

# Questions for Sigma Xi President-Elect Candidates

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1. If elected president, what would be your goals, particularly concerning membership, fiscal growth, and policy for Sigma Xi's future?

Having been our CEO, I understand exactly how SXI struggled and what we did to make corrections. When I say we were broken, I am serious. I am proud of our accomplishments, prouder still to have been asked to serve, and inspired by the subsequent progress.

Now, on the cusp of reversing membership decline, we have a robust philanthropic program; we are emerging as a force for scientific research back to the national and international stages; **American Scientist** remains a beacon of scientific communication excellence; our HQ organization is fully functional and achieving progress; we are reclaiming the role of leader in research ethics.

We have kept to our plans, reasonably well. If elected, I would analyze and evaluate the details of our management results in membership, programs, communications, and HQ. Across all functions of the organization, we have set in place plans and monitoring for sound business practice. Even so, we still have little time or resources for any costly, new major initiatives or organizational diversions. So, I would work hard to fulfill my duties to HQ and the Board. For the chapters, I would be mentor, advisor, and cheerleader to help achieve SXI's aims of reversing membership decline and regaining the ability and status to carry out our mission and vision.

My policy emphases are advocacy for SXI's Value Proposition and research professionalism. My overall goal would be a return to leadership preeminence for the ethically highest quality scientific research, to rejuvenated organizational relevance, and to Society growth.

2. Tell us about your most relevant leadership experience.

My time leading SXI, described in my full statement and bio, is most relevant; however, other career accomplishments are illustrative of possible qualification.

From the start, I have been given challenging situations requiring competence, confidence, and some courage. Never having stood in front of my own class, I was at age 21 made science department chairman, and handed an over \$100K NSF grant budget to set up a department in a brand new high school. I did it successfully. Then I learned how to teach in high school, then in college.

As an environmental consultant, I was often tasked with convincing clients to choose the right and ethical actions, and I built a very successful small program within Law Engineering into a successful consulting operation, Law Environmental.

Joining the Georgia Institute of Technology, I built a very small two person haz-waste program in GTRI into a several million-dollar, 100+person Environmental Science and Technology Laboratory in GTRI. In addition, I achieved joint appointments as professor in three academic schools: Applied Biology, Civil and Environmental Engineering, and Earth and Atmospheric Sciences.

Retiring from Tech, I became university partnerships VP at Oak Ridge Associated Universities—a \$200 million/yr non-profit. Managing the university consortium, I oversaw the formation of a core university-ORNL partnership, expanded the consortium to 122 universities and established an HBCU-centric program.

After having been retired for several years, SXI leadership asked me to take on the chore of leading The Society out of a very difficult time. So far, so good.

3. What is the most significant issue within Sigma Xi that you would exert time and effort to address?

Today, mobilizing the energy, passion, and intellectual capacity of our membership to address the big research challenges, such as climate change, clean environment, health care, poverty... is the single most important task for our president.

We are the country's largest, most storied, and most respected research honor society possessed of staggering positive intellectual capacity. Yet, literally tens of white-papers, hundreds of editorials, op-eds, and presentations languish on our Online Community. Even so, the ethics concerns arising online shows great potential. President's can encourage more action.

There is another factor related to membership mobilization. Sigma Xi is one of four members of the Honor Council. We are inducted in honor of our individual research records. That honor should be real to us. However, that honor seems to have been largely forgotten or at least relegated to something old hat, something less important to a career, something not necessarily to sustain. I want to reverse that attitude. You and I graduated Sigma Xi!

Then there is the power of Sigma Xi as a force for research—the third facet in my membership mobilization model. The president should be the Society's public face. That chore is a contact sport that takes someone experienced in and willing to take the stage, to interact at the highest levels of business and government, to be your voice every day, to seek venues and opportunities to spread our collective viewpoints.

Retirement is a joke at our house. I will commit not hours but days/week to this cause.

4. What particular personal qualities do you possess that might help convince members to vote for you?

I adhere to the SXI mission, the vision, and the principles of ethical research behavior as set out in our guidance, ***Honor in Science*** (1984).

Tenacity is a characteristic my acquaintances often use to describe me. Not rude, but direct and vocal, thoughtful, persuadable, I am hopefully kind. Once convinced, I am not likely to let go of a cause; however, I am reasonable and can be persuaded to other points of view. I am loyal...Oh my! Yes, I am an Eagle Scout.

I have a professional history, as described elsewhere, of taking on meager resources and small staffs to achieve very significant results often in the face of low expectation. Understanding business, having learned sound decision making, and somehow acquiring good people skills are all qualities that I must have had in some good measure. However, the trait I have cultivated to be successful is really straight forward. I surround myself with smart people and let them do their jobs, intervening only when necessary, most often to ask what I can do to help without meddling.

Finally, I did graduate Sigma Xi. Upon induction I felt pride, not the sinful sort, but the pride of fellowship as a scientist and researcher. A first-in-my-family college boy, I have always loved Sigma Xi, read ***American Scientist***, maintained my membership, and have achieved a reasonably good career. My greatest professional honor came when asked by peers to help Sigma Xi as CEO. Becoming your president would be the career pinnacle for me.