

Obituary of Dr Andrew Dearing

Dr Andrew Dearing, Secretary General of EIRMA since 2000, has passed away after a long illness. He was 55 years old.

Andrew guided EIRMA through a period of rapid change for industrial research managers, as companies shed their central facilities, globalised their organisations and looked to external partnerships to feed their innovation pipelines. Andrew's response was twofold: he innovated within EIRMA to ensure that it remained the best forum for research managers to discuss these challenging issues; and he worked with external organisations to ensure that national, European and global policymakers understood how they could enable industrial innovation, and the importance of the contribution it makes to wider society.

The personal contacts that Andrew developed through this outreach work, at the highest levels of national governments and international organisations, strengthened EIRMA's profile as a key player in the global innovation debate, as well as helping to convince the most senior industrialists and policymakers to share their insights at EIRMA events.

Andrew's distinguished career in research and research liaison began in 1978 when, after getting a doctorate in chemistry from the University of Oxford, he joined Royal Dutch Shell as an operations research analyst. Two years later he worked as a visiting lecturer in the department of pharmaceutical chemistry at the University of California, San Francisco. Upon his return to Shell in 1981, Andrew started to work on a project to introduce computer-aided methods for molecule design. The project offered early evidence of Andrew's lifetime interest in the power of computing, and his enthusiasm for capitalising upon research results. Andrew progressed through a number of roles at Shell, applying computing to seismic analysis and crop protection, and later chairing a group to introduce computer-based methods throughout the company's R&D function. His success in this role led to him being given responsibility for the planning and coordination of Shell's longer-term R&D portfolio, its external relations in science and technology, and later for its research and technology strategy planning.

In 1998, Andrew was seconded to the World Business Council for Sustainable Development as Programme Director for Innovation and Technology, where he helped to launch the United Nations' Millennium Assessment of the State of the World's Ecosystems and participated in the third round of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

In his role of EIRMA's General Secretary, Andrew regularly acted as an advisor to the European Commission on aspects of industrial innovation and research policy. He was also Chairman of the Technology Committee of BIAC, the OECD's industry advisory body, and a member of the Board of Administration of the Maison de la Chimie, France.

Andrew gave invited presentations to leading audiences around the world on research and innovation and worked on many committees and panels to guide innovation policy. Some of his most recent contributions are the Responsible Partnering initiative, which aims to help industry and academia to work together; and the findings of the European Commission's Expert Group on the role of community policy in the knowledge-based economy, of which Andrew was a member, demonstrating his commitment to European innovation.

Andrew is survived by his wife Judy and his son Tim.