Long Range Planning Committee Meeting
Wednesday, November 6th, 2024, 2P-3P EST

Attendees: *Note – There was an issue with the attendance file for this meeting. Attendance listed below is based on declines to the meeting invite and any emails received indicating inability to attend.

Seba Ausili	Jonathon Siegel	
Bjorn Herrman	Tal Teitz	
Keiko Hirose	Catherine Weisz	
Avril Genene Holt	Ksenia Gnedeva	
Nicole Jiam	Larry Hoffman	
Bonnie Lau	Nathaniel Nowak	
Hideko Nakajima	Haruna Suzuki-Kerr	

Apologies:

Ed Rubel		
Ross Williamson		

Unexcused:

Kirupa Suthakar		

Minutes:

Executive Summary and Survey Improvements

The group agreed to begin by looking at last year's Executive Summary. Bonnie Lau highlighted the need to improve communication of the Executive Summary to membership. Suggestions were made to streamline survey questions, focusing on their usefulness and impact. The committee discussed the potential removal of less effective questions to ensure that the surveys drive actionable feedback. Heidi Nakajima emphasized the importance of understanding how the gathered information will be utilized.

Underrepresented Topics and Program Committee Initiatives

The committee discussed the introduction of mini podiums this year which may help bridge the gaps on underrepresented topics. There are topics that do not receive many abstract submissions, making it unlikely that a full podium with 8 speakers will be proposed. With mini podiums, 4 abstracts can be selected. allowing for a broader range of discussions. Larry Hoffman pointed out the need to avoid scheduling conflicts that could split attendance at symposia and podiums. The Executive Office shared the Program Committee plans to mitigate topic overlap in concurrent sessions at the upcoming meeting.

Survey Content and Communication Preferences

The committee discussed the relevance of specific survey questions. Feedback on communication preferences was also considered, with a suggestion to reevaluate how members prefer to receive information. The need to brainstorm new, important questions for the survey was emphasized, particularly focusing on venue-related inquiries and more intentional evaluations of scientific content. Emma Holmes proposed including forward-thinking questions in surveys to aid in long-range planning, while Bjorn Herrmann stressed the importance of maintaining certain aspects of the survey so that data is reliable long-term.

Community Building and Networking Opportunities

The committee discussed the importance of fostering a sense of community at ARO meetings, noting that the new schedule for the upcoming meeting entails an hour dedicated for lunch for networking followed by 1.5 hours dedicated to engaging in the Poster Room. Ideas for conference dinners and social events were proposed to facilitate member interactions, while financial constraints were acknowledged. The need for spaces that encourage interaction without alcohol was also raised, alongside the importance of maintaining the meeting length as opposed to elongating it.

Survey Draft and Strategic Planning

Bonnie Lau concluded the brainstorming session by stating her intention to generate a new survey draft after consulting with committee members. She plans to send the draft via email and discuss any major changes in a follow-up meeting. The idea of presenting the new survey to the council instead of the usual yearly evaluation summary was suggested and agreed upon. The Executive Office noted that it would be prudent to shift the survey questions towards a focus on strategic planning as the current strategic plan concludes in 2025. The survey will serve as a tool to gauge member perspectives on the organization's future direction over the next 3 to 5 years.

Task List

1. Committee members to provide input on the draft survey Bonnie will send out ahead of her presentation to Council
2. Finalize the survey by December 18th, 2024