



March 20, 2020

Dear colleagues,

We are writing today to share the news that, due to the rapid spread of COVID-19 and the vigilant efforts by the Canadian Government and Province of British Columbia to control this disease by prohibiting public gatherings the **RNA Society will be unable to hold our annual meeting in Vancouver at the end of May**. Given the deadly nature of this novel virus and the importance of protecting the health and safety of individuals worldwide, the **RNA Society** fully supports this decision.

Please know, however, that while these circumstances prevent us from gathering physically to share our recent research advances, we recognize the importance of the **RNA Society** annual meeting in your scientific and professional development and have made the decision to proceed with **RNA 2020** using an on-line platform. Given that we are under threat by a virus with an RNA genome, the collective knowledge of our membership has never been more important. We are therefore making every effort to provide a lively platform for exchange of ideas and results, in keeping with our tradition.

We are pleased to announce that despite uncertainties surrounding the last several weeks, we have 700 meeting registrants and 560 submitted abstracts for **RNA 2020**. Only yesterday, meeting organizers completed review of your submissions and selected abstracts for oral presentation - thereby finalizing the meeting Program. Those selected to give talks will be contacted shortly with specific instructions, and we will be asking both oral and poster presenters to prepare material appropriate for on-line presentation. Additional details will be provided over the coming weeks but be assured that the **RNA Society** is working diligently to adopt a platform for **RNA 2020** that best facilitates both the presentation and accessibility of your science.

In the meantime, we are also working hard to initiate reimbursement of your paid meeting registration fees (in full) and any payments made for accommodations at the dorms at the University of British Columbia. We anticipate that payments will commence in the next 2-3 weeks, but also ask for your patience as we work with banks and credit card companies who themselves are experiencing disruptions in service.

And while developments associated with COVID-19 continue to evolve rapidly, we would like to pause and take this opportunity to thank all those who have worked tirelessly in the planning of **RNA 2020**, and to all of you for your continued participation as we adjust to these changing times.

Anna Pyle
President, **RNA Society**

Sarah Woodson
Lead Organizer, **RNA 2020**

Kristian Baker
CEO, **RNA Society**