ARO Awards Committee Meeting Minutes
Date: Tuesday, October 7, 2025
Time: 3:00-4:00 PM EST

Attendees: Katie Kindt (chair), Maria Rubio-Valero (chair), Lina Reiss, Hainan Lang, Joel Snyder, Wei Dong, Jianxin Bao, Victoria Bajo, Alain Dabdoub

Young Investigator Award Discussion

Summary:
The committee reviewed scores and discussed the top-scoring candidate, Ksenia Gnedeva. Her application was unanimously praised for strong letters and demonstrated leadership despite challenges. The committee unanimously agreed she was the clear winner, and no formal vote was deemed necessary.

Decisions Made:

- Ksenia Gnedeva selected as the recipient of the 2026 Young Investigator Award.

Action Items:

- Executive office to coordinate with the ARO President to notify Ksenia of her award.
- Executive office to collect necessary materials (bio, headshot).

Proposal for New Trainee Award

Summary:
Concerns were raised about postdocs competing with independent investigators for awards. The committee discussed the possibility of creating a new award specifically for trainees or postdocs to better recognize their contributions.

Decisions Made:

- General agreement to explore the idea of a new award for trainees.

Action Items:

- Committee members to brainstorm and submit ideas for a new trainee award.
- Executive office to facilitate future discussions or meetings if needed.

Innovator in Clinical Science Award Discussion

Summary:
Anil Lalwani was the sole nominee for the Innovator in Clinical Science Award. The committee recalled his strong candidacy from the previous year and agreed his contributions to gene therapy and translational science warranted recognition.

Decisions Made:

- Anil Lalwani selected as the recipient of the Innovator in Clinical Science Award.

Action Items:

- Executive office to coordinate with the ARO President to notify Anil of his award.
- Executive office to collect necessary materials (bio, headshot).

Pioneer in Basic Science Award Discussion

Summary:
The committee debated between the two top-scoring candidates: Tobias Moser and Ana Belén Elgoyhen. While both were highly respected, Ana's nomination package was considered more complete and compelling. Tobias' nomination lacked recent work and strong letters. The group discussed the definition of "basic science" and agreed it should include non-human research. A vote was held, and Ana was selected.

Decisions Made:

- Ana Belén Elgoyhen selected as the recipient of the Pioneer in Basic Science Award.

Action Items:

- Executive office to coordinate with the ARO President to notify Belen of her award.
- Executive office to collect necessary materials (bio, headshot).

Closing Remarks

Summary:
The meeting concluded with appreciation for the committee's work. Members were encouraged to continue thinking about new award ideas and to reach out if they wished to meet before the next cycle.

Decisions Made:

- Committee will reconvene after the midwinter meeting unless earlier discussion is requested.

Action Items:

- Members to email chairs and the executive office with ideas for new awards.