

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT 2019

Dear Members,

Welcome to Congress '19, our 27th edition of the World Congress of Science and Factual Producers. We are delighted to welcome you back to the dynamic city of Tokyo where it's been 14 years since we last met. Then, as now, NHK has always been our devoted host and we would like to thank the network for its long-standing commitment to our event.

These are exciting times in Tokyo as the city gears up for next year's Summer Olympics. Tokyo has always been a unique blend of ancient tradition, modern culture and futuristic technology. That range and diversity is reflected in our program content, social events and the venue itself, the National Museum of Science and Innovation, or "Miraikan".

As Tokyo prepares to welcome the world, we have a unique opportunity to beat the crowds and see first-hand one of the world's greatest and most fascinating cities, while enjoying the industry's most anticipated event of the year.

2018

Last year's successful edition in Brisbane was remarkable in that it attracted 320 new members from 21 countries. In our post-Congress survey, 98% of members reported that they would recommend the annual conference to a friend or colleague.

Two sessions from Brisbane that received critical acclaim from delegates were Lord David Puttnam's Spark of Inspiration speech on politics, the media and the environment. And "Watching with Millennials" – a brilliant role reversal where network executives found themselves pitching young digital viewers. I'm pleased to report that because of their success the themes in both of those sessions will be explored in even more depth this year. You'll find "Millennials Rising: The Sequel" and "Can We Save the Planet?" scheduled on Wednesday morning.

2019

This year we've undertaken new initiatives to broaden our reach and welcome new members. We have expanded our bursary program and reduced financial barriers, with lower registration fees for junior executives and producers under 35 as well as digital creators and science communicators. Expect to see lots of new faces, new session topics and new media companies this year.

Our long term strategy is being supported by Wellcome who have generously committed a multi-year grant to allow us to achieve our goals.

At the heart of this year's Congress is the Immersive Zone. This is the biggest, most exciting interactive area we have ever offered, with 8K VR, a Dome theatre, the latest in virtual and augmented reality experiences as well as the newest technology from NHK Labs.

And this year we welcome our new conference director, Paul Lewis who, along with an expanded editorial committee, has created an outstanding lineup.

2020

We're very excited to announce that we'll be returning to Europe next year and hope you'll join us for the announcement of the host city and sponsor at our closing plenary session.

We are committed to the progress we've made over the past few years to ensure Congress remains relevant and adapts to a rapidly changing media industry. This means we will continue to encourage and welcome members from new and developing platforms and ensure that our Board of Directors, Editorial Committee, session content and sponsors reflect those changes in every aspect of Congress.

As a member-led organization we encourage you as always to participate and get involved in Congress, and we welcome your feedback, suggestions and ideas.