

Paula Olsiewski, PhD

Dr. Paula Olsiewski is a pioneering leader in policy and scientific research programs in biosecurity, synthetic biology, microbiology, and chemistry. Her ability to connect talented individuals with emerging science and technologies to inspire, accelerate, and produce positive and lasting impact has been a constant throughout her career.

As Program Director at the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, Paula has led innovative and multidisciplinary programs since joining the organization in 2000. Her accomplishments include the creation and direction of the Microbiology of the Built Environment (MoBE) and Chemistry of Indoor Environments (CIE) programs. Prior responsibilities at Sloan include leadership of the biosecurity and synthetic biology programs which established the foundation for numerous present-day academic, industry, and governmental collaborations. Paula's insight into the ecosystem of philanthropy, early recognition of needs, and ongoing mentoring has enabled grant recipients to make a purposeful and sustainable impact.

Dr. Olsiewski is a leading expert in biosecurity as well as research oversight, serving as a member of the executive committee of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Board of Scientific Counselors, where she chairs the Homeland Security Research Subcommittee. Early in her career, Paula was Vice President of Product Development in the diagnostics division at Enzo Biochem, and President of Neo/Tech Corp – a consulting practice bridging the interest of technologies companies, academia, and governmental agencies.

Paula received a Bachelor of Science in chemistry, cum laude, from Yale College and a Doctorate in biological chemistry from MIT. She continues to be involved in the academic and alumni communities at MIT and Yale and has served as a member of the MIT Corporation, President of the MIT Alumni Association and member of the Yale Alumni Fund Board. She was honored by the MIT alumni association with their highest award for her contributions. Paula was deeply involved with MIT's Initiative for Faculty Race and Diversity Advisory Committee and she continues to be an advocate for diversity and ongoing supporter of MIT Women in Chemistry.

Paula's acumen in board governance, recruitment and development, and donor relations and fundraising has helped many scientific and philanthropic organizations improve their operational efficacy and programmatic outcomes. She is an active board member of the Critical Path Institute – an independent, non-profit organization – dedicated to improving the drug development and regulatory process. In her local community, Paula has been a trustee of the Spondylitis Association of America, and board chair of Asphalt Green – a not-for-profit in New York encouraging a lifetime of participation in sports and fitness for individuals of all ages.