

RICK HORWITZ, PH.D., INAUGURAL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, EMERITUS

Alan “Rick” Horwitz is the Inaugural Executive Director, Emeritus of the Allen Institute for Cell Science and was named to this position in December, 2020.

Rick spent the past 15 years in the Department of Cell Biology, as a Harrison Distinguished Professor and University Professor, at the University of Virginia, School of Medicine, where his lab investigated the mechanisms of cell migration and dendritic spine morphogenesis. He also served for 10 years as the Director of the Cell Migration Consortium: an NIH-funded multi-institutional, multi-disciplinary collaboration for studying cell migration in its many biological and pathological contexts.

Previously, he chaired the undergraduate Biophysics Program and served as the Associate Director of the Medical Scientist Training Program at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, and then served as Head of the Cell and Developmental Biology Department at the University of Illinois. Horwitz earned his B.A. with honors at the University of Wisconsin, where he majored in chemistry with additional concentrations in math and physics. He received his Ph.D. in Biophysics at Stanford University and did postdoctoral research in magnetic resonance at the Laboratory for Chemical Biodynamics at UC Berkeley. He has served as a Councilor of the American Society for Cell Biology and on the Advisory Council of the National Institute of General Medical Sciences.

Rick has organized many international meetings, delivered keynote lectures and symposia around the world, and served in various editorial capacities for the major journals in cell biology and biophysics. His research interests include cell adhesion, migration, and signaling and synapse formation.