

Bolstering National Science & Technology Competitiveness Through Effective Science Communication: A Workshop

Committee

Cindy Achat-Mendes

Member

Cindy Achat-Mendes serves as the new Director of STEM Initiatives with a joint appointment at URA's Sandia Site Office in Albuquerque, NM, where she offers technical support. At URA she strives to engender innovative STEM initiatives that are driven by national security R&D needs.

Before joining URA, Dr. Achat-Mendes served at the Department of Defense (DoD) as an American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Science & Technology Policy Fellow, where she worked on DoD's STEM programs and policies as well as multi-sector research collaborations, including the Air Force's new University Affiliated Research Center, Research Institute for Tactical Autonomy at Howard University and DoD STEM's Regional Community College Consortium Cooperative Agreement Program.

Prior to her science & technology policy experiences, she served on the Biology faculty at Georgia Gwinnett College, contributing to systemic change in STEM education and providing authentic research experiences for students. Dr. Achat-Mendes was trained as a neuroscientist in the field of drug addiction and psychiatry, earning her Ph.D. in neuroscience at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine and conducting her postdoctoral studies at Harvard Medical School.

She is committed to growing robust STEM research ecosystems and is a champion for inclusive STEM practices as a means of harnessing all the much-needed STEM talent within our nation.

Patricia K. Falcone

Member

Patricia Falcone is the Deputy Director for Science and Technology at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL). She is the principal advocate for the Lab's science and technology base and oversees the strategic development of the Lab's capabilities. She is responsible for LLNL's collaborative research with academia and the private sector, as well as its internal investment portfolio.

Falcone joined LLNL in 2015 after six years at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), where she served as the Senate-confirmed Associate Director of OSTP for National Security and International Affairs. In that capacity, she led a team that advised on the science and technology dimensions of national security policy deliberations and on federal support of national security research and development.

Earlier, Falcone held technical and management positions at Sandia National Laboratories in Livermore, California, including Distinguished Member of the Technical Staff and senior manager for Systems Analysis and Engineering.

Falcone chairs the advisory committee for the Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering at Princeton University. She is a member of the State Department's International Security Advisory Board and the Board of Directors of the Research Corporation for Science Advancement. She is a member of the Leadership Council of the Government-University-Industry-Philanthropy Research Roundtable (GUIPRR) of the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine and a commissioner on the National Commission on Innovation and Competitiveness Frontiers led by the Council on Competitiveness.

Falcone earned a B.S.E. in aerospace and mechanical sciences at Princeton University, and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in mechanical engineering from Stanford University.

Laura Patton

Member

Laura Patton is the Head of Government Affairs, US at Springer Nature. She works to disseminate and promote research from Springer Nature publications to a Congressional audience and other key policymakers, as well as build understanding of the scholarly publishing ecosystem. Before joining Springer Nature in 2022, she worked in congressional relations at the RAND Corporation. Laura started her career in Congress where she served as an aide to Representative David Obey, Chair of the House Appropriations Committee. She has an M.A. from Johns Hopkins University.