Clinician Scientist Committee Meeting

**Date:** April 22, 2026
**Time:** 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM EDT
**Attendees:** Iram Ahmad (Co-chair), Aaron Remenschneider (Co-chair), Ronna Hertzano (Council Liaison), Kristin Johnson (Executive Office), Allison Johnson (Executive Office), Grace Kim, Megan Arnold, Zahra Sayyid

## 1. Clinician Outreach and ARO Meeting Strategy

**Summary:** Ronna Hertzano (Council Liaison) briefed the committee on Council's priority to increase clinician participation at the ARO MidWinter Meeting. She noted that current successes in gene therapy trials present a unique "vacuum" that ARO is well-positioned to fill. To accommodate the schedules of practicing clinicians, Council has committed to concentrating clinical content on Saturdays and Sundays for the next two years, three years in total with 2026. The committee discussed the long-term goal of training industry partners to view ARO as the premier venue for presenting major clinical trial results.

**Decisions Made:**

- Council will proceed with the strategy to focus clinical content on the opening weekend of the MidWinter Meeting for the next three-year cycle.

**Action Items:**

- **Kristin Johnson/Executive Office:** Send the Committee Handbook to all members to clarify meeting attendance and participation policies.

## 2. Symposium Planning for MidWinter Meeting

**Summary:** The committee held an extensive discussion regarding the submission of a clinical symposium for the upcoming meeting. While standalone gene therapy sessions have been successful in the past, the consensus was to develop a cohesive two-hour session that combines gene therapy outcomes with other high-interest translational topics. Proposed subjects included molecular therapies, cisplatin ototoxicity prevention, AI/machine learning in CI fittings, and surgical delivery techniques. Kristin Johnson provided a comparison between "Symposia" (peer-reviewed/competitive) and "Special Sessions" (flexible format) to guide the submission strategy.

**Decisions Made:**

- The committee will submit a proposal for a single, cohesive two-hour session rather than multiple competing symposia.
- The session will aim to bridge the gap between basic science and clinical application to ensure broad appeal.

**Action Items:**

- **All Committee Members:** Brainstorm topics and potential speakers via email prior to the May follow-up meeting.

- Unassigned: Prepare the formal symposium/special session proposal for submission by the June 22 deadline.

### 3. Trainee Engagement and Networking

Summary: Junior committee members (Grace, Megan, and Zara) provided feedback on the barriers to attendance for residents and fellows. A primary concern is that ARO is often perceived as "too research heavy" for MD-only trainees. The committee discussed enhancing networking opportunities, specifically by inviting department chairs and division directors to attend events. This would allow trainees to connect with individuals making hiring decisions, thereby increasing the professional value of the meeting.

Decisions Made:

- The committee will explore expanding the networking event format to include more leadership-level clinical faculty to attract early-career participants.

### 4. Administrative Updates and Meeting Cadence

Summary: The committee reviewed its meeting schedule and decided to move away from a fixed monthly cadence. The group will shift to a flexible or quarterly schedule, supplemented by targeted meetings during peak planning periods. Kristin Johnson noted a technical issue with recurring Outlook polls and advised that new polls would be issued for specific windows.

Decisions Made:

- The committee will discontinue recurring monthly meetings in favor of a quarterly or "as-needed" cadence.
- The next follow-up meeting will be scheduled for early May to finalize the symposium proposal.

Action Items:

- Kristin Johnson/Executive Office: Delete current recurring monthly meetings from the committee calendar and issue a new scheduling poll for a follow-up meeting in early May.

### Summary of Meeting

The Clinician Scientist Committee met to align on strategies for the upcoming ARO MidWinter Meeting, focusing on increasing clinician and trainee participation. Key discussions centered on the "weekend-centric" clinical content model and the development of a high-impact, two-hour translational symposium combining gene therapy with broader clinical topics. The committee also resolved to shift to a more flexible meeting cadence to better suit member availability, with a primary focus on finalizing session proposals before the June deadline.

Decisions Made (Consolidated)

- Approved the concentration of clinical content on Saturdays and Sundays for the next three years.
- Agreed to submit a single, cohesive two-hour session for the MidWinter Meeting.
- Approved a shift from monthly meetings to a flexible/quarterly cadence.
- Agreed to recruit more department chairs and division directors for networking events to attract trainees.

Action Items (Consolidated)

Kristin Johnson/Executive Office:

- Send the Committee Handbook to all members.
- Issue a scheduling poll for an early May meeting.
- Delete recurring monthly meetings from the calendar.

All Committee Members:

- Submit suggestions for symposia/special session topics and potential speakers via email.
- Prepare the formal symposium/special session proposal by June 22, 2026.