



AST COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE (COP) OVERVIEW

SUMMARY

Communities of Practice Strategic Value:

- Work with the Board, committees, and task forces to accomplish AST's strategic goals and objectives
- Empower and support AST membership
- Provide a mechanism for AST to respond quickly to the evolving field of transplantation
- Create opportunities for members to share knowledge and to learn from each other
- To harness the essence of AST – its knowledge base and intellectual power – to drive progress
- Create greater organizational efficiencies

COP Overview

Most professional associations have employed traditional governance models that include formal standing and ad hoc committees that are charged with working on Board-mandated projects. It is a challenge to provide an opportunity for cross-fertilization between committees. Thus, only a fraction of the membership is actively involved in the work of the association. Traditional committee structures can limit the association's ability to respond quickly. This is a concern in an ever-changing environment. Communities of Practice (COPs) are crucial to addressing these challenges.

COPs are by nature self-forming, more informal, and develop around a common purpose.

A COP is different from a committee or task force in that the shared learning, knowledge, and interest of the members are what keep it together – not a mandate or project. COPs are defined by shared interests and exist because of the value they provide to the members. The COP's ultimate success is based upon the value perceived by the members.

The boundaries of COPs are more flexible than formal committees – members may join one or more communities that are of interest to them. This flexibility allows for more opportunities to learn and encourages engagement among members.

COPs must be officially sanctioned by the Board. COPs are less formal than committees but do benefit from staff and financial support from AST. They are also provided with an online community to facilitate interaction with a platform for sharing.

Benefits of COPs:

- Serve as a platform for the exchange and interpretation of information and a source of expertise for the Board, committees, and task forces
- Drive organizational strategy
- Generate new educational programs
- Solve problems

- Provide a home for people with common backgrounds and identities within the organization and a way to effectively initiate new members
- Help keep AST at the cutting edge of transplantation by discussing new ideas and staying abreast of developments in the field
- Create and promote the spread of best practices
- Develop professional skills by sharing knowledge and experience
- Provide networking opportunities
- Strengthen sense of community and loyalty to the organization
- Empower the membership by involving them in the work of the AST
- Provide the Board with a mechanism for obtaining feedback
- Create, host and monitor educational activities, such as journal clubs or webinars

COP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE - PURPOSE

The COP Executive Committees (ECs) represent and provide leadership to the COPs. Specifically, they:

- Provide COP leadership and serve as the core governance group within the COP
 - Based on mandates received from the board, the EC will set goals and objectives, develop a work plan, assign responsibilities, and monitor progress in achieving goals
 - Plan the annual COP meeting at ATC
 - Coordinate annual nomination and election process
- Present annual initiatives to AST Board of Directors with recommendations regarding new activities
- Serve as a liaison to COP subcommittees or work groups to ensure workgroup activities align with AST's current mission and initiatives
- Provide opportunities for collaboration, including serving as a liaison to other COPs to explore cooperative opportunities
- Build and assess COP need
 - EC members will actively assist in the recruitment of new members to the COP and AST (this can be done through a workgroup)
 - Periodically assess COP needs such as communication within the COP, and sharing of expertise, education, guidelines, research networks, laboratory needs, etc.
- Maintain Hub online communities, including for the content, library items, discussion posts , and announcements.

COP Executive Committee Structure:

All COP Executive Committee members must be:

1. AST members in good standing
2. Serve for two year staggered terms*

The COP Chair reports to the AST Board of Directors.

Position	Term	Number of Members
Chair	2 years	1
Chair-elect (Co-chair)	2 years	1
Past Chair	2 years	1
Committee Members at Large	2 years (staggered)*	3-5
Trainee Committee Member at Large	1 year	1

* During the initial elections for new COPs, at least half of the committee members are asked to serve one additional year to ensure leadership continuity. The Trainee Committee Member at Large position is not mandatory for a COP. It is up to the discretion of the Executive Committee whether the position will be filled.

GUIDELINES FOR BOARD LIAISONS

Introduction

Board liaisons are the board's link to clear communication with AST's committees, advisory councils and COPs (hereafter referred to as "committee"). Liaisons play a primary oversight role, on behalf of the board, and provide a link between the board and committee leadership.

A board liaison can be characterized as both an ambassador to the COP EC and as a working member of the COP EC (if this is mutually acceptable between chair and liaison).

Communication via the board liaison is critical to:

- initiatives staying in line with the strategic direction of the Society
- reporting on progress being made towards committee goals
- communicating board directives
- alerting the board to any issues arising within the COP, thus preventing potential issues from arising

Duties of the Board Liaison

- The board liaison must familiarize themselves with the initiatives of the committee. New liaisons are strongly encouraged to schedule a time to talk with the chair to review committee initiatives.
- The liaison is responsible for reporting any newly proposed initiatives or deviations from approved initiatives to the board.
- The liaison is a conduit of information/communication from the board to the committee and vice versa. The liaison is also a supporter of the chair in achieving the committee initiatives.
- The liaison should attend all in-person meetings and participate on committee conference calls throughout the year. This attendance and attention to committee initiatives acknowledges the importance of our committee members' time.
- The liaison should continually monitor the committee's progress toward accomplishing its goals.
- The liaison is responsible for advising the committee about appropriate processes for their activities, including the need for board approval of policy items or expenditures.
- The liaison should advise the board if there are concerns with a committee, including, attendance, leadership or policy problems. They should recommend to the Executive Director in advance of a board meeting that discussion of the committee be added to the board agenda.
- The liaison should review the minutes of the committee meetings and share key items with the board when appropriate.
- When the board decides about a committee recommendation, it is the liaison's responsibility to deliver that decision to the committee.
- The liaison should participate in formulating the annual goals for the following year.

Staff Support of the Board Liaison

- Copy liaison on all emails related to the COP.

COP EC Responsibility to the Board Liaison

- Copy liaison on emails involving the COP EC, including chair and co-chair communications.
- Include liaison on invitations to events, meetings and activities of the COP.

AST EXECUTIVE STAFF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

COPs should be predominantly self-sufficient but will receive support and resources as outlined below.

An AST executive staff member is assigned to each COP to provide administrative support, assist the chairs in developing strategic objectives, and to ensure the smooth operation of the COP. Assistance includes:

- Scheduling Executive Committee calls
- Distribute official AST announcements (i.e., call for election nominations)
- Guide the EC with processes, procedures, and implementation of the COP EC elections
- Assist with other projects aligned with COP initiatives if time is available

COP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CALLS

Executive Committee calls are led by the COP Chair and are typically held once a month. If the Chair is unavailable, the Co-Chair should lead the call. If neither are available, the call should be postponed or rescheduled.

While the COP calls are not exceedingly formal, [Roberts Rules of Order](#) are used as a guideline, specifically when making a motion that requires a formal vote.

NOTE: AST's bylaws require that actions of all COPs shall be taken by a simple majority of the members present and voting, and any number of members greater than one-third of the total committee membership shall constitute a quorum or a minimum of three committee members for committees with total committee membership less than nine members.

Executive Staff and Board Liaisons do not count towards a quorum, since they are not voting members.

COP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTION PROCEDURES

A "call for nominations" will be posted on the COP website each year (typically in the February/March timeframe) for Co-Chair and Member-at-Large positions. Nominations will be submitted to the chair and then posted on the site for voting by COP membership. The Executive Committee members

elected in this manner will be subject to final approval by the AST president-elect and the Board of Directors.

For Trainee positions on the EC, a “call for nominations’ will be posted on the COP website each year (typically in the March/April timeframe). Nominations will be submitted to the Executive Committee for consideration and the EC will chose their one-year Trainee member.

During the COP election process, if a tie occurs for any position, the voting period will be re-opened and extended for seven days. The position(s) that are tied will not be divulged to the COP executive committee or the COP membership. An announcement will be made to the COP membership that voting will be re-opened and a new deadline set with the hopes that the tie is resolved with additional votes. AST staff will track voting to ensure there are no duplicate votes cast.

If the tie still exists after the second round of voting closes, the AST President-elect, in consultation with the COP chair, will appoint one of the two candidates tied for the position to the COP Executive Committee.

COP ALLOTTED FUNDS POLICY

Each COP has up to \$2,000 available towards board-approved projects and initiatives.

This funding is to be used for previously approved Initiatives (such as ATC travel grants, hosting an executive committee meeting at a non-AST event, funding an AJT submission, live webinar, etc.)

To use the funds, each COP should notify the Board about its plan when initiatives are proposed for the upcoming year.

New Initiatives

- If the proposed use of this funding is for a new initiative (i.e., not presented as part of the COP’s yearly plan of initiatives), a special request should be submitted to the Board requesting their approval of the new initiative.
- If the request for a project or initiative has a budget impact that will exceed the allotted \$2,000, traditional board approval measures will be needed. An official proposal and agenda item must be submitted for discussion and approval at a future AST Board of Directors’ meeting.

Please note that funds allocated each year cannot be accumulated and carried over for use in future years. Unused funds will be returned to the general fund at the end of each calendar year.

Finally, the amount of available funds for each COP will be reviewed annually as part of the budgeting process for AST. Amounts may change annually, based on AST’s financial state.