Meet Our Newly Elected Honorary President

Peiqing Zhang, President, ISPE Singapore Affiliate, Scientific Director Asia, Cytiva



About Peiqing

Q. Could you share a bit about your professional journey and how you became involved with ISPE?

Graduating from my PhD in glycobiology and cell line engineering, I started my career as a researcher leading a group of scientists to develop analytical technologies for analysing large molecules such as therapeutic antibodies.

I always wanted to be closer to drug development and manufacturing so I moved to the industry, taking a role in analytical science and technology with Novartis Singapore site, and later transitioned into another role in manufacturing science and technology. In between, I spent about two years in China, leading a drug development program in a clinical-stage biotech company.

I feel I was lucky to have the opportunities to learn different things in the therapeutics development space and was looking for a good platform to exchange knowledge and expand my network.

I came to know ISPE through Shanshan Liu, my former colleague in Novartis and Chairperson of ISPE Singapore Affiliate at that time.

So I joined ISPE and I must say it has been a fulfilling and enriching experience working alongside people from different sectors of the pharmaceutical industry, all enthusiastic about our industry and the Society and willing to dedicate their time and effort. From speaking at Tech Tuesday webinars to organizing annual conference to simply joining the networking events, ISPE has provided me so many opportunities to learn, to contribute and to enjoy!

Q. What motivates you most about being part of the ISPE community?

I will say it's about creating opportunities. Fundamentally, ISPE provides arguably the best opportunities to stay in sync with best practices in the industry, to gain new knowledge from peers and thought leaders brought together by ISPE events. Alongside opportunities to collectively shape future directions e.g. through Community of Practice (COP) initiatives, ISPE document drafting/review, and training courses.

Certainly, there is a strong element of capability development through ISPE. And by volunteering for our affiliate, many of the members including myself, get the opportunities to develop skillsets outside of our daily jobs, e.g. students honing their leadership skills, individual contributors providing monitorship to young professionals, etc.

Being part of the ISPE community unlocks opportunities for ourselves as members and provides various ways for many of us to give back to the community through knowledge sharing and outreach activities.

Role and Vision

Q. What are your key goals or priorities during your term?

Our overarching goals remain unchanged: we strive to add value to our members. We will continue to do so through events especially our annual conference, CoP activities, and initiatives from our chapters (e.g. students, emerging leaders, women-in-pharma).

This year marks the 25th anniversary of ISPE Singapore Affiliate.

We will celebrate this important milestone together with people who have enabled our journey, and set the stage for our future growth.

With our Executive Committee, I'm confident we can deliver. And I'm looking forward to expanding our influence through collaborations with affiliates/chapters and CoPs in the region, and through ISPE Foundation, to create more value for ISPE and its members.

Industry Perspective

Q. What opportunities do you see for collaboration and innovation within the industry?

I see two trends in our industry: divergence of drug modalities, and convergence of workflows and technologies.

From vaccines to small molecule generics, to large molecule drugs and cell and gene therapies, the industry now offers more options to address various healthcare needs. At the same time, pricing pressure and rising regulatory standards drive the pharmaceutical manufacturing sector towards adopting platform-based, flexible, GMP-compliant, and highly efficient manufacturing solutions.

And now we also have the sustainability mandate especially for developed markets.

Across different modalities, there are several key enablers of these mandates, including digitalization and automation, advanced facility and process technologies, and trained workforce. Each aspect requires in-depth domain knowledge and stacks of technologies.

No company can do it alone. This is where we need to collaborate across the ecosystem to develop and implement solutions to fulfil quality, speed and process economics requirements in drug manufacturing, tapping upon each other's expertise.

We need more robust platforms for the exchanges.

Within ISPE, we have different CoPs that work on standardizing and harmonizing platforms and sharing best practices from CQV through to ATMP. Perhaps we will also need to do more cross-talks among the CoPs, taking a workflow perspective, to share problem statements and seek collaborative solutions.

Personal Insights

Q. What is one fun fact or hobby you'd like the ISPE community to know about you?

I started learning tennis only about three years ago. No shame about it. My former boss, who is much older than me 😀, plays tennis every weekend. I was like, if he can do it, why can't I? So I did. I guess it's never too late to pick up a new hobby.