ARO Communications Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: October 15, 2025
Attendees: Kristin Johnson, Mike Bowl, Nicolas Grillet, Francisco Barros, Farideh Moeinvaziri, Ruben Stepanyan

1. Outreach Award Proposal Discussion

Summary:
The committee discussed the concept of an ARO Outreach Award to incentivize members, particularly students and early-career researchers, to engage in community outreach. Key points included eligibility criteria, application process, judging metrics, and prize structure. The award aims to recognize members who promote hearing health and ARO visibility through outreach activities.

Decisions Made:

- Eligibility will require applicants to be ARO student members and include ARO branding in their outreach presentations.
- Outreach activities can include school visits or other community engagements; use of the provided slide deck is encouraged but not mandatory.
- Application will require details such as school name, date, teacher name, and grade level.
- Review process will involve a single annual call for submissions, similar to travel awards.
- Prize package will include:
    - Certificate of recognition
    - Free registration for the next ARO Midwinter Meeting

Action Items:

- Nicolas Grillet to send previous mini-grant proposal materials to Mike (completed during meeting).
- Kristin Johnson to confirm system capabilities for application and review process; explore options for tracking outreach activities.
- Committee to finalize eligibility language and award details for council proposal.

2. Application and Review Logistics

Summary:
Discussion focused on simplifying the submission and review process. Suggestions included using Microsoft Forms for data collection and automating metrics like the number of outreach events per

applicant. The committee agreed that feedback from schools should not be mandatory but could be collected optionally for promotional purposes.

Decisions Made:

- Application will include required fields for outreach details; optional teacher feedback will be collected via a QR code link.
- School feedback will not influence award selection to avoid bias.
- Annual submission deadline will align with ARO's Midwinter Meeting timeline; likely October for review before registration deadlines.

Action Items:

- Kristin Johnson to check feasibility of integrating forms and tracking outreach metrics on the ARO website.
- Committee to design content for a dedicated Outreach Award webpage, including a feedback form for schools.

3. Prize Structure and Announcement Strategy

Summary:
The committee finalized the prize components and discussed how to announce the award at the Midwinter Meeting. Ideas included adding the award to the existing Award Ceremony and creating a dedicated webpage featuring winners and testimonials.

Decisions Made:

- Prize will include a certificate and free registration for the next Midwinter Meeting.
- Announcement will occur during the standard Awards Ceremony of the General Assembly; no separate luncheon or event due to budget constraints.
- Webpage will display winner details and allow schools to submit feedback.

Action Items:

- Kristin Johnson to coordinate with marketing for webpage design.
- Committee to draft language for the award announcement and webpage content.

4. Mini-Grant Promotion

Summary:
The committee noted low application numbers for mini-grants and agreed to create a promotional slide for the Midwinter Meeting's rolling deck.

Decisions Made:

- A promotional slide for mini-grants will be added to the Midwinter Meeting deck.

Action Items:

- Nicolas Grillet to draft initial slide content and send to Kristin Johnson and Mike Bowl.
- Kristin Johnson's marketing team to finalize design and branding for the slide.

5. Website Updates

Summary:
Kristin Johnson reported ongoing server issues affecting images and navigation on the ARO website. IT is working to resolve these problems. Members were asked to report broken links or images.

Decisions Made:

- None

Action Items:

- Kristin Johnson to continue monitoring and coordinating with IT for resolution.

6. Any Other Business (AOB)

Summary:
Farideh Moeinvaziri offered to assist with advertising committee initiatives through departmental channels. Francisco Barros confirmed plans to seek teacher feedback on slide decks once finalized.

Decisions Made:

- None

Action Items:

- Committee members to email additional ideas for review process, award webpage, or promotional strategies to Mike Bowl and CC Kristin Johnson.
- Francisco Barros to share teacher feedback on outreach slide decks when available.

Decisions Made (Consolidated)

- Outreach Award eligibility: ARO student members; outreach must include ARO branding.
- Application process: annual call; required outreach details; optional school feedback.
- Prize package: certificate and free registration for next Midwinter Meeting.
- Announcement during standard Awards Ceremony or General Assembly; dedicated webpage.
- Mini-grant promotional slide to be added to Midwinter Meeting deck.

Action Items (Consolidated)

- **Mike Bowl:** Draft proposal for Outreach Award.
- **Nicolas Grillet:** Send mini-grant proposal materials to Mike; draft mini-grant slide content.
- **Kristin Johnson:** Confirm system capabilities; coordinate webpage design; finalize award announcement plan; monitor website issues.
- **Committee Members:** Email additional ideas for award process and webpage; finalize eligibility language.
- **Francisco Barros:** Share teacher feedback on outreach slide decks.
- **Marketing Team:** Finalize mini-grant promotional slide design.