

Newsletter – Winter 2025

From the President – Joseph D. Ferrara



2025 has been a foundational year for the American Union of Crystallography. We have secured our legal and financial footing, been recognized by the International Union of Crystallography (IUCr) as the *ad interim* adhering body for the United States and launched the George M. Sheldrick Award for Contributions to Structural Science.

At the same time, we are preparing to support the community through education, outreach, and participation in the 27th IUCr Congress in Calgary in August 2026.

This newsletter provides an overview of our recent activities and outlines how you can help ensure a strong future for US crystallography.

AUC Recognized as IUCr *Ad Interim* Adhering Body

Following the National Academy of Sciences' decision to dissolve the US National Committee for Crystallography (USNC/Cr) effective 1 January 2026, the IUCr Executive Committee granted the AUC *ad interim* adhering body status for the United States, effective the same date. Thus, the AUC will formally represent US structural scientists to the IUCr beginning 1 January 2026, pending a final vote of the IUCr General Assembly at the 27th Congress in Calgary. Furthermore, 2026 IUCr dues have already been paid, ensuring continuity during the transition from the USNC/Cr to the AUC.

We are working with the American Crystallographic Association (ACA) and IUCr2026, LLC to ensure a smooth transfer of roles and responsibilities previously managed by the USNC/Cr.

Governance and Board Elections

The AUC Board structure has been formalized through revised bylaws modeled on those of the USNC/Cr while adapting to the AUC's independent nonprofit status.

Recent governance developments:

Transition from the USNC/Cr: The eight Regular Members of the USNC/Cr whose terms extend into 2026–2027 will continue as Regular Members of the AUC Board for the remainder of their original terms, ensuring continuity.

USND–AUC pipeline: Beginning in 2025, the ACA US National Division (USND) provided slates of candidates for Regular Members and officers (Secretary, then Vice Chair, then Treasurer), from which the AUC Board elects individuals for three-year terms, with Regular Members eligible for up to two consecutive terms.

2025 Election Results (New Officer and Regular Members):

The AUC Board elected:

Secretary: Allen Oliver

New Regular Members:

Stephen Burley

Ed Eng

Benjamin Frandsen

Leighanne Gallington

We thank the outgoing members who completed their terms and welcome our new Secretary and Regular Members, who will play a critical role in shaping AUC's next phase.

Committees and Community Engagement

AUC's work is organized through several standing and emerging committees, including:

Education, Workforce Development & Outreach Committee

Finance & Fundraising Committee

Standards & Ethics Committee

Research Infrastructure Committee

Public Relations / Communications Committee

These groups are coordinating activities such as community surveys on infrastructure needs, development of best practices and white papers, outreach to early-career scientists, and improved communication via the AUC website and social media.

If you are interested in serving on any of these committees, please contact the AUC leadership through the website's contact page.

George M. Sheldrick Award for Contributions to Structural Science

One of the AUC's major new initiatives is the George M. Sheldrick Award for Contributions to Structural Science, established in memory of Professor George M. Sheldrick (1942–2025).

The award:

Recognizes outstanding early-career contributions to molecular structure determination, including innovative methods, algorithms, or software. It includes a \$3,000 monetary prize and payment of registration fees for the IUCr Congress where the award is presented (starting with IUCr 2026 in Calgary). The award is triennial, to be awarded in IUCr Congress years beginning in 2026 and will be administered by the AUC Education, Workforce Development & Outreach Committee.

Nominations are now open, with details and deadlines available on the [Sheldrick Award](#) page on the AUC website.

Funding need: To sustain the award at its intended level, the Sheldrick fund must reach approximately \$60,000, creating a stable base to support the cash prize and registration costs across multiple IUCr cycles.

As of mid-December 2025, the Sheldrick restricted account holds about \$13,000, with additional donations pledged.

Preparing for IUCr 2026 and Supporting US Participation

The 27th IUCr Congress and General Assembly will be held in Calgary, Canada, 11–18 August 2026.

AUC's priorities for the Congress include:

Identifying and confirming five voting delegates (and two alternates) to represent the United States at the General Assembly under the new AUC adhering-body structure. Where funds allow, assisting delegates whose participation is not fully institutionally supported. Working with ACA and partners to help US students and early-career researchers attend IUCr 2026 through travel support and coordinated programming.

We also intend to support outreach and training programs such as the ACA Summer Course and other crystallography schools and workshops in the US, using AUC funds to broaden access and participation.



Why We Need Your Support Now

At this early stage, AUC is operating with modest unrestricted funds but has an ambitious mission: supporting education and outreach, including summer courses (such as the ACA Summer Course), workshops, and pipeline-building efforts across structural science. It also aims to help send and support US delegates and early-career scientists to IUCr 2026 and future international meetings. Additionally, AUC seeks to steward the legacy funds previously managed by NAS on behalf of USNC/Cr in a way that directly benefits the US crystallographic community.

With net operating funds currently under \$2,000, every contribution—large or small—will have a meaningful impact on what AUC can accomplish in 2026 and beyond.

You can help by making a personal donation to AUC's general fund or directly to the Sheldrick Award fund. You can also help by encouraging your institution or company to sponsor specific programs (e.g., the ACA Summer Course, a lecture series, or student travel to IUCr 2026) through the AUC.

Information on how to give is available on the AUC website's "Support" or "Donations" section.

501(c)(3) Status and Financial Infrastructure

The AUC is now a recognized 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. This allows donations to be tax-deductible (subject to individual circumstances) and positions AUC to receive and manage community funds directly.

We are deeply grateful to the early donors who have helped us launch this year. Transparency is key to our mission; here is where we stand:

The George M. Sheldrick Award Fund

- **Goal:** \$60,000 (for long-term sustainability)
- **Current:** \$13,000
- **Status:**  22% of goal reached
- *A special thank you to our founding donors and those with pending pledges. We need your help to bridge the remaining \$47,000 to secure this award for future generations.*

AUC Operating Fund

- **Status: Critical Need**
- With net operating funds currently **under \$2,000**, your unrestricted donations are vital. These funds directly support our ability to manage the transition from NAS, maintain our website, and provide the infrastructure needed to support US crystallographers.

We have established the following levels of donation. Any amount will have a meaningful impact!

Donation Level	Tier Criteria
Rhodium Level	≥\$10,000
Iridium Level	≥\$5,000
Gold Level	≥\$1,000
Cesium Level	≥\$500
Palladium Level	≥\$250

American Union of Crystallography

Keep your eye out for the AUC logo in your mailbox!



In the coming year, the AUC will issue quarterly newsletters, share updates via the AUC website and social media channels, and publicize calls for nominations, funding opportunities, and community input.

We invite you to stay engaged, share this newsletter with colleagues, and consider how you and your institution can partner with AUC to strengthen structural science in the United States.

On behalf of the AUC leadership, thank you for your continued support.

Joseph D. Ferrara, President and Chair
Lisa J. Keefe, Vice Chair
Ilia A. Guzei, Treasurer
Allen J. Oliver, Secretary