

Dear AURIL Members,

It is a great honour for me to have been elected as Chair of AURIL and over the coming year I hope that I can live up to the high standards set by my predecessors. For me, AURIL's strength comes from the diversity and inclusivity of our membership base. We have members from throughout the UK and also enjoy close links with AURIL Ireland. Moreover, this year, all four home nations are being represented on Council. Devolution has allowed Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales to mould their own KT landscape to reflect their needs. As such, one of my main objectives for the coming year is to strengthen and broaden our links with key stakeholders in the devolved countries to complement the close ties we already have in England. This will present an excellent opportunity to learn from best practice in each of the countries and it is only natural that AURIL leads the way by facilitating this process.

As the leading UK body representing publically funded organisations engaged in Knowledge Transfer, our main role is one of advocacy. AURIL draws membership from nearly all the HEIs in the UK and Ireland (with international organisations joining as associate members), NHS IP Hubs and Public Sector Research Establishments (PSRE). This diversity is one of our greatest strengths. It allows us to access a wealth of knowledge that enables us to respond to and influence the agendas of key stakeholders such as the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills, HEFCE, UK Governments, the research councils and industry. The diversity of our membership base also allows us to justifiably state that we are the voice of Knowledge Transfer organisations when responding to consultation exercises.

Knowledge Transfer covers a broad spectrum of activity and we draw our membership from all areas, from those working in community and social engagement through to industrial Technology Transfer. Our conferences and specialist events provide space and time for our members to network while our mail base allows the distribution of information and offers a forum where problems/issues can be discussed and debated. Several of our key stakeholders even use it to conduct research into the changing Knowledge Transfer landscape.

AURIL has been at the leading edge of developing Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for KT Professionals. AURIL's KT CPD Framework was originally researched and designed in 2001 and it is currently undergoing its second review/update. AURIL's role within the framework has evolved over the years and we now work in partnership with several organisations (both in the UK and overseas) to deliver training and materials to enable the framework to make a real difference.

In these economically uncertain times, Knowledge Transfer and the potential benefits it can bring will increasingly come under the spotlight as policy makers look at ways of making the "knowledge economy" a reality. In this sense, AURIL has a vital role to play in ensuring that our voices, requirements and concerns are heard where it matters most: with our stakeholders, at Whitehall and in the devolved administrations. AURIL is only as strong as its members and I look forward to working with you to promote Knowledge Transfer.

Davena Rankin