

## Narrative Biography, John C. Sommerer, Ph.D.

John C. Sommerer is a technologist with over 35 years of professional experience and over 20 years of executive experience. He is the principal of Talitha Ventures, which he founded to provide broad-spectrum technology consulting, including unique, transformational investment opportunities. He previously served in a number of senior executive positions at the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory (APL), the largest of the Department of Defense University Affiliated Research Centers. In 2011, Dr. Sommerer was designated by Hopkins as one of the inaugural Daniel Coit Gilman Scholars, “exemplifying the highest ideals of the University,” and was elected a full (life) member of the International Academy of Astronautics. Until January 1, 2014, he led the APL Space Sector, with responsibility for all APL contributions to military, intelligence community, and civil space programs, including the New Horizons mission to Pluto, the MESSENGER mission to Mercury, the Van Allen Probes operating in the Earth’s radiation belts, Solar Probe Plus, the MDA Precision Tracking Space System, ORSTech 1 and 2 as well as numerous other missions in progress. Prior to 2008, he served JHU/APL as Director of Science & Technology, Chief Technology Officer, Director of the Milton S. Eisenhower Research Center, and he led a number of enterprise-level task forces, strategic plans, and other initiatives. Dr. Sommerer received B.S. and M.S. degrees in systems science and mathematics from Washington University in St. Louis, an M.S. in applied physics from Johns Hopkins University, and a Ph.D. in physics from the University of Maryland. Dr. Sommerer has served on a number of advisory bodies for the U.S. government, including terms as chair and vice chair of the Naval Research Advisory Committee, senior technical advisory committee to the Secretary of the Navy, Chief of Naval Operations, and Commandant of the Marine Corps. He has also served on numerous NRC boards and committees, most recently as a member of the Committee on the Assessment of the Governance Structure of the NNSA National Security Laboratories; as a member of the Committee on Human Spaceflight and chair of the study’s Technical Panel; and as a member of the Committee on Operational Science and Technology Options for Defeating Improvised Explosive Devices. He was appointed as a National Associate of the NRC in 2008.