

Leonardo Cortez — Bio & Vision Statement

I am a Research Associate at the Centre for Prions and Protein Folding Diseases, University of Alberta. I attained my B.Sc. and PhD in Biological Chemistry at the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina, followed by post-doctoral training at the University of Alberta. I have worked in Dr. Valerie Sim's laboratory since 2011. My research focuses on understanding the molecular mechanisms involved in the pathogenesis of neurodegenerative disorders, specifically in relation to the aggregation-prone proteins prion protein and amyloid beta. Through my research, I have investigated how molecular changes in prion protein sequence affect aggregation, how anti-prion compounds may interfere with prion disease pathogenesis, and how prion aggregate size correlates with clinical phenotype.

My vision as AASUA councilor is to help navigate our association through the challenges facing post-secondary education institutions in the current economic climate. With budget cuts and restructuring threatening the quality of scientific research and education, it is crucial to work together to find effective solutions and advocate for our members' interests. By promoting awareness and greater collaboration, we can develop a strong and effective voice that advocates for the needs and aspirations of TRAS members. Ultimately, my mission is to represent TRAS members to help our association navigate the complex and ever-changing landscape.