Dr. Richard J. Roberts is the Chief Scientific Officer at New England Biolabs, Ipswich, Massachusetts. He received a Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry in 1968 from Sheffield University and then moved as a postdoctoral fellow to Harvard. From 1972 to 1992, he worked at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, eventually becoming Assistant Director for Research under Dr. J.D. Watson. He began work on the newly discovered Type II restriction enzymes in 1972 and his laboratory discovered more than 70% of the first 100 enzymes described. In 1975 he became the fourth employee of New England Biolabs first as their chief consultant and later moved to the company permanently in 1992. Studies of transcription in Adenovirus-2 led to the discovery of split genes and mRNA splicing in 1977, for which he received the Nobel Prize in Medicine in 1993. During the sequencing of the Adenovirus-2 genome, computational tools became essential and his laboratory pioneered the application of computers in this area. DNA methyltransferases, as components of restriction-modification systems are also of active interest and the first crystal structures for the HhaI methyltransferase led to the discovery of base flipping. Bioinformatic studies of microbial genomes to find new restriction systems are a major research focus as is the elucidation of DNA methyltransferase recognition sequences using SMRT sequencing and a new approach to elucidating m5C-containing recognition sequences. It is now clear that these enzymes do much more than simply protect host DNA from the action of their restriction enzymes. Since winning the Nobel Prize, Dr. Roberts has been involved in organizing a number of Nobel initiatives to correct scientific misunderstandings and promote humanitarian causes. His most recent campaign has been on the issue of GMOs, where 160 Nobel Laureates have supported the use of GMO techniques to improve plant breeding practices that could greatly help the developing world.