



**International  
Science Council**  
The global voice for science

# Best wishes for the new year

---

We are looking forward to continued  
collaborations in 2021!



# Letter from the President

22 DECEMBER 2020

---

Dear ISC Members,

I recently wrote to the ISC staff, expressing my gratitude for their continued energy, focus and resolve to carry on with the ISC's daily functions as the global representative body for the social and natural sciences, by continuing with implementing the [ISC Action Plan 2019 – 2021](#), as well as launching a number of new projects in response to the global pandemic.

I would like to say to you what I said to ISC staff – any attempt to describe the turbulence of this year is likely to come across as understatement. It has deeply affected every single individual, the impact ranging from instability to social and economic insecurity and a host of health-related consequences, in many cases tragic.

2020, despite its challenges, has been a year in which scientific endeavour and international collaboration have been at the forefront of the minds of policy makers and the public alike. And we, the international science community, have risen to the occasion.

As I write, vaccines are in the process of being developed and distributed, but new strains of the virus are emerging, and the issues around fair and equitable distribution of vaccines, vaccine hesitancy (especially through misinformation) and the uneven social and economic effects of the virus continue to highlight deep inequities in our society. These issues are also at the heart of the ISC's values – promoting the continued and equal advancement of scientific rigour, creativity, and relevance in all parts of the world and above all, our vision to advance science as a global public good.

But there will still be rocky roads ahead, as we navigate the next phase of this pandemic from crisis management to recovery. Through its membership and global convening power, the ISC will need to find impactful and unique ways in which to respond to the needs of policy communities and wider publics, ensuring that science is a partner in the creation of a sustainable and equitable new normal for the world we want to live in.

The Governing Board has been able to review the activities and impact the ISC has made this year. We are proud of what the Council has been able to achieve during this difficult time. But it could not have been achieved without the support, engagement, and dedication of you, our Members and our colleagues in our many affiliated programmes. The ISC Action Plan 2019 – 2021 continues to drive the Council's activities. Consultation with Members on the draft Action Plan for 2022 – 2024 will start in early 2021 and will be accompanied by a report on our achievements since the merger.

2021 will be a year of transformations, particularly with the start of the [Ocean Decade](#) and the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) scheduled for Glasgow in November. The ISC will continue its convening role, working with Members, affiliated programmes and international partners to realise its mission as the global voice for science. In that regard, please find here a [joint statement](#) by the International Science Council and the InterAcademy Partnership: Strengthening cooperation and collaboration, reiterating that the global research community requires strong, coordinated leadership and representation on wide-ranging science-for-policy and policy-for-science issues.

I look forward to continuing to work with you, our Members, in the new year, and hope to see you at the [extraordinary General Assembly](#) scheduled for 1 – 5 February 2021. A Governing Board Communiqué highlighting key decisions from our virtual meetings September – December 2020 will be sent to Members in the new year.

For now, I extend my very best wishes to you and your loved ones for a safe and restful end-of-year-season, and for a peaceful and healthy 2021.

With warm regards,



*Daya Reddy*

Daya Reddy  
ISC President

---

## About our 2020 Season's Greetings Cover Image

The photo created for [Cell Signaling Technology](#) by [Digizyme](#), is a 3D rendering of a eukaryotic cell and is modelled using X-ray, nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR), and cryo-electron microscopy datasets for all of its molecular actors. Interactive versions of the image can be explored [here](#). © Cell Signaling Technology, Inc. Licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND 4.0](#).

For the ISC Secretariat, this image evoked a feeling of looking at a carnival or fair taken from above, a normally joyful experience where families gather to celebrate the end of the year or new beginnings, however this carnival is empty, reminding us of how the SARS-CoV-2 virus has impacted our lives.