



SCIENCE PHILANTHROPY ALLIANCE

Advancing basic science—The foundation of our future

Dear members and friends of the Science Philanthropy Alliance,

Last week I spent an afternoon in Seattle meeting with the newly recruited cohort of [civic science fellows](#), a program which was launched by the [Rita Allen Foundation](#). The fellows bubbled over with optimism for science and the important role it plays in civic dialogue and for the future health of our people and our planet. Woven throughout the meeting were themes of the importance of diverse perspectives, of recognizing bias, and challenging the culture of science.

As we look ahead to the work of the Science Philanthropy Alliance in this new decade, it is exciting to imagine that who is doing science and how science is being done will continue to evolve. The need for funding fundamental research, whether curiosity-driven or use-inspired, will continue. Our Alliance will adapt to the times by being both a hub for learning and networking, and an incubator for funders to debate the pressing issues faced by the basic science funding community.

Because of the continued need for our advising services to the community of basic science funders we are building, we enter 2020 in a growth phase. We anticipate that our Alliance will continue to increase its members and activities, so we are adding internal expertise to match this growth. I'm thrilled to [announce](#) that Shirley Tilghman, president emeritus and Professor of Molecular Biology and Public Affairs, Princeton University, has accepted the role of senior science advisor. She joins [David Baltimore](#), [Marc Kastner](#), and [Robert Tjian](#), who have fielded philanthropists' questions and guided them in their decisions about basic science research funding. By adding Shirley and Marc, formerly president of the Alliance, we have doubled our capacity to serve our advisees through the wisdom and experience of our senior science advisors. We have also added a full-time science director, [Kate Lowry](#), previously the Alliance's fellow specializing in ocean and climate science.

To help guide our next five years, we have convened a future vision committee consisting of members of the board and representatives from our member foundations to develop a vision and strategic plan for our next five years. Stay tuned for updates on our progress during the course of the year.

To refine workflow and acknowledge expanding duties within our staff, some restructuring and title changes of personnel has occurred. Searches are under way to fill the role of [advisor](#), [director of operations](#), and our [climate science fellow](#). We encourage you to share these position descriptions with your networks!

As always, I look forward to your feedback on how we can best support and build our community of basic science research funders.

Warm regards,