Public Policy Committee Charter

TYPE OF COMMITTEE: Standing

PURPOSE:

The committee’s major role is to advise the Society and its leadership on public policy issues related to cell biology and the basic biomedical research community, with attention to research funding and relevant science policies. The committee, its members, and staff meet with Members of Congress and other government officials to educate them about implications of proposed policy measures on the cell biology community and the need for policy solutions to existing community issues. The Committee also provides advice on funding priorities and other matters relevant to cell biology. It is also responsible for educating ASCB members on grassroots advocacy activities and alerting them to advocacy opportunities.

The committee also works to:

- Increase ASCB influence in setting federal science policy
- Develop White Papers on topics related to the life science community
- Increase ASCB member activity in science policy advocacy

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP:

- Ideal Size: Membership on the committee must contain, at least, a Chair, the ASCB President, the ASCB Past President, and five members. Other committees are able to appoint liaisons from their committee to join the Public Policy Committee.
- Term Length: Committee members serve for a three-year term, which can be renewed once for a total term of six consecutive years of service. Committee chairs serve three year terms, also renewable once. Tenure as chair counts separately from committee terms. Associates serve one year terms to allow them to explore interest in longer participation with the Committee.
- Average Time Commitment: The estimated total annual time commitment is approximately 30 hours per year. This includes 30 minute monthly video meetings, one 2 hour mid-year virtual meeting and one 2 hour long in-person meeting at each ASCB|EMBO annual meeting. Additional time may be required for work on additional projects.
- Membership Type(s): Committee membership includes Regular members, Postdoctoral members, and Graduate Student members.
- Approval Process: Chairs and co-chairs are approved by Council. Members are approved by the Executive Committee. Associate members are selected and invited by the Committee chair.
- Member Expertise: Interest and experience in the intersection of science policy and science policy advocacy are the most important requirements. Willingness to actively participate in various projects taken on by the committee is also important.

AUTHORITY:
The Public Policy Committee, in its role as educating government officials on Capitol Hill and at other Federal agencies, often speaks on behalf of the ASCB, verbally and in writing. The positions taken by the Committee are reached in collaboration with the ASCB Executive Committee and ASCB Council along with the Public Policy Director and the Chief Executive Officer. A detailed process outlines the process of approval of statements or comments made by the Committee. Public Policy Committee members also speak with the media on behalf of the Society after consultation with leadership.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND DELIVERABLES:

- The Public Policy Committee monitors federal legislative and agency policies. When appropriate, the PPC provides recommendations to ASCB leadership for possible Society actions.
- Committees members scan for problems and issues that may be developing within the research community and bring them to the Committee to be addressed.
- The Committee selects the annual recipient of the ASCB Public Service Award. The Committee, along with staff, manages the complete presentation process.
- Each ASCB yearly meeting includes policy- and advocacy-related sessions. The Committee develops and implements the sessions.
- The Committee also creates task forces to review important topics of science and topics connected with science. Committee members participate in the development of topics to be studied, participate in the work of the task force, and the production of the resulting reports. Task force members are mainly ASCB members but the Committee can invite outside experts to participate in the task force work. Currently, a Task Force is examining the options, strategies, and institutional impediments to transitions away from the lab to other roles, including within the scientific community.

MEETINGS:

The Public Policy Committee holds 30 minute monthly video meetings, one 2 hour mid-year virtual meeting and one 2 hour long in-person meeting at each ASCB | EMBO annual meeting.