

—President's Message



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Some of you may have heard that Optica has recently made some leadership changes. Given the significance of these changes, I wanted to provide a brief overview of them and why they occurred.

To begin with, Elizabeth Rogan, who served as Optica CEO, and Chad Stark, formerly the Executive Director of the Optica Foundation, are no longer with the society. Both made tremendous contributions to Optica's programmatic expansion and strategic management, as well as to enhanced diversity, inclusivity and innovation within the optics and photonics community. I appreciate and thank them for their significant efforts to support the community.

We arrived at this moment because of some questions raised around the implementation of the Optica Foundation Challenge. After evaluating its processes, controls and procedures, Optica is now executing necessary changes to ensure that it is best positioned for the future.

It is important to share that in the course of the independent review of the Optica Foundation Challenge that the Board of Directors undertook, no violation of law was identified. However, based on the review, it was determined that not all of the agreed controls associated with the program were implemented, and there was a lack of transparency with the Optica Foundation Board. We regard these as serious issues, and we determined that a change in leadership is in the best interest of the organization. The Board of Directors was thankful to have questions about this program brought to its attention.

As part of the leadership changes, the Board of Directors has asked Elizabeth Nolan to serve as the CEO of Optica and executive director of the Optica Foundation on an interim basis. Elizabeth has been Optica's deputy executive director and chief publishing officer for over a decade, and we have full faith in her ability to lead the organization as well as to ensure that the society is well positioned to continue to grow and thrive.

As we move forward, I want to assure you that Optica is on strong footing programmatically, operationally and financially, and that we remain focused on supporting the important and vital work undertaken by our worldwide community. Optica has dedicated itself to promoting the generation, application, archiving and dissemination of knowledge in optics and photonics for more than a century. We intend to continue to do so.

—Gerd Leuchs,
Optica 2024 President