



RSC Annual Gala | Le gala annuel de la SRC

Remarks by Françoise Baylis (as delivered in Montréal, November 15, 2025) Allocution de Françoise Baylis (prononcée à Montréal le 15 novembre 2025)

Good evening, everyone. It is both an honour and a pleasure to be here with you tonight.

Before looking ahead, I would like to take a moment to recognize the exceptional leadership of my predecessor, Alain Gagnon.

Over the past three years, Alain has guided the RSC through a period of accelerated evolution, transparency, and coherence, advancing our shared priorities of inclusive excellence, independent expertise, and international engagement.

Il a dirigé le Conseil d'administration et le Conseil consultatif avec collégialité, ouverture et vision, consolidant ainsi les fondements de la Société pour les années à venir.

Alain, merci pour votre leadership et votre dévouement.

As I step into the role of President of the Royal Society of Canada, I want to say loudly and clearly that I value teamwork and I cherish collaboration. I consider myself very fortunate to be able to work with talented colleagues to achieve our lofty goals. And, when I refer to talented colleagues I mean all of you. To quote Susan Tighe “recognition is not just a reward — it is a responsibility.”

When I was inducted in 2007 and walked across the stage Yvan Guidon, the incoming president, shook my hand. I didn't think much about it. The next day he tapped me on the shoulder and asked me to work with the soon-to-be created RSC Atlantic – an initiative that would not have been possible without the generosity of Arthur and Sandra Irving and that would not have been successful without the support of Darren Gilmour and Linda Clauson.

Ce fut le début de mon parcours au sein de la RSC. Considérez donc ce commentaire comme un avertissement. Je prévois devoir solliciter votre aide et vos conseils durant ma présidence, et je compte sur votre soutien.

J'espère également que ce soutien s'étendra aux nouveaux présidents : l'Académie des arts des lettres et des sciences humaines James Grier, l'Académie des sciences sociales Guy Laforest et l'Académie des sciences Robert Boily ; Audrey Moores, présidente du Collège RSC ; ainsi qu'à notre conseil d'administration, notre conseil et l'équipe du bureau de la RSC.

Together, we will advance the RSC's mission as Canada's national academy, guided by the pillars of our 2026–2030 Strategic Plan, *Excellence and Engagement*, and rooted in our enduring purpose of connecting knowledge and community for the common good.



We are living in an era of uncertainty and division, when trust in expertise is being tested.

In this context, I am especially pleased that the RSC has launched the *Strength Through Science* initiative.

Through this initiative, we will ensure that the RSC remains steadfast in its commitment to building a brighter, more inclusive, and more informed future — together — and for the benefit of us all.

It has been wonderful to attend this year's Celebration of Excellence and Engagement here in Montréal.

Je tiens à remercier sincèrement nos partenaires présentateurs — l'Université de Montréal, Polytechnique Montréal et HEC Montréal — dont le généreux soutien a rendu possible cette rencontre.

Au cours des derniers jours, nous avons entendu des chercheurs de renom s'exprimer sur certaines des questions les plus pressantes de notre époque, allant de l'intelligence artificielle et de l'avenir de la recherche aux multiples défis sociaux et environnementaux auxquels notre planète est confrontée.

Ces conversations nous rappellent pourquoi le travail de la SRC — et de chacun d'entre vous — est si essentiel.

Sur ce, je tiens à adresser mes plus chaleureuses félicitations aux lauréats des prix 2025 et à souhaiter la bienvenue à la nouvelle cohorte de membres du Collège et de fellows.

To see you here, from across generations and disciplines, united in your dedication to advancing knowledge and improving our world, fills me with hope for what lies ahead.

Though we may be living through challenging times, tonight reminds us how much there is to celebrate, and how much more work we have to do together.

In that spirit, I am delighted to introduce someone whose leadership truly embodies the spirit of excellence and engagement that we have celebrated throughout this weekend.

En tant que professeure à la Faculté de médecine et vice-présidente à la Recherche et à l'innovation à l'Université d'Ottawa, elle a été un moteur pour faire progresser l'excellence en recherche, soutenir la collaboration interdisciplinaire et veiller à ce que nos travaux de recherche trouvent leur place dans la communauté.

Her commitment to fostering an environment where researchers can thrive — and where ideas can move from curiosity to impact — reflects a deep belief in the power of research to serve society, fuel innovation, and contribute to a better future for all.

It is a vision that resonates deeply with the mission of the Royal Society of Canada and with our shared belief in the power of ideas to serve the common good.



Please join me in welcoming to the podium the Vice-President, Research and Innovation of the University of Ottawa, Professor Julie St. Pierre.