Melanie MacGregor

Background

- I have been a member of the RACI since 2013 and served as the SA state representative for the Polymer Chemistry group from 2013 to 2018.
- In this role I chaired events such as the South Australian Polymer and Bionanotechnology Symposiums and a Theo Murphy Initiative networking event (held in parallel to the 2018 International Conference of Young Researchers on Advanced Materials)
- In 2017, I represented the RACI at Science Meets Parliament and hosted the subsequent visit to SA of The Hon Craig Laundy, Assistant Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science.
- Since obtaining my PhD in 2013, I have worked on several industry and government funded research projects in the field of applied materials engineering for biomedical applications.
- For this translational work I was awarded the 2017 Winnovation awards in the Engineering category and a 2018 SA Young Tall Poppy Science Award
- I am currently working as senior Santos-UCL research fellow at the Future Industries Institute, UniSA, as of 2021 I will continue as an ARC Future Fellow.
- As an enthusiastic ambassador of diversity in the STEM sector, I became one of the 2019 *Super Stars of STEM*, a program sponsored by Science and Technology Australia which actively support women in STEM to engage with the media and school kids. In this role, I for instance, contributed to an article in Chemistry World on "Looking after children and your career"
- From 2019 I have been the ECR representative on the UniSA Research and Integrity committee, and I am the co-chair of the SA node of the Australian-French Association for Research and Innovation. I am also a mentor in the current RACI mentoring program.

RACI direction

- **Translation**: RACI is already designed to bring together chemists from academia, industry and government institutions. It is therefore well placed to play a key part in fostering translational projects that will make a real impact to the local Australian economy. 2020 has highlighted that a priority for Australia is to revive its industrial base in areas such as the advanced manufacturing sector. I see RACI becoming a catalyst in developing new partnerships between its members, capable of bringing Australian-made technologies from the lab to the shelves.
- **Visibility**: As the job market sees the number of "hybrid" jobs roaring, chemistry has become one of the essential elements to many modern career paths that often don't get a specific mention (i.e. nanotechnology, renewable energy- even the emergency response to a pandemic through the development of new PPE!). The RACI through its members can help increase the visibility of the discipline to the community. I would encourage our organization to use avenues such as the media (including social media) to showcase the importance of chemistry. This would in turn increase the support the RACI could get from different stakeholders.
- **Diversity and inclusion**: With a view to keeping the RACI inclusive of all chemists in Australia I would actively contribute to the promotion of the organization and its events in underrepresented states and demographics.