Meeting Minutes

Meeting Name: spARO Steering Committee August Meeting
Date: August 19, 2025
Time: 4:00-5:00 PM EST

Attendees: Samantha Davis (chair), Thore Schade-Mann, Shelby Payne, Charanjeet Kaur, Sree Varshini Murali, Rose Rizzi, Jessica MacLean, Shakila Mahmuda Fatima, Paul Krumpöck, Ilkem Sevgili, Marcia Thulasiram, Aravind Chenrayan, Audrey Drotos, Leslie Gonzales, Rhiannon McNeely (executive office)

July Meeting Minutes:

The meeting minutes from July were discussed and approved.

spARO Newsletter:

Samantha presented the draft of the first spARO newsletter, which includes sections on spARO, event surveys, abstract writing tips, JARO Research News, and an initiative by Audrey to publish science articles. The committee agreed to add events and resources to the newsletter by Friday, after which Rhiannon will incorporate it into the marketing platform and send to all ARO trainee members.

Committee Updates:

Accessibility and Accommodations: The committee is focusing on improving poster accessibility and identifying local experts to form a panel and submit a proposal for an accessibility-focused special session at the 2027 MidWinter Meeting. The committee will also offer poster help office hours in January for the 2026 MidWinter meeting.

Clinician Scientist: The committee will host a webinar on September 25th on “Funding, Partnerships, and Innovation Across Borders.” Plans are also underway for a Clinical Scientist gathering at the 2026 MidWinter Meeting, which will be open to trainees.

Communications: No update.

Diversity and Minority Affairs: The committee has a planned coffee hour for September 3rd on the topic of "Exploring Funding Opportunities".

Education: The committee has scheduled a coffee hour on September 10 focused on *Establishing Your Lab as a New PI*. The final talk in the current seminar series, on the *Auditory Brainstem and Midbrain*, will take place on September 24.

Long Range Planning: No update.

Membership: The committee is developing a pilot program to offer new members a free first-year membership to provide financial relief and attract new members. The committee is also working to revamp the member spotlight, with the goal of increasing diversity by featuring more clinician scientists and international members.

Program: No update.

Travel Awards: No update.

Global Professional Outreach: GPO proposed collaborating with the Communications and Membership Committees on the *ARO Around the World* social media initiative. The campaign would highlight one country or region each month through photos, researcher bios, and research updates. Membership noted this aligns well with their efforts to diversify the Member Spotlight series, suggesting the two initiatives could coordinate or alternate features.

Also discussed was a potential *World Otolaryngology Research Day* (Global Oto Day), envisioned as a globally coordinated event with open lab sessions, live talks, and research sharing across regions.

JARO Research News: The JARO Editor in Chief has suggested renaming the committee and shifting to a more rigorous publishable approach, including monthly journal clubs similar to Frontiers in Neuroscience, with plans for a meeting in September to align on expectations and discuss implementation details.

spARO Sessions: The group discussed combining the advocacy and spARO sessions for the year, with Audrey taking the lead on organizing two sessions focused on science advocacy and science communication. It was agreed to meet and determine the content for the remaining two sessions.

Mentorship Program: No update.

Buddy System: No update.

Young Investigator: No update.