

Pilar de la Puente, PhD

Dr. Pilar de la Puente is an Associate Scientist at Sanford Research and Associate Professor at the University of South Dakota Sanford School of Medicine. She received her PhD in Biomedical Engineering and Biological Sciences from the University of Salamanca and completed postdoctoral training at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, where she specialized in cancer tissue engineering, nanomedicine, and precision medicine approaches.

Dr. de la Puente's research focuses on extracellular matrix remodeling, tumor microenvironment engineering, and the development of patient-informed models to investigate cancer progression, therapeutic response, and immune interactions. Her laboratory integrates matrix biology, biomaterials, and cancer biology to advance more predictive platforms for translational research and precision oncology.

An active member of the American Society for Matrix Biology since 2020, Dr. de la Puente serves on the Communications and Outreach Committee, has co-led the organization of ASMB's e-Symposium series for the past two years, and is a member of the organizing committee for ASMB 2027. She is passionate about fostering interdisciplinary collaborations, supporting trainees and early-career investigators, and strengthening engagement across the Society.

ASMB has played an important role in my professional growth, and I am seeking a Council position to help shape the Society's future while giving back to the community that has provided opportunities for collaboration, mentorship, and scientific exchange. If elected, I would focus on three priorities. First, I would advocate for expanded support of trainees and early-career investigators, helping them develop not only scientific expertise but also skills in leadership, collaboration, communication, mentorship, and team science. I believe ASMB can play an important role in preparing the next generation of matrix biologists by creating meaningful opportunities for engagement, networking, mentorship, and leadership within the Society.

Second, I would work to strengthen connections between matrix biology and related fields, including engineering, immunology, cancer biology, aging, regenerative medicine, and computational biology. As matrix biology continues to influence diverse areas of biomedical research, ASMB is uniquely positioned to foster interdisciplinary collaborations that accelerate discovery and broaden the impact of our field.

Finally, I would support initiatives that promote year-round engagement through scientific exchange, mentoring opportunities, educational programming, and community outreach. Maintaining an active and connected membership between meetings will help ensure that ASMB remains a vibrant, welcoming, and inclusive professional home for scientists at all career stages.

It would be an honor to serve on the ASMB Council and help advance a Society that supports scientific excellence, collaboration, and the success of current and future generations of matrix biologists.