



AUTM Board of Directors 2020 Candidate Form



Gisele Roberts, MBA

Manager, Innovation and Commercialization
Laurentian University

Candidate Biography

I have been a member of AUTM for over a decade, working at a small institution while making a big impact. I executed the university's first license, led the creation of a first startup, led the creation of the university's first entrepreneurship support program and our innovation centre. I have also taken a leadership role in supporting industry-academic collaboration including the negotiation of multi-million dollar agreements. I am also very active in the local ecosystem, sitting on 2 advisory boards and leading joint activities that support innovation in the City of Greater Sudbury.

I am a huge supporter of AUTM and would not have been able to achieve the success that I have without being able to leverage the network that AUTM has helped me develop.

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?

To represent the tech transfer community generally, in particular small offices and, in particular, Canadian institutions. AUTM plays a vital role in bringing the international tech transfer community together and I would like to give back for all that AUTM has given me.

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

I have been a frequent participant at both the ACCT/AUTM Canadian region and AUTM annual meetings.

I have recently finished as Chair of the meeting committee for the ORCA (Ontario Research and Commercialization Alliance) bi-annual meeting, bringing 30 tech transfer professionals to my host institution for a two day professional development meeting.

What special experience do you have that you feel will benefit AUTM and its members?

What might distinguish you from other candidates?

My deep network within the AUTM community and my avid networking has given me significant insight into the challenges faced by my peers and colleagues across the country and around the world. I also have deep understanding of the unique challenges of small institutions in remote locations.

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

The major issue that we face as a community is the communication of the benefits we provide that go beyond revenue generation to our funders and policy makers.

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

It is important to maintain connection to the organization when members may not be able to travel regularly to meetings. AUTM also needs to meet the needs of both skilled practitioners and newcomers to the profession.

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

These responsibilities are important components of communicating the value of the tech transfer role at my institution and promoting the resources and network available to advance tech transfer and its benefits to society. I feel that participation in a leadership role at AUTM will help me and my institution move to the next level of professionalism.

How has AUTM benefitted you in your work and career?

AUTM has provided me with an incredible network of mentors who have supported me and my institution in the development of resources for the commercialization of university IP in addition to the implementation of best practices. In addition, I have made friendships that have greatly enriched my personal and professional lives.

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

The resources and support provided by AUTM have had the greatest positive impact on my professional life. I still consult the AUTM practice manual to reinforce my knowledge and demonstrate the value and skill required for this most challenging job that we hold.