

What Is Your Why?

LIZ CULYBA

ASSOCIATE SCIENTIFIC DIRECTOR TRANSLATIONAL SCIENCES

PROFILE

Liz has over a decade of drug development experience in large pharma and small biotech, with expertise in developing protein therapeutics from discovery to early CMC. Throughout her career, she has focused on understanding protein structure and function relationships and the biophysical properties of therapeutic proteins. Most recently, she worked on immuno-oncology therapeutics in antibody discovery and protein analytics leading projects from candidate selection through initiation of GMP manufacturing and IND filing, giving her extensive experience in the drug development process. Liz brings this deep knowledge of protein therapeutics to her role as an Associate Scientific Director in the Translational Sciences group at Immunologix and as the head of the Immunologix Critical Reagents Group. Outside of Immunologix, she is a member of the American Association of Pharmaceutical Sciences and active in the Critical Reagents Subteam. Liz received her B.S. in chemistry from the College of William & Mary and her Ph.D. in Chemical Biology from the Scripps Research Institute.



EDUCATION

2005 - 2010

SCRIPPS RESEARCH INSTITUTE

- PhD in Chemical Biology

2000 - 2004

WILLIAM & MARY

- Bachelor of Science in Chemistry

Finding A Path in Science

Q: What first sparked your interest in laboratory sciences?

When I started college, I initially planned to study history. However, after enrolling in a Fundamentals of Chemistry class during my freshman fall semester, which offered more in-depth insights into chemistry than any class I had taken before, I was captivated. As I continued taking chemistry and biology courses, my fascination grew, especially with the molecular workings of the human body.

I continued to follow a path in science including a summer position at the Naval Research Lab, where I worked with in carbon nanotube research, and a research project at William and Mary focusing on PVC. These experiences led to a post-baccalaureate internship at the NIH the year after I graduated, where working full-time in a research lab confirmed my desire to pursue graduate studies in biochemistry. While I still appreciate history, I found my true passion in scientific research.

Q: Can you walk us through the journey that led you to Immunologix Laboratories?

After graduate school, during my postdoctoral fellowship, I taught at a small college in San Diego, initially considering an academic career. However, I soon realized that I missed conducting research full-time. I decided to pursue a career in the pharmaceutical industry and relocated to the Boston area for a position with Biogen in their Hemophilia discovery research group.

Since then, I have held roles at various companies of different sizes, focusing on protein therapeutics and gradually moving from discovery to development. Working in the Translational Sciences Group at Biogen provided me with invaluable insights into the later stages of drug discovery— specifically, the

extensive effort required to bring a therapeutic to patients.

Working at smaller biotech firms allowed me to engage with the early CMC process, which, like my Translational Sciences experience, truly struck a chord with me. I find great fulfillment in being part of the intricate journey of developing new drugs for patients— a journey that is often underappreciated. My desire to focus on Translational Sciences ultimately brought me to ILX, where I have enjoyed participating in various projects and playing a role in advancing new medications.

What Drives Me

Q: In your role at Immunologix, what aspect of your work gives you the most satisfaction?

I find great satisfaction in watching an assay or project come together when everything falls into place. Equally satisfying is the opportunity to see scientists grow and become passionate about their work. And, finally, I love learning about new molecules entering clinical trials and innovative techniques emerging in the industry.

Q: Can you share a specific moment that reinforced why you chose this field?

I can't pinpoint a specific moment, but I genuinely love analyzing data and troubleshooting. There's a certain magic in understanding the intricacies of experiments and finally watching everything fall into place. As a protein person at heart, I thoroughly enjoy working on antibody campaigns for clients, examining affinity data, and determining the best reagents for assays. Additionally, I find it fascinating to learn and think about different therapeutics and how they interact with human physiology.

Looking Ahead

Q: What about our company culture helps you pursue your professional purpose?

What I appreciate most about our company culture is the encouragement to continuously learn, grow, and leverage our strengths and experience. I feel supported and inspired to tackle new challenges and expand my knowledge.

Q: How do you hope your work will impact the future of drug development?

I hope that our work plays a pivotal role in bringing groundbreaking therapeutics to patients, while advancing the bioanalytical field. We are committed to doing rigorous and innovative science to do our part in bringing new therapies to patients.

Q: What excites you most about the future of our field?

What excites me most about the future of our field is the incredible innovation taking place in drug discovery. The emerging approaches and formats in large molecule therapeutics are truly fascinating. And I'm deeply inspired by the dedication of scientists to research and making a meaningful positive impact on the world.



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