

NEW ASTC PRESIDENT AND CEO TAKES THE HELM

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Cristin Dorgelo, the new President and CEO of the Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC), officially begins her tenure today, following a carefully planned transition led by the association’s Board of Directors and Interim CEO Gillian Thomas.

“I’m so excited to begin leading ASTC today, energized by the many illuminating conversations I had with ASTC members during the 2017 ASTC Annual Conference in San Jose and the Science Centre World Summit 2017 in Tokyo, as well as numerous working sessions and calls over the past few months with ASTC staff and the ASTC Board of Directors,” she said.

“2018 will be an exciting year. We will engage in extensive dialogue with our members about how to best support their future success, as we forge a long-term strategy for ASTC. We will seek collaboration, ideas, and input from regional networks of science centers, other museum-service organizations, and outside our field as well, building cross-sector partnerships. And, as we engage in this future planning work, we also will continue serving science centers and museums around the world with all the networking, professional development, advocacy, and other services they expect from ASTC.”



Among the first things Dorgelo will launch is a yearlong listening and planning process to help assess what institutions focused on informal science education and engagement identify as crucial for helping them meet their missions. “It’s fundamental for ASTC to fully understand the challenges science centers and museums face while we start planning for our evolution,” she said. Experts and partners from other fields and sectors—community organizations, academia, education, industry, government, and philanthropy—will also be invited to participate and contribute ideas for the future of the field.

She has already scheduled a gathering of the ASTC Board, with its Conference Program Planning Committee and Leadership and Field Development Committee, in late February 2018, to develop ideas for strategic improvements to ASTC’s annual conference. And Dorgelo and the ASTC staff will host an open house in the ASTC office on February 28, for ASTC members who will be in Washington, D.C., for the annual Museum Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill, February 26–27.

Next up, throughout spring and fall 2018 will be a series of listening and ideation sessions with ASTC members and other stakeholders and experts, through regional dialogues, workshops at ASTC and online, member surveys, and other methods. As a field, the association will together create a new vision for ASTC, clarify its core purpose, and set course through focused strategy for shared goals—all informed by the needs and aspirations of ASTC’s global members and the communities, families, and youth they serve.

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“Even before she officially started on the job today, Cristin’s been enthusiastically engaged in conversations about the future of the association, our institutions, and the field of informal science learning. We’re excited by her talent, energy, commitment to the work ASTC members do in their communities, and support for our vital work in harnessing science and technology engagement to solve big challenges,” said Guy Labine, chair of the ASTC Board and CEO of Science North in Sudbury, Ontario, Canada.

Dorgelo comes to ASTC from the Obama Administration’s White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), where she was chief of staff to President Obama’s Science Advisor and the U.S. Chief Technology Officer, responsible for facilitating policy development and implementation across a broad range of science and technology issues. She led a White House effort to encourage more organizations and individuals to pursue Grand Challenges and also increased the use of open innovation approaches, such as incentive prizes, crowdsourcing, and citizen science.

Previously, she worked at the XPRIZE Foundation, implementing innovative competition models designed to drive technology breakthroughs, including challenges to develop super-fuel-efficient cars, effective approaches to oil-spill cleanup, advances in personalized medicine, and new space-exploration technology.

“Cristin’s background is the right match for ASTC at this pivotal time for our field and for science,” said Chevy Humphrey, chair of the ASTC Board’s Search Committee that unanimously selected Dorgelo during an extensive, international search.

Humphrey added, “Her experience and expertise with science, technology, public policy, organizational development, cross-sector partnerships, and addressing big challenges is closely aligned with what ASTC needs as we look ahead in a rapidly changing world. And her passion for listening to ASTC members and the communities we serve as we chart our course together will serve ASTC and its membership well.”

“It’s a critical time for science all around the world,” Dorgelo said, “and the work ASTC members do in their communities—every day—is incredibly important to helping everyone in the world experience the joy of learning and participate in applying science and technology to help meet the global challenges we face.”

Staff at ASTC-member organizations can meet Cristin through these forums during her first week and beyond:

Wednesday, January 24, 2–3 p.m.: ***“Ask Me Anything with Cristin Dorgelo”*** in the [ASTC General Forum](#), a live, interactive Q&A session.

Thursday, January 25, 2 p.m.: ***“ASTC on Air with . . . Cristin Dorgelo,”*** a lively and wide-ranging interview with ASTC’s new chief executive during her first week.

Wednesday, February 28: Following [Museums Advocacy Day](#) activities in Washington, D.C. (February 26–27), we will host an **ASTC Open House** at our offices for members who are in town. Join us between 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. for coffee with Cristin—or come by any time until 5:30 p.m. to tour the office, talk with ASTC staff, or just get some work done or relax between museums visits or before traveling home.

Read her new ASTC blog: ***“Highlights from Cristin,”*** which will feature news and insights from around the science center world and beyond.

Follow her on Twitter: [@cristindorgelo](#).

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About ASTC

Founded in 1973, ASTC has nearly 700 members in 50 countries, including science centers and museums, and also nature centers, aquariums, planetariums, zoos, botanical gardens, space theatres, and natural history and children's museums. Its members also include companies that offer products and services to the field and non-profit organizations that have an interest in science education. Through strategic alliances and global partnerships, ASTC strives to increase awareness of the valuable contributions its members make to their communities and the field of informal STEM learning. www.astc.org