

## Optica Election for 2025 Offices

The Optica election for the 2025 Vice President and one new Director-at-Large opened on 18 June 2024. Please read the candidates' statements and cast your ballot. Instructions for electronic voting have been sent to all eligible voters. If you did not receive voting materials, email [voting@optica.org](mailto:voting@optica.org) or call +1.202.416.1913.

Polls will remain open until 16 August 2024. Results will be announced at Optica's Annual Business Meeting on Monday, 23 September 2024. They will also be available on the Optica website by the end of September. For biographical information about the candidates, visit [optica.org/optica\\_election](https://optica.org/optica_election).

### Candidates for Vice President



#### Turan Erdogan

*Plymouth Grating Laboratory, Inc., USA*

Optica is a community. For some, the experience is so intimate it might even be considered a family. The health of a community—or a family—is determined at least in part by the health of its individual members. But I believe it's more than that. The community itself can be strong or weak, vibrant or flaccid, alive or dead. And surely its health is also indicated by its external impact. Strong communities make a difference to people outside of the community.

I am excited to play a part in continuously improving the health of the Optica community. But how can we tell whether our health is improv-

ing or not? Peter Drucker said, "If you can't measure it, you can't improve it." In optics, our minds immediately go to the frustration we would feel trying to polish a lens or mirror without a good test plate or Fizeau interferometer.

Measuring the health of a business is straightforward. Financial metrics rule. You've got to see growth of both the top line (revenue) and the bottom line (profit). Growth of revenue without profit is useless. And growth of profit without revenue is almost never sustainable.

But what about measuring the health of Optica? What metrics should we focus on? For a community like ours, I believe our membership count is like revenue, and the impact we have is like profit. Just as revenue growth is a no-brainer for businesses, so is membership growth for Optica. If we're not adding to our numbers, we're probably not as healthy as we should be.

Impact, or the bottom line, is a little more subtle. Impact should be measurable for each of the three beneficiaries of a healthy community listed above: its individual members, the community itself and people outside the community.

Are Optica members truly benefitting from Optica? Are their careers

advancing more rapidly? Are they learning new things and being inspired to develop, invent and create new ideas, theories or products?

How about the community itself? Are we connecting more globally than ever before? Are we growing more intimate? Are we blurring the lines that seem to be naturally drawn by geographic borders, gender and professional affiliation—or even making them transparent?

Finally, how is Optica impacting society outside of our community? Are we making it easier for great science to be done that will benefit people for generations to come? Are we facilitating the creation of great companies and helping established companies to thrive?

I am eager to work with Optica leaders, staff and members to refine the metrics for improving the health of our society. Having served on Optica's Board of Directors, several councils including OIDA, several awards committees and several conference committees, and having co-chaired a number of Optica conferences, including FIO-LS and OFC, I believe I have the experience to find new and more effective ways to review and assess these metrics, and to set the right priorities which enable us to act on what we've learned.



## Min Gu

*University of Shanghai for Science and Technology, China*

I have been associated with Optica since I was a graduate student studying in optics and photonics. I have been so fortunate that I have contributed to the society in a variety of roles, including as a journal editor, a conference organizer, a council member and a member of the Board of Directors.

I served as a director of the Board of the Optical Society of America (now Optica) and served on its Executive Committee and Finance Committee. I also served on the Fellows and Honorary Members Committee of the society. I chaired the International Council and the Asia Working Group. I was a member of the Optica Nominating Council. I have also served on numerous organizing committees and program committees for the CLEO and FIO conferences. I have been a guest editor and a topical editor for *Optical Technology and Biomedical Optics for Applied Optics*, and have served on the editorial board of *Biomedical Optics Express*.

I have been willing to become involved in these activities because I am fully committed to the vision, the mission and the values of Optica. I am greatly honoured to be nominated as a candidate for the Vice President role of the society.

If elected, I will provide my experience, skills and knowledge to promote the society as a global community in optics and photonics. To this end, the society should be a diverse, inclusive platform for international collaboration in the generation, application, archiving and dissemination of knowledge in light science, technology, engineering and education.

As one of its priorities, the society should create a strong, innovative linkage between industry, governments and the membership, so that the enabling role of optics and photonics can be promoted, enhanced and harvested worldwide. Equally important, the impact of the society largely lies in sustainable success in enhancing mentorship and educational opportunities for the next generation of leaders in optics and photonics. They hold the key to a future where optics and photonics can enable better and greener solutions for many challenges that the world faces.

Specifically, I will work closely with the Optica leadership and staff as well as the optics and photonics community:

- To consolidate **awareness of the Optica Foundation**. The Optica Foundation has developed excellent programs for the career development of the members. It is important to increase foundation participation from developing nations.
- To create the opportunity for **global collaboration** in conference organization, journal publication and knowledge transfer. Optica has many valuable products in those areas. The engagement of Optica's global membership can build on the enormous enabling impact of optics and photonics innovation.

## Candidates for Director-at-Large



## Mihaela Dinu

*CACI International, Inc., USA*

I am honored to be nominated as a candidate for the position of Director-at-Large of Optica. As the premier global organization devoted to optics and photonics, Optica is at the center of a rich and expansive scientific and technological field that uniquely touches so many aspects of the world. I have considered Optica my professional home since graduate school. In thinking about the impact I could make as Director-at-Large, three topics come to my mind.

**Industry engagement.** Having worked in industry my entire career—first in applied research at Bell Labs and more recently in the field of space optical communications—I am familiar with the photonics industry ecosystem. I will strive to expand Optica's already excellent efforts directed at engagement with industry. I will support Optica's activities to promote industry networking and to foster industrial partnerships via its industry events, and I aim to identify avenues for augmenting those efforts.

Optica's mission of keeping members informed on current science and technology developments relies on its stellar lineup of technical journals, membership newsletters, online resources and webinars. I am currently serving on the Editorial Advisory Committee of Optica's membership magazine *Optics & Photonics News*, which

has provided me with an opportunity to reflect on the needs of the Optica membership. I will work to explore new ways of engaging industry members in areas that benefit their careers and technical development.

**Member engagement via local sections.** Optica has a large and diverse global membership, yet the number of local sections in North America as well as worldwide is limited. I will advocate for amplifying the role of local sections, and for increasing their visibility as a framework for member participation. Local sections can be valuable resources for members who are not affiliated to centers of higher education or photonics hubs, for in-person networking and technical engagement. Local sections also offer opportunities for educational outreach, can benefit student members that graduate into industry jobs, and can reach members who may not participate in Optica's scientific and technical conferences and meetings.

**Climate action.** Climate change is the fundamental and defining challenge of human civilization in our time. With photonics at the core of such technologies as renewable energy generation and greenhouse emission monitoring, Optica has an excellent track record of addressing this challenge. Subjects related to renewable energy and climate action are already being given close coverage by Optica conference organizers, such as within topical meetings at the Advanced Photonics Congress, and within Optica journals.

Still, I believe that Optica can do more to lead in addressing the challenge of climate change. If elected, I will work toward expanding Optica's role in the fight against global warming. In addition to events and conferences centered around the role of optics and photonics in energy and climate, I will advocate for promoting initiatives to kickstart new approaches and partnerships for novel solutions and for fostering multi-disciplinary collaborations related to climate mitigation.



## Christine P. Hendon

*Columbia University, USA*

Service is my opportunity to use my talents to impact others outside my laboratory or classroom. As a high school and undergraduate student, I participated in many outreach events, which were life-changing opportunities. As a faculty member, participating in service efforts is natural. I am privileged and honored to serve in my current roles with the university and use all of my experiences to provide different perspectives within the various communities and committees I am a part of.

My service to the biophotonics scientific community is highlighted through my participation as a reviewer for the US National Science Foundation and National Institutes of Health, and through my involvement with the Optica, SPIE and National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) professional societies. My service to the scientific community has broadened my perspective. I will utilize those experiences if allowed to serve as an Optica Director-at-Large.

Within Optica, I was appointed to the Optica Board of Meetings, starting a three-year term in January 2019, to represent the biomedical conferences that Optica sponsors, including the Optica Biophotonics Congress (Biomedical Optics and Optics in the Life Sciences) and the Optica European Conference on Biomedical Optics (ECBO). I co-chaired the conference meetings on Optical Coherence Tomography, Optical

Tomography and Spectroscopy, and Bio-Optics Design and Applications. This year, I was the general chair of the Optica Biophotonics: Biomedical Optics Congress.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, I was a conference chair and member of the Board of Meetings in transitioning the conference to a virtual format. I also participated in the Optica Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Rapid Action Committee. These experiences have enabled me to think outside the box as we approach events organization to ensure we reach a wider audience.

Mentoring is another critical form of teaching and career development. My first service role within Optica was organizing the Meet the Expert event to facilitate mentoring events at the Biophotonics Congress. I am also the faculty advisor of the Optica/SPIE and NSBE student chapters at Columbia University. As a Director-at-Large, I will work toward the continued development of student and early-career researcher engagement and career development opportunities and continue working toward expanding access.

Thanks to the members of the Nominating Council who prepared the 2024 slate.

Arlene Smith  
*Molex, Inc., USA, Chair*

Roel G. Baets  
*Ghent University, Belgium*

Connie Chang-Hasnain  
*Berxel Photonics, China*

Ekaterina Golovchenko  
*Lumentum Operations LLC, USA*

Satoshi Kawata  
*Nanophoton Co. Ltd., Japan*

Michal Lipson  
*Columbia University, USA*

Sujatha Ramanujan  
*Luminate, USA*