

Ian Robertson joined the Metallurgy and Mining Engineering Department at the University of Illinois in 1982, after receiving his D. Phil. (Metallurgy) from the University of Oxford, England and his B.Sc. degree (Applied Physics) from Strathclyde University, Glasgow, Scotland. He moved through the professorial ranks at Illinois and in 2004 was appointed Head of the Department of Materials Science and Engineering. Prior to becoming Head he served in various administrative positions, including the associate Head of the Department and as an assistant Dean in the College of Engineering and Director of the Office of Continuing Engineering Education. In 2005, he was appointed as a Donald B. Willett Professor of Engineering. He serves on numerous advisory committees and councils for universities and for funding agencies, including ones for the Math and Physical Sciences Division of the National Science Foundation and for Basic Energy Sciences of the Department of Energy.

His research focuses on the use of the electron microscope as an experimental laboratory in which time-resolved experiments can be conducted to reveal the atomistic processes responsible for the macroscopic response of a material. He has applied this technique to enhance our understanding of the reaction pathways and kinetics that occur during deformation, phase transformation, irradiation and hydrogen embrittlement of metallic materials. His insight to the mechanisms responsible for hydrogen embrittlement of metals was recognized by the Department of Energy in 1984 when he, along with Howard Birnbaum, received the prize for Outstanding Scientific Accomplishment in Metallurgy and Ceramics. He has served as a Principal Editor for the Journal of Materials Research since 1995 and a Key Reader for Metallurgical Transactions since 1994.