ARO Communications Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: November 19, 2025
Attendees: Mike Bowl, Kristin Johnson, Hainan Lang, Barbara Vona, Nicolas Grillet, Ruben Stepanyan, James Dias, Farideh Moeinvaziri

1. Outreach Slide Deck Updates

Summary:
The committee reviewed progress on outreach slide decks for younger and older student groups. Francisco provided updates via email: slides have been revised, and a test run with a teacher is planned before the holidays. The simplicity and clarity of the slides was praised. Discussion focused on ensuring age-appropriate content, emphasizing hearing protection, and adding an ARO-branded cover slide to promote the organization and presenter details. The older kids' deck requires further development, and the task group will meet to finalize it.

Decisions Made:

- Include an ARO-branded cover slide with space for presenter details (name, affiliation, motivation).
- Maintain simplicity and clarity in slides; emphasize hearing protection.
- Proceed with teacher review before finalizing content.

Action Items:

- Francisco Barros to complete test run with teacher and share feedback.
- Barbara Vona and Mike Bowl to coordinate with Kelsey on older kids' slide deck.
- Committee to review Google Drive link for final edits after next iteration.

2. Outreach Award Proposal

Summary:
The committee revisited the Outreach Award concept discussed previously. Consensus was reaffirmed: one annual award recognizing impactful outreach activities. Prize will include a certificate and free registration for the next Midwinter Meeting. Announcement will occur during the Awards Ceremony of the General Assembly. Mike Bowl will draft a proposal for Council review at the December 18 meeting.

Decisions Made:

- Outreach Award will consist of one prize: certificate + free registration for next Midwinter Meeting.
- Award announcement will be integrated into the standard Awards Ceremony.

Action Items:

- Mike Bowl to draft and circulate Council proposal by early December.
- Committee to review and provide feedback on proposal before submission.

3. Website Updates

Summary:
Kristin Johnson reported that the website redesign is largely complete for the committee's scope. Ongoing maintenance will involve quarterly reviews for broken links or outdated content. Specific pages (e.g., spARO and Membership) are still being refined by these respective committees. Kristin confirmed that the Hearing Inclusive ARO page has been updated, and new content is being developed.

Decisions Made:

- The committee's role in website redesign is complete; future involvement only if major updates are needed.

Action Items:

- Kristin Johnson to monitor site and coordinate fixes for broken links or outdated content.
- Committee members to report any issues encountered during routine checks.

4. Mini-Grant Program Update

Summary:
Nicolas Grillet reported receiving a strong new mini-grant application for a Harvard/Fenway partnership, which all reviewers agreed to fund. Discussion included promoting funded projects on the website and social media to encourage future applications. Kristin suggested creating a gallery-style webpage featuring photos and short descriptions of funded events. The committee emphasized obtaining photo release permissions before posting.

Decisions Made:

- Fund the new mini-grant application (Harvard/Fenway partnership).
- Promote funded projects via website and social media using photos and brief descriptions.

Action Items:

- Kristin Johnson to notify awardee.
- Nicolas Grillet to share past awardee materials and maintain application tracking spreadsheet.

6. Any Other Business (AOB)

Summary:
Discussion covered logistics for the Midwinter Meeting in Puerto Rico, including hotel reservations and flight costs. Committee agreed to consider skipping the December meeting or replacing it with an email update, depending on progress.

Decisions Made:

- Tentative plan to cancel December committee meeting; decision pending.

Action Items:

- Kristin Johnson to send reminder to previous mini-grant applicant to resubmit with requested updates.

Decisions Made (Consolidated)

- Add ARO-branded cover slide to outreach decks; emphasize hearing protection.
- Outreach Award: one prize (certificate + free registration); announce during Awards Ceremony.
- Committee's website redesign role complete; quarterly checks for updates.
- Fund Harvard/Fenway mini-grant application; promote funded projects online.
- Consider canceling December meeting.

Action Items (Consolidated)

- **Francisco Barros:** Complete teacher test run; share feedback.
- **Barbara Vona & Mike Bowl:** Coordinate with Kelsey on older kids' slide deck.
- **Mike Bowl:** Draft Outreach Award proposal; circulate for feedback.
- **Kristin Johnson:**
    - Monitor website; fix broken links.
    - Notify mini-grant awardee.
    - Send reminder to previous mini-grant applicant.
    - Create promotional slides for Midwinter Meeting.
- **Nicolas Grillet:** Share past awardee materials; maintain tracking spreadsheet.
- **Committee Members:** Review outreach decks; provide feedback on award proposal.