



April 30, 2024

CSC President's Report (2023 – 2024) – AGM June 2024

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 12 months. It has been a privilege to serve in this role for the past two years. 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 with the Board of Directors of both the CSC and CIC, and with the CIC National Team (NT). I am delighted that the 2023 Canadian Society for Chemistry national meeting and exhibition, held in June 2023 in Vancouver, was a success thanks to the efforts of the Conference Organising Committee (Drs Robin Hicks, Fraser Hof, Irina Paci, Alexandre Brolo, Scott McIndoe), and the NT. It is also a very exciting time for the CSC: We will be hosting two major international conferences—Pacifichem in 2025 and IUPAC & CSC in 2027. These major conferences will highlight Canadian chemists and our research on the international stage. The CSC Board of Directors, along with the NT, continue our efforts towards increased transparency, and commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility (EDIA). We are also delighted to report that there are six recipients of FCIC designation this year; of these, four—three women and one man—are chemists. Congratulations to Drs Gregory Jerkiewicz, Daniela Look, Stephanie MacQuarrie and Lisa Rosenberg for becoming Fellows of the CIC this year.

I would also like to comment on a change to how fee waivers are assigned for symposia organisation at the CSC meeting. Because of financial and fundraising constraints, largely a result of COVID disruptions and a slow return to 'normal', the previous way of assigning fee waivers is not currently financially viable and has been modified. This decision was not taken lightly, and I hope that the change is temporary. I very much realise that this is frustrating to symposium organisers; however, it is the financial situation in which the CSC finds itself at present.

The following is a brief summary of activities of the CSC Board in the past year.

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 (AGM) at CSC 2022. Dr Matta has recruited a strong team of adjudicators to assist in accreditation activities of Canadian and international departments of Chemistry. As noted in last year's President's report by Dr Zhongxin Zhou, 'CSC accreditation (leads) to high quality, recognized programs, provides comparator analyses required by quality assurance, and helps attract students to these institutions.' The workload for the Accreditation Committee has been enormous, due to the backlog resulting from the pandemic. Nevertheless, the Accreditation Committee has worked assiduously to address the backlog of accreditation and will continue to do so in the coming years.

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 AGM at CSC 2022. 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. In response, 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 Terms of Reference for awards continue to be updated, particularly with an eye towards ensuring best practices in EDIA, with the assistance of Dr Stephanie MacQuarrie, CSC Director of EDI and chair of the Working for Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity (WIDE) committee.

Conferences. The 106th Canadian Society for Chemistry Conference and Exhibition (CSC 2023) was held in Vancouver (June 4–8, 2023). This meeting was the second national conference that was held in person since 2019. We thank the organizers under the leadership of Drs Robin Hicks, Irina Paci, Fraser Hof, Scott McIndoe and Alex Brolo, supported by NT 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 CSC 2024 conference in Winnipeg under the leadership of Drs David Palmer, Michel Gravel, Tara Kahan, Andrew Grosvenor, Gregg Tomy, Joey Lussier, Curtis Rieder, Angela Kuchison and Ahamd Reza Salehi. We are delighted to return to Winnipeg for the CSC meeting. Winnipeg last hosted the CSC meeting in 2007 and was expected to do so again in 2020. COVID had other ideas, yet we are delighted that the hotels and conference centre in Winnipeg have been working closely with us to ensure we could postpone the conference until 2024.

The CSC is the host society for Pacifichem 2025, and the organizing team is being formed under the leadership of Dr Laurel Schafer, alongside Drs Tom Baker and Joelle Pelletier. The theme of the conference is Building Communities to Address Global Challenges. The CSC also actively participated with the core planning of the Atlantic Basin Conference on Chemistry (ABCChem), with its location yet to be determined for 2026.

CSC is a proud member of the Commonwealth Chemistry, and we are delighted to have Dr Alison Thompson elected to be on the Commonwealth Chemistry Executive Board representing Canada until 2026. Many thanks to Drs Russell Boyd and J Hugh Horton for putting their names forward for election to the Executive Board as President Elect and Executive Board member, respectively. CSC will be nominating Drs Marc-André Légaré from McGill and Cora Young from York to serve as Canada's representatives on the Scientific Organising Committee for the 3rd Commonwealth Chemistry Congress (CCC), scheduled tentatively for April 2025 in South Africa.

The planning for CSC 2025 is underway, chaired by Dr Maria DeRosa from Carleton University. We are looking forward to seeing everyone next year in Canada's capital Ottawa.

We are also working closely with the Canadian Society for Chemical Engineering (CSChE) to host a concurrent conference with the CSC in the foreseeable future, agreed upon by the Boards of the CSChE, CSC, and CIC. Having a concurrent conference offers interdisciplinary collaboration, expanded networking opportunities, a comprehensive program, enhanced visibility and streamlined organisation. Please stay tuned for an announcement.

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. Our thanks to Drs Fran Kerton, Mark Workentin, Eli Zysman-Colman, Jennifer van Wijngaarden and LC Campeau for spearheading this effort.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI). WIDE continued to work on initiatives outlined in the 5-year strategic plan shared at the CSC 2023. Highlights include:

Self-Identification Questionnaire (SIQ) and continued data collection: CIC contracted Senomi Solutions (an external data analysis firm) for analysis of the second round of data collected via the SIQ in 2022/23. The report was shared with WIDE and the CSC President. WIDE is working with the data to determine focus points within the strategic plan.

Policy Development and Systematic Change Initiatives: WIDE has created an accessibility policy with feedback from the community and CIC and CSC Boards and is looking for approval of this policy at the June CSC Board meeting. WIDE is working with the Director of Conferences and the NT to determine a way to ensure EDI and accessibility are implemented at the CSC. This year we have identified a local Ambassador of EDI – a volunteer position currently held by Angela Kuchison at University of Manitoba. A subcommittee of WIDE led by Tricia Carmicheal is working with the Director of Accreditation to review international accreditation requirements with an EDI lens and adjust language and requirements accordingly. This language will be brought to the CSC Board meeting in June for approval. The WIDE committee continues to work with the Director of Awards and Director of Divisions to update the Terms of Reference for the CSC awards.

The Symposium Organizer Guidelines were approved by the CSC Board and are being implemented by the CIC for the upcoming CSC symposium.

Education: WIDE has created an education committee who works on creating content around policy and information important to the strategic initiatives of WIDE including, for example, the Conference Code of Conduct. WIDE will be joining the CIC at their conference booth this year. WIDE continues to develop Spotlight videos and share info on their website and social media. The Twitter handle is @CSC_WIDE and the email is WIDE@cheminst.ca

CSC 2024 EDI Symposium: Two ½ day symposia are planned for the CSC 2024 under “Breaking the Barriers and Biases in Sciences: From Systemic to Scientific” and one ½ day session on “Balancing the Reaction – Mental Health in the Chemical Sciences”.

Industry Liaison. Industry members had organized symposia at CSC 2023 and are engaged in organizing Transitions Program at CSC 2024. The Transitions Program aims to help prepare early

career scientists for the next stage of their career and broaden the national chemistry network. The Transitions Program strives to expose early career scientists to the diverse array of careers that are possible with a degree in chemistry and create the opportunity to showcase local innovation. This program includes an innovation symposium, as well as professional development events, a culture of safety panel discussion and an industry mixer. The Board is considering introducing programs that will enhance recognition of industry-based membership and activities that are directly relevant to our industry membership. Adequate industrial engagement is a continuing challenge. Attracting industrial interaction into the CSC remains an important activity as the value to this sector is not obvious; nor are the groups within the industrial sector for which the CSC is relevant.

Local Sections. Local Sections (LS's) activity varies depending upon location, with several LSs being highly active, and others inactive. Examples of the active LS initiatives have included career fairs, industry tours, awards nights and café CIC, to name a few. Some of the challenges associated with LSs include: difficulty in communicating with members; limited number of active members; and NT resources. To address these issues, we are planning greater engagement of LSs during the national conference, creating a team (including NT members, Directors of LSs) to regularly engage with LSs, and improving engagement between the Directors of LSs and the LSs. In addition, the director of Crystal Growing Contest (CGC) is retiring. As CGC is one of the events that LSs are engaged and assist with, we have been working with the retiring CGC Director to ensure continued engagement of the LSs. Thank you to Dr Josée Brisson for her tireless efforts in leading the CGC in the past years.

Nominations. During the past year, the CSC Board worked on the creation of a new directorship. Dr Zhongxin Zhou stepped down as Past President of the CSC in December 2023. Dr Mark Workentin agreed to chair the Nominations Committee and was appointed at the February 20, 2024, CSC Board meeting.

NSERC Chemistry Liaison Committee (NCLC). The NSERC Chemistry Liaison Committee consists of a diverse group 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 in organized, strategic initiatives involving NSERC. The committee also provides input on topics that NSERC is consulting the community on and allows the community to prepare responses on these topics. In June 2022, the Board decided that the chair of the NCLC should become a director position. Dr Bruce Arndtsen became the NSERC Liaison Director at the AGM in 2023. The committee has met several times over the past year with NSERC Discovery and Alliance representatives to provide feedback on proposed program changes, as well as to discuss the evolution of funding levels of Chemistry in the Discovery program. It is currently planning events during CSC 2024 for the community to meet with NSERC officials and is becoming affiliated with efforts to lobby government officials for increased research funding.

Student Affairs. Director of Student Affairs Nola Etkin led a meeting with Student Chapter (SC) leaders at the CSC 2023 conference in Vancouver, where we had an engaging discussion about how the CSC can support the activities of the Student Chapters. We also announced that the CIC

was reinstating the Student Chapter grants in the fall semester. Students indicated that they would benefit from regular online meetings with the Director and the NT. Beginning in the fall semester, Nola has worked closely with the CSChE Director of Student Affairs, Sumant Upreti. Together, and supported by the NT, they have hosted 1-2 online student chapter meetings per semester, where the student leaders have described recent initiatives and asked questions about the CIC programs available to support the Chapters. Eight student chapters received SC Grants in the fall semester and a further 4 grants will be awarded in the winter semester. The program is being reviewed for improved delivery in the coming academic year. In addition, the Directors of Student Affairs for the two Societies worked together to evaluate applications for their respective Student Chapter Merit Awards, which are awarded at the relevant conference.

Subject Divisions. Paul Hayes was elected as the Director of Subject Divisions in 2022. The primary responsibility of the Director of Subject Divisions is to serve as a liaison between the Subject Divisions, the Board of Directors and the NT. Over the past year, many emerging matters have been addressed, particularly those related to awards, conferences, and EDI. The most notable issues include concern over continued sponsorship of the Strem Award for Pure or Applied Inorganic Chemistry (Strem has agreed to sponsor the award again this year) and a decrease in the value of conference fee waivers. The latter topic was deemed sufficiently important that a Subject Divisions Sub-Committee meeting was held to address it on October 12, 2023. A follow-up meeting with all Subject Divisions took place on October 19, 2023. Recent conversations have focused upon the viability of creating a new Green Division.

Vice President. The CSC Board extends heartfelt appreciation to our members for their unwavering support and dedication to our society, and their continuous commitment to enhancing the value of our membership, improving our offerings, and ensuring each member feels valued and supported. We successfully championed diversity, inclusion, equity, and respect within our community through various efforts, including providing recommendations in the accreditation and conference policies, as well as initiatives for Board recruitment and retention. In my role as Vice President, I actively contributed to these efforts, ensuring that our policies and practices reflect our core values of inclusivity and equity. Moreover, we fostered a welcoming chemistry community, nationally and internationally, where every individual feels empowered and valued. Through my contributions as Vice President, we created platforms and opportunities for meaningful engagement and collaboration, fostering an environment where diverse perspectives thrive and innovation flourishes. By collaborating closely with esteemed organizations such as the Royal Society of Chemistry, the American Chemical Society, Commonwealth Chemistry Federation, and the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry, among others, we leveraged collective expertise and resources to drive positive global change. As Vice President, I dedicated myself to strengthening these partnerships and exploring new avenues for collaboration, amplifying our impact and advancing the field of chemistry on a global scale.

Bilingualism. Together with the CIC NT 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.

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. This past year, Deborah Nicoll-Griffith served on its the Executive Board of CC. The CSC was represented by the President of the CSC at the Special CC AGM held on May 19, 2022. The CSC Past President participated in the election (1 voting member per society) of the CC President Elect and New Executive Board Members in May 2022 prior to the Special AGM. I, as CSC President, represented the CSC at the 2024 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 this year for a three-year term. Drs Josephine Tsang and Jennifer 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.

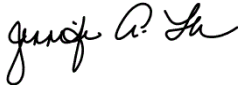
(3) **Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC)** – In July 2023, it is my great pleasure, alongside Drs Deborah Nicoll-Griffith (CIC Board Chair) and Josephine Tsang (CIC Executive Director) to renew our commitment to the RSC by renewing our MOU at the Burlington House. we renewed our MOU with RSC in July 2023 at the Burlington House. We very much look forward to continuing our partnership and serving the chemical sciences community around the world.

Directors at Large. Directors at Large Saurabh Chitnis and Samantha Smith were the inaugural holders of the Members at Large positions. They supported the Board's activities in various capacities such as creating tools for tracking deadlines and upcoming responsibilities for other Directors, collating Director responsibilities, participating on the Nominations Committee to solicit and vet candidates for upcoming directorships and attending and providing feedback during Board meetings. Nominations have been collected for two new individuals to fill these roles.

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 NT 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 (Vice President of the CSC), Mark Workentin (Interim Chair of Nominations of the CSC), Deborah Nicoll-Griffith (CIC Chair), Josephine Hill (CIC Vice Chair), Josephine Tsang (ED of the CIC), the NT, and organisers of all of the conferences and symposia. I also give my sincere thanks to outgoing CSC Board Members, Drs Agha (Local Sections), Chitnis (Member-at-large), Etkin (Student Chapters), MacQuarrie (EDI), Smith (Member-at-large), van Wijngaarden (Conferences) for their outstanding commitment to the CSC Board. 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 and I look forward to serving the CSC as Past President in the upcoming year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer A. Love". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Jennifer Love, FCIC
CSC, President, 2023-2024