



## **CANDIDATE STATEMENT FOR BOARD MEMBER**

Meaghan O'Donnell, B.Sc (Honours), M. Psych (Clinical), PhD

**Title and Organizational Affiliation:** Director of Research, Australian Centre for Posttraumatic Mental Health (ACPMH); Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry, University of Melbourne

**Education and Employment:** I have worked in the area of traumatic stress as a researcher and clinician for over 13 years. During this time I have published more than 60 peer review papers in the area of posttraumatic mental health, and have an H-Index of 22. I frequently work with departments within the Australian government to facilitate the translation of research into policy and practice for trauma survivors.

**Qualifications:** I have a strong commitment to ISTSS both in terms of promoting the interface between science and practice, and in terms of ensuring ISTSS is the professional home for clinicians and researchers who work in the traumatic stress area. I have attended the ISTSS meeting every year since 2000 (except once due to the impending birth of one of my children). I was elected to the board of ISTSS in 2010 and have spent the term being actively involved in working to meet the goals of the ISTSS strategic plan. My commitment to developing ISTSS as a dynamic and engaging society is seen by my involvement as Program Deputy for ISTSS meetings in 2008 and 2010, chair of the Awards Committee in 2011, being a reviewer for most meetings since 2008, subcommittee chair for the Distance Education Committee (2011-12) and chair of the Distance Education Committee (2013-).

**Candidacy Statement:** I see that one of the challenges facing ISTSS is the issue of how to make ISTSS a truly international society. As an Australian I can bring to the board of ISTSS a focus that encourages responsiveness to international issues for members and stakeholders. Central to this is the issue of what it means to be an international society and plan to represent the international community in this conversation to develop a model that is inclusive, transparent and sustainable. My goal is to develop within ISTSS a focus that promotes engagement and collaboration between members so that ISTSS is as accessible and relevant for international members as it is for North American members.

Through my role as Chair of the Distance Education Committee I am pursuing a key goal of the ISTSS strategic plan to engage with its members in advancing the science of traumatic stress. Through working closely with the Distance Education Committee members and the ISTSS staff, we are aiming to facilitate the effective interchange among researchers, clinicians and policy makers. By utilising technology such as webinars we are aiming to connect the membership with expert researchers, clinicians and policy makers so that ISTSS members feel connected and supported in their essential work of minimising the psychological impact of trauma.

I welcome the opportunity to continue my work on the ISTSS board to work with ISTSS members to further develop a society that is relevant, influential and has a societal impact.