Women in Cell Biology (WICB) Charter

TYPE OF COMMITTEE: Standing

PURPOSE: The major objective of the Women in Cell Biology (WICB) Committee is to provide opportunities and information useful in developing careers in cell biology. WICB came together as a group in the 1970s to discuss challenges facing women in biomedical science and to organize programs and publish resources to support women establishing careers in biomedical research. WICB was formalized as a Society committee in 1994. The ASCB WICB Committee has a national reputation as an activist group in support of women in science. Our goals are accomplished through the dissemination of information (newsletter, online community, and social media), the recognition of excellence (awards), and the provision of education material (panels and networking events).

Detailed goals and objectives:

- Promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in cell biology.
- Provide career development and leadership opportunities in cell biology.
- Communicate and coordinate with other ASCB committees, particularly the MAC, EdComm, COMPASS, International Affairs, PPC, and LGBTQ+, to support and promote women from all backgrounds and career stages.
- Communicate with Council to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in ASCB programming and organization.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP:

- Ideal Size: 2 co-chairs, 12-15 members, 15-20 associates, including liaisons with other committees.
- Term Length: 1 year associate period followed by 3-year memberships with the opportunity to renew once. The chair also has a 3-year term, which can be renewed once; the chair term can be an extension of the regular membership term. Associate members can be renewed yearly. Former members can be considered for associate membership.
- Average Time Commitment: 20-30 hours annually.
- Membership Type(s): mainly regular, but occasional student or postdoc associate members.
- Approval Process: Chairs and co-chairs are approved by Council. Members are approved by the Executive Committee.
- Member Expertise: a commitment to increasing diversity in cell biology, through career development, mentoring, and networking.
- Duties: Participation in regular planning calls (3-4/year) and subcommittee activities as detailed below.

SUBCOMMITTEE(S) MEMBERSHIP:

- Mentoring Theater Subcommittee:
• Purpose: Eminent scientists who are willing to make fun of themselves act out scenarios of career challenges, including effective self-promotion, developing self-esteem, dealing with funding problems, publishing, negotiating for a job, and feeling overwhelmed. After the performance, the audience is invited to engage in a question-and-answer session with the senior scientists/thespians to identify effective strategies.

• Size and Composition: Chair/organizer and 2-3 additional WICB members

• Term Length: 3 years

• Average Time Commitment: 20 hours annually

• Approval Process: Subcommittee members are approved by the Chair

• Duties: The Mentoring Theater is often organized in collaboration or coordination with EdComm, MAC, COMPASS, and other committees as appropriate. Organizers discuss the skit content and compose the skits. They also coordinate with other committees and award winners for the Mentoring Theatre event at the Annual Meeting. The Event at the Annual Meeting is a combination of Announcing the three WICB Career Recognition Awards; nominators and awardees are introduced and given time for brief remarks. These scientists often participate as thespians in one or more skits and participate in the open conversations on the theme topic following the ice-breaker humor.

• Networking Panel and Reception Subcommittee

• Purpose: This subcommittee plans and implements the content and structure of the WICB and COMPASS-hosted networking panel and reception at the annual meeting.

• Size and Composition: 4-6 WICB members and/or associate members, 2 COMPASS members

• Term Length: 3 years

• Average Time Commitment: ~15-20 hours total over the course of the year

• Approval Process: Subcommittee members are approved by the Chair in consultation with the President and CEO.

• Duties: Together with the mentoring theater subcommittee and the full WICB committee, this subcommittee establishes a topic for a panel discussion at the annual meeting. Once decided, committee members, identify potential panelists, invite and secure panelists, submit a proposal for the event to ASCB, and moderate the panel.

• Speaker List Subcommittee

• Purpose: This subcommittee maintains the WICB Speaker List, a resource of women-identified cell biologists, their contact information, and their research areas.

• Size and Composition: 1-2 WICB members and/or associate members

• Term Length: 3 years

• Average Time Commitment: ~15-20 hours total over the course of the year

• Approval Process: Subcommittee members are approved by the Chair
- Duties: Promotes the WICB Speaker List by ensuring that the information that it contains is current and accessible and communicates with partners at CSHL that host the site.

- **WICB Awards Subcommittee**
  - Purpose: This subcommittee coordinates the review and selection of the annual Women in Cell Biology awards (junior, mid-career, and the Sandra Masur senior award).
  - Size and Composition: 2 full WICB members and two associate members
  - Term Length: 3 years
  - Average Time Commitment: ~20 hours total over the course of the year
  - Approval Process: Subcommittee members are approved by the Chair
  - Duties: The awards committee conducts a preliminary review of nominations to ensure they are complete, maintains and updates a rubric for scoring and ranking nominations, coordinates the review process (in which all full WICB members participate), and leads the final discussion in which the awardees are chosen.

- **Outreach and Communications Subcommittee**
  - Purpose: The Outreach and Communications Subcommittee seeks to build and integrate existing networks to 1) foster an active and engaged WICB community, 2) promote connections between mentors, mentees, and peers, 3) improve visibility and access to resources and opportunities, and 4) provide models for the myriad ways that one can be (or can be an ally to) a woman in cell biology.
  - Size and Composition: 5-6 WICB members and/or associate members
  - Term Length: 3 years
  - Average Time Commitment: 12 hours/year
  - Approval Process: Subcommittee members are approved by the Chair
  - Duties: This subcommittee is tasked with ensuring that the WICB mission and activities reach the ASCB community and beyond. The subcommittee helps to craft the outward-facing aspect of the WICB webpage and to coordinate outreach activities.

- **Career Navigator WICB column (ASCB newsletter) Subcommittee**
  - Purpose: publish bimonthly WICB Career Navigator column in the ASCB newsletter
  - Size and Composition: Chair of the WICB committee and 1-2 additional members or associates; authors are not required to be WICB members
  - Term Length: 3 years
  - Average Time Commitment: ~20-30 hours total over the course of the year
  - Approval Process: Subcommittee members are approved by the Chair
  - Duties: This subcommittee identifies topics and authors for the WICB column, and helps edit the columns for content and clarity.
RESPONSIBILITIES AND DELIVERABLES:

Overall:

- Recognition for women cell biologists at all career stages through award programs including career awards (Awards subcommittee)
- Support for cell biologists through travel and childcare awards (Childcare Awards subcommittee)
- Provide resources for the promotion of women in science, including the online Speakers List of women cell biologists (Speakers List subcommittee).
- Educational programming at the annual meeting including roundtable discussions, mentoring theatre, and networking panel events (Mentoring Theatre and Networking subcommittees)
- Information throughout the year disseminated through ASCB platforms (Career Navigator column in newsletter, online community, Twitter, WICB network email distribution) (Outreach and Communications subcommittee)

- Deliverable: Mentoring Theater
  - Due date: annual meeting
  - Deliverable: meeting event (see description above)

- Deliverable: Networking Panel
  - Due date: annual meeting
  - Deliverable: meeting event (see description above)

- Deliverable: Speaker List
  - Due date: quarterly update
  - Deliverable: an online web resource for women speakers in cell biology

- Deliverable: WICB awards
  - Due date: reading applications and a call in May/June; presentation at the annual meeting
  - Deliverable: identification of career award winners, and recognition at the annual meeting (see description above)

- Deliverable: Outreach and Communications
  - Due date: continuous
  - Deliverable: tweets and email distribution of information that promotes, educates, and supports women in cell biology, website content, posts of the ASCB Community

- Deliverable: Career Navigator WICB column (ASCB newsletter)
  - Due date: bimonthly (6/year)
  - Deliverable: written column in the ASCB Newsletter featuring news and resources to promote women in cell biology

MEETINGS: 3 quarterly calls, plus one longer meeting at the annual meeting (or virtual)