



AUTM Board of Directors 2020 Candidate Form



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Candidate Biography

I started my career in technology transfer in 2007, as a Licensing Associate in what was then the Office of Technology Transfer at Caltech, managing an IP portfolio in a wide range of technical areas including chemistry, imaging, medical engineering, and more. I became a registered US patent agent in 2008. Since 2015, I have served as Director for Innovation, Patents & Licensing in what is now Caltech's Office of Technology Transfer and Corporate Partnerships (OTTCP). I support the Chief Innovation Officer in strategic planning and oversight of OTTCP operations. Over the years, I have initiated, and helped develop and implement, numerous operational improvements within OTTCP, including the introduction of agreement checklists; electronic docketing of patent prosecution activity; systematization of legal bill processing; management of the patent budget through expense modeling and provisional conversion tracking; and management of the operating budget through monthly tracking and reporting.

Like many in our profession, I came to tech transfer in a somewhat roundabout way. After earning a BSc in biology at Queen's University (Kingston), I came to Caltech for graduate school, receiving a PhD in neurobiology in 1999. Wanting to explore options other than bench science, I ventured into management consulting, spending almost five years as an Associate and then Engagement Manager in the Toronto office of McKinsey & Company. But I had strayed too far from science for my liking; so when I returned to Pasadena, I was very happy to discover the field of tech transfer and come back to Caltech.

Candidate Q&A

Why do you want to be on the AUTM Board of Directors and what motivates you to join the AUTM Board of Directors?

AUTM has been very important to me in my development as a technology transfer professional. I have benefited professionally and personally from having attended most of the Annual Meetings and many of the Western Region Meetings held during my twelve years in tech transfer. My participation in AUTM activities, including my role as Co-Chair of the WRM Committee for two years, and my involvement with the Model IIA task force, has allowed me to get to know many Board members and other AUTM volunteers, and inspired me to pursue the opportunity to give back further to AUTM by serving on the Board.

Have you served in a volunteer leadership role for other organizations? If so, please explain.

My volunteer leadership experience goes back to my undergraduate years at Queen's University, where I served as Social Convenor for the Biology Departmental Student Council, and as President of the Ballet Club. In graduate school at Caltech I founded and led the Caltech Canadian Club. More recently, I served as an inaugural member of the Board of Directors of MADIA Tech Launch, a non-profit dedicated to building an entrepreneurial ecosystem in the San Gabriel Valley. I am also the treasurer and a co-leader of my daughter's Cadette Girl Scout troop.

What special experience do you have that you feel will benefit AUTM and its members? What might distinguish you from other candidates?

While my education and training in science (including PhD work at Caltech) laid the foundation for my analytical and communications skills, my five years as a management consultant at McKinsey pushed me to apply those skills "at the speed of business." This background has given me the ability not just to solve problems efficiently and effectively, but to more rigorously define problems in the first place and to clearly articulate possible solutions. I am also dedicated to making sure that the selected solutions are actually implemented, by putting in place appropriate follow-up processes.

What do you see as the major strategic issues facing technology transfer today?

As tech transfer professionals, we are often faced with multiple, conflicting mandates: to support our researchers in their entrepreneurial endeavors; to bring in licensing revenues to our institutions; to be in compliance with our funding sources' requirements; to help with economic development of our communities; and, of course, to translate the results of fundamental research into innovations that benefit society. Finding a way to balance all this (and communicate it all to our stakeholders), in the face of limited resources, is a significant challenge.

What challenges does AUTM face that you think could be addressed by strategic discussion at the Board level?

As I see it, AUTM's challenge, similar to that faced by tech transfer offices, is to figure out how it can best serve its constituents, also in the face of limited resources. Like the field of technology transfer more generally, AUTM has multiple mandates. In addition to providing education,

professional development, and networking opportunities to its members, it also serves as an advocacy group and a repository of useful tools and resources. The Board has a critical role to play in setting strategic direction for AUTM to allow it to effectively fulfill these mandates and remain relevant to its members.

How do the terms (both responsibilities and time commitment) of the position fit within your other responsibilities?

I have several years of experience in balancing my volunteer commitments to AUTM with my day-to-day responsibilities at Caltech. I anticipate service on the AUTM Board to be complementary to, rather than in conflict with, my other responsibilities. As one of the Directors within our office, much of my work has to do with strategy development and operational oversight -- arguably quite similar to the responsibilities of an AUTM Board member, albeit with different scope and scale. I expect to bring back, from my work with the AUTM Board, insights and connections that will support my work at Caltech.

How has AUTM benefitted you in your work and career?

I joined AUTM shortly after starting as a Licensing Associate at Caltech. Throughout my twelve years in technology transfer, I have always valued AUTM as a source of helpful information, through its educational materials (webinars, Tech Transfer Practices manual, etc.), online discussion groups, programming at the Annual and Regional Meetings, and above all the networking opportunities. The collegial atmosphere fostered by the organization has been a tremendous source of support to me over the years.

Is there anything else you would like AUTM members to know about you before they vote?

I do not take my commitments lightly. If elected, I will bring the same discipline, thoroughness, and attention to detail to my role on the AUTM Board as I do to my work at Caltech.