For Immediate Release

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Imagining the Next 250: Democracy, the Arts, Physics, Biohacking, and More

Members of Benjamin Franklin's American Philosophical Society to Host Three-Day Meeting

PHILADELPHIA, PA (October 29, 2026)—As semiquincentennial celebrations continue, Members of the **American Philosophical Society (APS)** will imagine **the next 250 years** with a three-day meeting featuring **talks and discussions with leading figures** in law, civics, the arts, the sciences, and more on **November 19–21, 2026**. Members of the public may view a **free livestream** of the event at **amphilsoc.org** starting on Thursday, November 19, at 1 p.m. EST.

Program highlights include:

- A fireside chat with Vice President **Mike Pence**
- A discussion on democracy, knowledge, and civic responsibility with U.S. Supreme Court Justice **Sonia Sotomayor**, led by fellow APS Member **David Tatel**
- A performance by famed conductor and harpsichordist **William Christie**
- A conversation with the 14th Librarian of Congress **Carla Hayden**
- A presentation by Nobel laureate **Venki Ramakrishnan** on whether humans can live forever

"Though the American Philosophical Society is nearly 300 years old, it has always had its eyes on the future," said **Patrick Spero, APS CEO**. "When Franklin founded the APS, he envisioned the Society as a facilitator of important discussions and promoter of the most promising new ideas. In 2026, there is no institution holding a more vital and varied gathering than the APS, where the world's top minds convene to discuss the day's most pressing issues."

Founded by Benjamin Franklin in 1743 for the purpose of "promoting useful knowledge," the APS is the nation's oldest learned society. Its elected Members

represent expertise in all fields, including Nobel laureates, Pulitzer Prize winners, Academy Award winners, civic leaders, entrepreneurs, and philanthropists. Located next to Independence Hall in Philadelphia, the APS continues to convene leading scholars, scientists, and professionals from around the world for its biannual Meetings.

Members of the press are invited to attend via livestream or in person. Due to the stature of the invited speakers, in-person press attendance is limited and must be confirmed ahead of the event to comply with security requirements. Members of the press wishing to attend in person must confirm with the APS no later than **November 6** by emailing communications@amphilsoc.org.

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ABOUT THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The **American Philosophical Society (APS)**, the oldest learned society in the United States, was founded in 1743 by Benjamin Franklin for the purpose of "promoting useful knowledge." The APS sustains this mission today by engaging leading scholars, scientists, and professionals through elected Membership, supporting research and discovery via grants and fellowships, sparking conversation through its programs, conferences, and books, and by making its research library available to scholars at all stages of their careers. The APS continues to reflect the founders' spirit of inquiry, to provide a forum for the free exchange of ideas, and to convey the conviction that intellectual inquiry and critical thought are inherently in the best interest of the public. To learn more about the APS, visit amphilsoc.org.

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