 2022\)](#) in Calgary. Similar to previous years, most members renew their membership during the conference registration process, likely incentivized by the discounted registration fee for members. We highly recommend opting for autorenewal of your Membership.

It is important to acknowledge that organizing a conference entails significant expenses across various areas, such as conference room rentals, audio visual rental equipment and labour, food and beverage, hotel accommodation, Wi-Fi and more. Each component contributes to the overall costs, making it a substantial financial undertaking for the conference organizing team and the Society as a whole. Multiple conference-related contracts were signed several years in advance, prior to the onset of the pandemic. Being able to forecast and/or maintaining our commitments during a time of uncertainty became challenging due to factors such as significant increases in pricing, attributed to both inflationary factors and pandemic-related impacts. Additionally, it is important to highlight the potential financial consequences if the Society is unable to fill the reserved hotel rooms, leading to penalties. Consequently, CCCE 2022 incurred a deficit, which can be attributed to both attendees’ hesitation to participate in in-person conferences and the associated cost increases mentioned above.

NSERC Chemistry Liaison Committee (NCLC). The NSERC Chemistry Liaison Committee consists of a diverse membership of academic researchers and several NSERC staff members. This committee was created to facilitate discussions between the chemistry research community in Canada and NSERC with the purpose to further Canadian chemistry research. It provides a venue for involvement of chemists on broader NSERC matters and to create opportunities for Canadian chemists to engage NSERC in organized, strategic initiatives. The committee also provides input on topics which NSERC is consulting the community on and allows the community to prepare responses on these topics. At the June 13, 2022 CSC board meeting, the Board decided that the chair of the NCLC should become a director position, and Dr Janine Mauzeroll was appointed to the board as Interim NSERC Liaison. After completion of her term in Dec 2022, the board appointed Dr Bruce Arndtsen as the Interim NSERC Liaison. Since January 2023, the NCLC has met several times with NSERC representatives to provide feedback on potential program modifications, and present arguments for increased funding to chemistry. NCLC has also organized two events at the upcoming CSC Vancouver meeting. One of these will be between NSERC Discovery and Alliance representatives and the full chemistry community, and a second will be with recent NSERC Discovery panel members to provide insights into preparing grant applications.

Members-at-Large. Drs Saurabh Chitnis and Samantha Smith were appointed as members-at-large on the Board of Directors. Drs Chitnis and Smith are continuing to organize and create a repository of Board member responsibilities and key information for the purpose of call for nominations for replacing the roles as well as onboarding of new Board members. In addition, Drs Chitnis and Smith are assisting in the development of a written history of the CSC since 1985 to be placed on the CIC website. A motion supporting this effort was passed on May 12th and they will work together with Drs Kim Baines and James Bolton to go through ACCN/CIC News to select the most significant events to include in this written history.

Dr Smith is a member of the CSC2023 conference organizing committee responsible for the Industry Program. The program includes a morning symposium on Startups and Their Successes which includes 7 Canadian startups from across the country, a tour of Powertech Labs in Surrey, BC, and a co-organized career panel titled “Exploring Careers Outside of the Laboratory” which includes a diverse panel of 6 professionals with very different careers paths and backgrounds.

Vice-President. Dr Shan Zou was appointed Interim Vice-President in late November 2022. With the late onboarding of Dr Zou, the Board of the CSC have recommended that Dr Love continue in the role as the President for a second term. Acclamation of Dr Zou as the Vice President will occur at the AGM in June 2023.

External Relations

(1) Commonwealth Chemistry. Commonwealth Chemistry (CC) is a federation of chemical societies from nations of the Commonwealth intent on being an effective and inclusive voice for practitioners of the chemical sciences in the Commonwealth and to speak out as a single cohesive group for collective benefit. Dr Deborah Nichol Griffith completed her term on the Executive Board and is continuing to participate as part of the Finance Committee. The CSC President participated in an election of new members of the Executive Board; Dr Alison Thompson (Dalhousie University) was elected to the board beginning at the Annual General Meeting at the Commonwealth Chemistry Congress on May 25, 2023. In May 2023, Drs Tsang and Love attended the first in-person CC Conference in Trinidad. Dr Tsang represented the CIC in her role as ED, and Dr Love, as CSC President, represented the CSC at the AGM.

(2) Journals. The CSC continued to receive financial contributions from the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) Publishing House when CSC members publish in the Physical Chemistry Chemical Physics (PCCP) journal. Alex Brown (Alberta) continues to serve as the CSC representative on the ownership board of PCCP and was

appointed to the Executive Committee in early 2022 for a three-year term. Drs Tsang and Love will meet with representatives of the RSC to determine if this model could be extended to other RSC journals. As with last year, the CSC maintains the tie with Canadian Science Publishing (CSP) that publishes the *Canadian Journal of Chemistry* (CJC). Efforts from CSP with the support from CSC, are necessary to ensure CJC attracts and publishes world-class research and remains a high-calibre research publication.

(3) **American Chemical Society (ACS)**. The CSC and the ACS have a shared interest in advancing the chemistry enterprise that identifies solutions to global challenges confronting humanity. The CSC and ACS are working on an MOU, to be signed in 2023. Details will be given in next year's report.

Closing Remarks

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to the boards of the CSC and CIC, as well as the National Team for their commitment to our societies. I very much appreciate the wisdom and input from Drs Zhongxin Zhou (Past-President of the CSC), Shan Zou (Interim Vice-President of the CSC), Deborah Nicoll-Griffith (CIC Chair), Josephine Hill (CIC Vice-Chair), Josephine Tsang (ED of the CIC), the National Team, and organisers of all the conferences and symposia. Without their support and leadership, we would not have had the fruitful events of the past year.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as CSC President this past year.



Jennifer Love, FCIC
CSC President, 2022-2023