ARO Council Meeting
February 21, 2025

Attendees: Kate Fernandez (joined virtually), Ronna Hertzano (joined virtually), Sunil Puria, Mike Bowl, Brandon Cox, Jeff Holt, Avril Genene Holt, Lisa Olson, Anna Lysakowski, Jesse Howard, and Kristin Johnson

1. Welcome and Introductions

- **Summary:** Sunil Puria welcomed everyone to the meeting, acknowledging the challenging times and expressing gratitude for attendance. Mentioned colleagues from NIH joining late and Radha dealing with home issues.
- **Decisions Made:** None.
- **Action Items:** None.

2. Discussion on spARO Email

- **Summary:** The council discussed a spARO request to send out safety information for the meeting location and the concerns raised about certain parts of the email. The main points of concern were causing fear instead of easing it.
- **Decisions Made:**
  - Allow spARO to share the email on their WhatsApp group.
  - Include a note in the daily email saying, "If you have concerns about safety at the conference, contact the Executive Office." And the EO will reply with the information spARO has compiled.
  - Upload the safety information to the conference app under the info section.
- **Action Items:**
  - EO to upload the file in the conference app under the info section.
  - EO to include the above language in the daily email.

3. Introduction of Incoming Program Chair

- **Summary:** Jeff was introduced as the Incoming Program Chair, shadowing Brandon for the year. Reviewed the recent restructuring of the Program Committee and the new roles (incoming, current, and past program chairs).
- **Decisions Made:** None.
- **Action Items:** None.

4. E-Poster Requirement

- **Summary:** Discussion on the requirement for poster presenters to upload an e-poster. Concerns were raised about accessibility issues and the impact on unpublished data.
- **Decisions Made:**
  - Make e-poster upload optional but highly encouraged.
  - Allow exceptions for those with accessibility concerns.
  - Exceptions to be sought via the EO to serve as a tracking mechanism for how frequently the requirement might be hindering/discouraging attendees from submitting their science.

- **Action Items:**
    - Kristin to communicate the new exception requirement and language with EO team and update submission guidelines.

5. Late-Breaking Session Proposal

- **Summary:** Proposal for a late-breaking session to include recent and significant research findings. Discussion on the logistics, review process, and potential impact on the program.
- **Decisions Made:**
    - Pilot a 1-hour late-breaking session with 6 presentations.
    - Council to review and select the submissions.
- **Action Items:**
    - Council to establish a review process for late-breaking submissions.
    - Program committee to organize the session.
    - Kristin to communicate with Kara (ARO Content Manager) about this change, create timelines, etc.

6. Council and Committee Liaison Roles

- **Summary:** Discussion on the roles of council members as liaisons to committees and the need for better communication and support.
- **Decisions Made:**
    - Council meetings to be extended to 90 minutes, with the first or last 30 minutes dedicated to committee presentations. (2 presentations maximum at 15 minutes each)
    - Committees to provide regular updates to council.
- **Action Items:**
    - EO to schedule the extended council meetings.
    - Plan for how to schedule committees.

7. Strategic Planning

- **Summary:** Discussion on the strategic plan, its goals, and the need for specific objectives and strategies. Emphasis on growing membership, supporting trainees, and increasing industry sponsorships.
- **Decisions Made:**
    - Focus on growing membership, both geographically and by professional category.
    - Develop specific objectives and strategies for each goal.
- **Action Items:**
    - Council members to think about 3 big goals for the new strategic plan to center on.

8. Meeting Budget

- **Summary:** Brief overview of the meeting budget, noting a shortfall in registration numbers and the impact on the overall budget.
- **Decisions Made:** None.

- **Action Items:**
    - EO to send out the detailed budget via email.

Adjournment

- **Summary:** The meeting was adjourned with a reminder to review the budget and strategic plan drafts.
- **Decisions Made:** None.
- **Action Items:**
    - Council members to review the budget and strategic plan drafts.