

Ellen D. Williams



Ellen Williams is a Distinguished University Professor at the University of Maryland, where she works at the interface of energy technology and policy. Before returning to the University in January of 2017, she was the Director of the Advanced Research Projects Agency, ARPA-E, which advances high-potential, high-impact energy technologies that are too early for private-sector investment.

Prior to Senate confirmation for her role in ARPA-E, Dr. Williams had been the Chief Scientist at BP (2010-2014), and a Distinguished University Professor in the Institute of Physical Science and Technology and the Department of Physics at the University of Maryland. At Maryland she established an internationally recognized research program in experimental surface science, exploring fundamental issues in statistical mechanics and nanotechnology. She founded and led the University's interdisciplinary Materials Research Science and Engineering Center from 1996 through 2009.

Dr. Williams has a distinguished history of professional service, including chairing the development of the NAS report on Technical Issues for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and extensive work in providing technical advice to the U.S. government, primarily through the Departments of Energy and Defence. She is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, a foreign member of the Royal Society (London), a fellow of the American Physical Society, American Vacuum Society and American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and has been recognized by awards from the American Physical Society and the Materials Research Society.