

# Previewing MS&T20: A Roundtable with Program Organizers

Kelly Zappas and Kaitlin Calva

**MS&T20**  
MATERIALS SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

The three organizing partners of the Materials Science & Technology (MS&T) conference series—TMS, the Association for Iron & Steel Technology, and The American Ceramic Society—are deep into planning MS&T20 and the robust technical program that takes full advantage of new opportunities and approaches to sharing important work across materials disciplines.

After 17 years, MS&T is the established destination for fostering technical innovation and professional collaboration through the synergies of major professional societies cooperating to advance the materials professions as a whole. This fact is reflected in the tagline adopted for MS&T20 and beyond—Where Materials Innovation Happens.

Highlighting the individual identities of each of the partner societies within this collaborative meeting will be a new feature introduced with MS&T20. TMS Fall Meeting programming, for instance, has been an integral part of MS&T from the very beginning. However, in 2020, it will play an even more prominent role, with TMS Technical Committees receiving acknowledgement for the symposia that they sponsor.

The success of MS&T, both now and in the future, rests with the contributions of the many volunteers who organize symposia, contribute papers, and attend the meeting. For a preview of how MS&T20 will build on that legacy, *JOM* has asked several of those volunteers to share their perspectives. Read on and make sure MS&T20 is on your professional “must-do” list: October 4–8, 2020, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. For more information, visit [www.matscitech.org/MST20](http://www.matscitech.org/MST20).

## Q. What is your history with the MS&T conference series?

**Narayan:** I first organized the Next Generation Biomaterials symposium at the 2005 MS&T meeting. The symposium has been held each year since 2005, and I have served in an organizer or co-organizer role since that time.

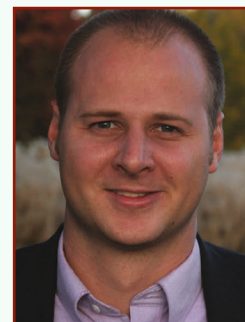
**Carpenter:** I first attended an MS&T conference in Columbus, Ohio, in 2011, where I gave two talks. Over the past few years, I’ve regularly attended and spoken but have not been an organizer at MS&T prior to the 2020 meeting.

**Unocic:** My association with MS&T began when I transitioned from being a graduate student at The Ohio State University to becoming an R&D staff scientist at Oak Ridge National Laboratory. My research fit well with a number of symposia at MS&T, so I started submitting abstracts. At the same time, I became very active in TMS committees, such as the Young Leaders and the Corrosion & Environmental Effects Committees, which prompted me to attend committee meetings and to get involved in planning future symposia.

## Q. As an organizer, what differences do you see between MS&T and the TMS Annual Meeting? Does the participation of other societies impact the experience of attending and presenting at MS&T?

**Carpenter:** At TMS annual meetings (attending since 2011), I’ve organized 17 separate symposia over the years. What I had found was that the symposia I was interested in did not exist at TMS annual meetings until I helped create them. MS&T always seemed to have good symposia

## Meet the Organizers



**John Carpenter,**  
*Los Alamos National Laboratory*  
Symposium Title:  
*Additive Manufacturing:  
Mechanical Behavior  
of Lattice Structures  
Produced via AM*



**Roger Narayan,**  
*North Carolina State University*  
Symposium Title:  
*Next Generation  
Biomaterials*



**Kinga Unocic,**  
*Oak Ridge National Laboratory*  
Symposium Title:  
*High Temperature Corrosion  
and Degradation of  
Structural Materials*

already in place. As I developed new symposia at TMS, the “exotic” locales of Orlando, San Diego, etc. always seemed like a better draw for pulling in invited speakers or international speakers. What I have found, though, is that a well-focused symposium, regardless of location or society participation, will draw the right speakers and audience.

**Unocic:** From what I have observed, I believe more representatives from industry attend MS&T meetings. Having a

diverse array of attendees from academia, industry, and government is important because it gives students, researchers, engineers, manufacturers, and scientists the opportunity to collaborate and connect at different research levels. Also, the participation of attendees from other societies further broadens the scope of MS&T conferences, providing even greater opportunities for technical interaction and networking. Having technologically relevant symposia is important for the future of materials research. The interaction between academia or national laboratories with industry can create a unique opportunity for future projects, collaborations, and advances in research.

**Narayan:** Our symposium is supported by the TMS Biomaterials Committee and The American Ceramic Society Bioceramics Division. Each society brings its own focus area of expertise and membership to the symposium.

**Q. What are you looking forward to with the 2020 meeting?**

**Unocic:** As an organizer, my desire is to deliver an outstanding symposium for the attendees. In our symposium, High-Temperature Corrosion and Degradation of Structural Materials, I am looking forward to learning about the new and exciting research areas from our diverse range of speakers, from early career to senior researchers, and from academia, industry, and national laboratories. I am also looking forward to meeting new people, establishing new collaborations, and seeing old colleagues and friends.

**Carpenter:** This is what I am aiming for at MS&T20: a focused symposium on a scientifically challenging topic that is at the forefront of manufacturing. I have high hopes that this symposium will be a success. I am also excited about altering the format. Instead of talk after talk, I plan to include a panel discussion with invited speakers and a “brainstorming” or roundtable discussion for developing a roadmap or strategy for work needed to support the acceptance of lattice structures. Given industry’s large presence at MS&T, I see this as a method for bridging the gap between researchers and industry.



## Q&A with James Foley



As both the current TMS President and a volunteer who was instrumental in developing programming at MS&T in the conference’s early years, James C. Foley, Los Alamos National Laboratory, offers some insight into both the history and the future of the MS&T conference series.

**Q. Could you briefly describe your history with MS&T?**

**A.** My history with MS&T started when it was just TMS and the Association for Iron and Steel Technology. I then was part of the initial tenuous start with the other societies, ASM International and The American Ceramic Society. I was the first TMS representative to the MS&T Program Coordinating Committee and then was the first chair of that committee. (I had suggested after the 2005 installment of MS&T that the Program Coordinating Committee have a rotating chair so that there was someone to lead the discussion of the committee. No good deed goes unpunished, and I became the 2006 MS&T Programming Coordinating Committee chair.) I have attended all MS&T meetings that I can think of. I even snuck in a talk or two in between serving on the TMS Board of Directors and ASM Board of Trustees.

**Q. What differences do you see between MS&T and the TMS Annual Meeting?**

**A.** MS&T is a little more structured than the annual meeting to ensure that all the participating societies get a fair and equitable participation. Each society has their own special programming and stamp on the meeting to ensure that their members get value out of the event while working together for a better overall conference. Also, there are technical divisions within TMS that typically don’t participate in MS&T as much as they do in the Annual Meeting.

**Q. Why do you think that MS&T is an important programming venue for TMS members?**

**A.** MS&T is a great opportunity to program with professionals in the ceramics and steel sectors that isn’t as possible at the annual meeting or any other conference. Also, MS&T has historically been located in places where it is within easy driving distance for university students. That means that there is usually an abundance of materials students participating in MS&T.