

From the President

Editor's Note:

These remarks are drawn from those at the 2005 CSE annual meeting. For coverage of the meeting, see upcoming issues of Science Editor.

Outgoing president Faith McLellan and others have worked tremendously hard this year to continue to create the most effective and influential organization in science communication in the world today.

I want to stress the global reach of CSE. We have editors at the 2005 CSE annual meeting from 20 countries, including six in Africa. CSE is edging toward being a truly global organization. And science needs that kind of global organization more than ever before.

CSE's agenda is clear.

First, we must not only restore public confidence in science but also foster a public demand for science. The toll taken on the reputation of science by

events surrounding the Vioxx and antidepressant scandals is likely to be severe—and will long be played out in the courts. As a neutral convening group and with the creation of clinical-trial registries that are close to becoming a global requirement and reality, we can do much to protect and augment the integrity of science. We can also strengthen the voice of science in public dialogue. We can encourage decision-makers to demand evidence from science before they make irreversible choices that have profound consequences. CSE—with its policies and publications, its conferences and educational activities, and the energy of its members—has a pivotal part to play here.



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Second, we must continue to make our organization more global. Threats to human survival, to our wider ecology, and to the fabric of the planet do not recognize national boundaries. We must find better ways to forge alliances with essential collaborators in our work. We have been making the effort in recent years. We must find ways to embed it permanently in CSE's operations.

Third, we must work even harder to recognize the essential multidisciplinary of science. Our futures depend on understanding the connections among technology, the environment, agriculture, climate, health, animal and plant ecology and disease, engineering, information, the oceans, and food. CSE is perfectly, perhaps even uniquely, placed to promote such understanding.

Fourth, we must look with fresh eyes at what we editors are for. If we are less about gate-keeping and midwifery, then we

are surely more about interpreting, revealing, explaining, advocating, demystifying, arguing, clarifying, investigating, amplifying, and orchestrating signals that scientists are generating to inform the ways in which their work can best serve society. We will need to examine our core values. We will need to turn to the best evidence we can find to support what we do. The science of information must become still further a critical force in advancing our vision.

And finally, we must find better ways to contribute to fulfilling the overall purpose of science. That purpose is not only about finding natural explanations for what we observe in the world. It is also about having the ambition and belief to protect and improve our world. To strengthen our societies. To deepen our collective awareness of the value of Knowledge and Nature.

Richard Horton

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