

TIPS FOR GETTING INVOLVED NATIONALLY

The following are tips for getting involved nationally and being successful at the national level. There is no one way or right way to do this. Faculty in the department are willing to help others get involved and excel.

GETTING STARTED

- Choose 1-2 organizations of interest and that best match your professional goals; contact chairs of committees (email addresses are typically on the website). Send a brief email highlighting your strengths and interest and attach a CV. Chairs and other leaders welcome those who show initiative.
- Offer to volunteer even if there are no open positions on the committee. Remember, organizations need helpers.
- Offer to help out with various tasks in an organization of interest; examples: judge abstract and poster competitions, organize continuing education opportunities, serve on the local arrangements committee of a national organization holding a meeting in your city/region, write exam and practice exam questions, organize and chair a symposium. Be willing to do scut work jobs, especially at the beginning.
- Think about what you like to do, what you are good at, and what your ultimate goals are; you are more likely to follow through and do a great job if you seek tasks that you like and are good at.
- Organizations want early career people; don't be afraid to reach out as junior faculty even if a committee or board seems more heavily weighted with senior members.
- Network, network, network
 - Get to know people, including at social events
 - Ask people you know to help you get involved in an organization
 - Ask people you don't know to help you get involved and introduce you to people
- Review papers, do a good job, offer to be on an editorial board, then do a good job at that and this helps your chances of getting selected as an Associate Editor and potentially an Editor. Use the same strategy with study section.
- Choose a small society or committee that you can attend regularly.
- Committee work is often administrative, thus you don't need to be a content expert to get involved. Committees value a range of skills and talents.
- Dissemination of research into the community also reflects service (e.g., use of community advisory boards).
- Offer to give talks in the community.
- Be patient and persistent; expect some rejection, this is normal.

INCREASING YOUR INVOLVEMENT

- Get involved in one or two things and then develop connections. Making connections helps you get on multiple committees.
- Participate actively on committees and do what you say you will do.
- Get known as a niche expert; show initiative and/or some level of creativity.
- Start with small activities with smaller groups, then increase your visibility to others, including those who can help your career.
- Don't be afraid to nominate yourself for a committee or a specific role. Be sure the incoming Chair is aware of your interest in a position, these are often the people making new appointments. Send an email to the President-Elect and express interest in a specific role/position— convey interest, motivation, and competence.
- Work your way up in a system – don't expect to start at the top. One strategy is to start locally or regionally and then get involved nationally. Alternatively, you can start with a

small, specific role in a national organization and work your way up. Some people worked their way up through one committee in a large national organization. There is no one right way to do this.

- Involve other colleagues; enjoy connections with colleagues who share your interests.
- Become a protégé of someone important in the organization.
- Do not get overcommitted.
- Take part in more leadership activities once you have proven yourself as someone who follows through. Choose roles that simultaneously serve the organization and help you fulfill your professional goals.

COLLABORATING & LEADING

- Learn from the masters – watch the people who are successful in the organization and follow their example, especially if you are new to a position.
- Know the culture of the organization.
- Demonstrate courage.
- Choose your battles wisely.
- Negotiate effectively.
- Develop a strong understanding of what the other side wants, what their goals are, and negotiate from that perspective.
- Assert yourself properly.
- Have a strategy for dealing with people who don't do what they were supposed to do, because this is inevitable when doing committee work. This often presents an opportunity for you to demonstrate leadership.
- Capitalize on your strengths; think about what you are good at and how that contributes to what you want to do.
- Socialize actively if you are comfortable doing so, but it is not essential to be outgoing and talkative (use your own interpersonal style).
- Make a personal connection with each person on the committee.
- Remember as a leader have little direct power, so be sure to get others engaged to work with you and in line with your vision.
- Collaborate, collaborate, collaborate.