Meeting Minutes: spARO Steering Committee
Date: September 16, 2025
Time: 4:00-5:00 PM ET

Attendees: Samantha Davis (chair), Michael Roberts, Shelby Payne, Sree Varshini Murali, Elika Fallah, Ilkim Sevgili, Austin Huang, Leslie Gonzales, George Ordiway, Audrey Drotos, Richard Mariadasse, Rania Sharaf, Charanjeet Kaur, Daniel Romano, Paul Krumpöck, Pankaj Bhatia, Emily Fabrizio-Stover, Ansley Kunnath, Rhiannon McNeely (executive office)

1. Approval of August Meeting Minutes

The meeting started with a review of the August meeting minutes, which were approved after a few initial edits.

Decisions Made:

- August meeting minutes were approved with edits.

Action Items:

- None.

2. Updates from the Executive Office

A reminder was provided that the final deadline for submitting poster/podium abstracts for the 2026 ARO MidWinter Meeting is approaching. It was also noted that travel and honor award applications have closed and are currently under review

Decisions Made:

- None.

Action Items:

- None.

3. Moderator Sign-Up for Podium Sessions

The need for spARO moderators for the podium sessions at the 2026 MidWinter Meeting

was discussed, and the committee was encouraged to sign up using the link provided in the agenda. The committee was reminded that the deadline to volunteer as a moderator via the link is October 15th.

Decisions Made:

- None.

Action Items:

- Interested members sign up to be a podium session moderator by October 15th.

4. Committee Updates

Accessibility and Accommodations:

- No updates.

Clinician Scientist Committee:

- An update on the *Global Otologist* webinar, presented by the Clinician Scientist Committee, which will take place on September 25th.

Communications Committee:

- No updates.

Diversity and Minority Affairs (DMAC):

- It was confirmed that the committee has been renamed the *Development, Mentorship, and Advancement Committee*. The committee remains the same, with the same members and mission. Also mentioned was the committee's upcoming coffee hour series on *Exploring Funding Opportunities*, with the second and third sessions scheduled for October and December.

Education Committee:

- The committee is working on reaching out to past Seminar Series speakers to submit for the JARO special edition and planning for upcoming meetings.

Long Range Planning Committee:

- No updates.

Membership Committee:

- No updates as the September meeting was rescheduled.

Program Committee:

- The committee is preparing to begin reviews on Poster/Podium submissions for the 2026 MidWinter Meeting.

Travel Awards Committee:

- It was mentioned that the travel award application window has closed, and the committee is currently reviewing applications.

Global Professional Outreach:

- Updates were provided on a *Global Voices Panel* concept; although a similar session is already hosted by DMAC, the team plans to move forward with a virtual global mini-series instead.

JARO Research News:

- A brief update was given on plans for the new *Journal Club* news article. It was also mentioned that an info session on the new submission guidelines will likely be scheduled for a Friday in October.

spARO Sessions/Advocacy:

- The group is planning four workshops to cover science communication, advocacy, finding postdocs, and industry topics, and speaker contacts are currently in progress

Mentorship Program:

- The program has secured 40–50 pairings so far. Plans were shared to implement improved follow-up mechanisms, and collaboration with the Clinician Scientist Committee was proposed to develop a specialized mentorship program for clinician scientists. Concerns were raised about ensuring that clinician scientists are aware.

Buddy System:

- No updates.

Young Investigator Luncheon:

- No updates as the winner of the 2026 Young Investigator has not yet been named.