

**Katharine Fernandez, AuD, PhD**

Laboratory of Hearing Biology and Therapeutics  
National Institute on Deafness and Other Communications (NIDCD)  
National Institutes of Health (NIH)  
Bethesda, MD, USA

**Title:**

Staff Scientist, Laboratory of Hearing Biology and Therapeutics  
Audiologist/Faculty NIH Clinical Center

**Education:**

B.S. Communication Sciences and Disorders, Penn State University, USA  
AuD/PhD Audiology, James Madison University, USA  
Postdoctoral Fellowship, Harvard Medical School, Massachusetts Eye and Ear, USA

**Previous Service to ARO:**

spARO Mentorship Program 2019-2021  
Program Committee 2023-present

**Research Interests:**

Acquired forms of hearing loss relating to age, noise, and ototoxic medications; ototoxicity monitoring program development; outcome measures in clinical research; use of Big Data to address hearing disorders; animal model development; drug-repurposing towards ototoxicity protection; clinical trial implementation.

**Outside Interests:**

Member, ASHA Liaison, International Ototoxicity Management Group (IOMG)  
Member, NIDCD/NIH Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) Working Group  
Member, Pharmaceutical Interventions for Hearing Loss (PIHL) Ototoxicity Group  
Member, American Speech, Language, and Hearing Association (ASHA)  
Member, HearShare Consortium  
Invited Subject Matter Expert, Hearing Science Accelerator  
Guest Editor, Ear and Hearing

**Personal Interests:**

Rediscovering the world with my kids, family and dog one day at a time and working to protect the hearing of every person, big or small.

**Statement of goals:**

ARO has promoted basic science and clinical research spanning all aspects of hearing and balance since its conception. As an audiology clinician scientist, I have personally benefited from the support and feedback from the ARO community as my science has advanced from basic science research into a clinically-relevant animal model of ototoxicity that has provided the platform to explore the potential for a statin drug to reduce hearing loss caused by cisplatin. I have used the connections made at ARO to collaborate with surgeon scientists, share data, and observe trends in the clinical population. And now, I am leading a multi-site, randomized interventional study in patients with head and neck cancer treated with cisplatin to definitely determine the effectiveness of a statin to reduce hearing loss. ARO is home to incredible scientists, clinicians, surgeons and physicians - all working towards bettering hearing health for everyone. If elected to council, I'd love to work with committee members to foster increased support for clinical translation, increase opportunities for data sharing and collaboration, and improved clinical trial design so that we can all learn from and optimize therapeutic opportunities for different, diverse target populations.