

## **APS DBIO Executive Committee Annual Meeting**

March 17th, 2025 at 9:00 pm PT

In person at the Anaheim Hilton, room Catalina 1 and by Zoom

### **Invited attendees**

<u>Chair:</u>	Ajay Gopinathan
<u>Chair-Elect:</u>	Arpita Upadhyaya
<u>Vice Chair:</u>	Michelle Wang
<u>Past Chair:</u>	Joshua Shaevitz
<u>Secretary/Treasurer:</u>	Andrew Mugler
<u>Councilor:</u>	Jennifer Ross
<u>Member-at-Large:</u>	Elena Koslover
<u>Member-at-Large:</u>	Suliana Manley
<u>Member-at-Large:</u>	Armita Nourmohammad
<u>Member-at-Large:</u>	Alison Patteson
<u>Member-at-Large:</u>	Patricia Soto
<u>Member-at-Large:</u>	Daniel Weissman
<u>Early Career Member-at-Large:</u>	Noah Mitchell
<u>Early Career Member-at-Large:</u>	Christopher Lynn
<u>Incoming Vice Chair:</u>	Vernita Gordon
<u>Incoming Member-at-Large:</u>	Jasmine Nirody
<u>Incoming Member-at-Large:</u>	Andrew Leifer
<u>Incoming Early Career Member-at-Large:</u>	Jules Nde

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# Outgoing/incoming Executive Committee members

We thank the outgoing Executive Committee members:

- Joshua Shaevitz (Past Chair)
- Suliana Manley (MAL)
- Armita Nourmohammad (MAL)
- Noah Mitchell (EC MAL)

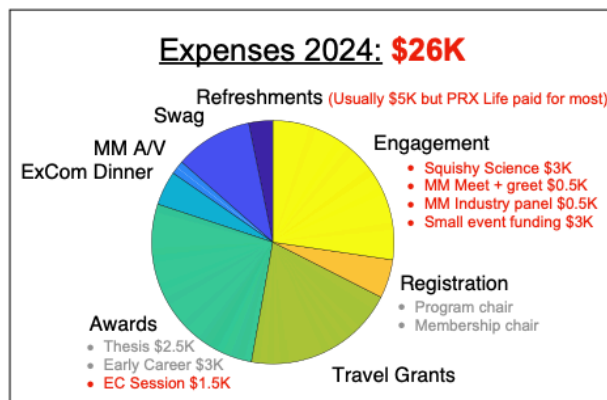
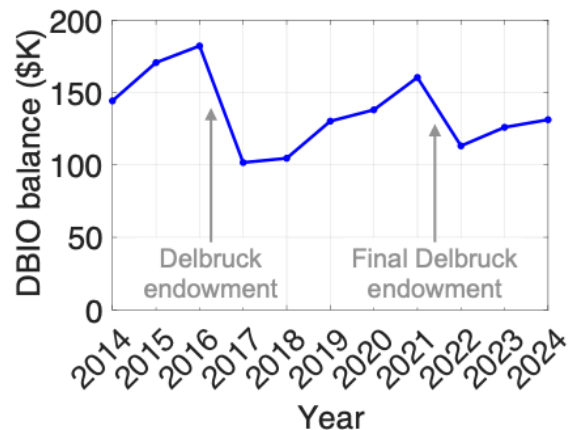
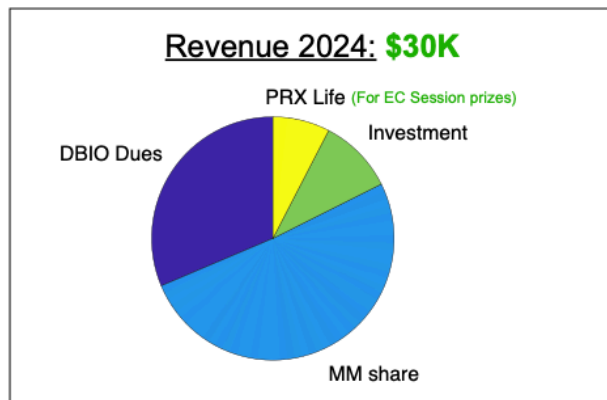
We welcome the incoming Executive Committee members:

- Vernita Gordon (Vice Chair)
- Jasmine Nirody (MAL)
- Andrew Leifer (MAL)
- Jules Nde (EC MAL)

## Committee reports, 2024-2025

### Finances

Treasury report (Andrew Mugler)



## Canvassing:

2023 Committee: (Chair) Joshua Shaevitz

2024 Committee: (Chair) Ajay Gopinathan

This is an ad hoc unit activity (not in bylaws). The current DBIO Chair is in charge of canvassing activities, obtains help from the Executive Committee and other members as needed. The activities done to solicit a diverse nomination/application pool of APS Fellows and Delbruck Prize Nominees and Nominations for Executive Cmte were as follows:

- We use a service survey for soliciting interest in DBIO activities  
<https://forms.gle/F45unejVnBeM6wrj6>
- Emails were sent out to all DBIO members asking for their input for nominations..
- In April, a list of all fellowship eligible APS members and the list of active/rollover fellowship nominations from APS Honors. The list was to identify strong applicants for Canvassing Chair to reach out to individuals who could serve as nominators for strong candidates - these were senior colleagues who had previously served as mentors or collaborators.
- Canvassing for Delbruck may require a multi-year plan and improvements should be made. Activities done in 2023 and 2024, several potential nominators were contacted by the Canvassing Chair.
- A publicity blitz (email, engage) is recommended for early career and thesis prizes. .
- Canvassing for Nominations Cmte included obtaining a list of all APS-DBIO members as well as a list of all folks who previously agreed to serve on the ballot (whether or not they were elected or not). ExComm was asked if they'd be willing to help; several members helped identify strong members.
- The S&T maintained the spreadsheets. Given the sensitive nature of canvassing, this information should be kept confidential.

Eligibility of nominators:

- Any individual, except a member of the selection committee, may participate in one nomination per year for a given honor. Participating in a nomination is considered serving as a nominator, serving as a co-sponsor, or writing a letter in support of a nomination submitted by another individual. [See APS' nomination guidelines.](#)

**Example canvassing email:**

Dear Professor XXX,

As Chair of the Division of Biological Physics of the American Physical Society, I am writing to suggest that you may be a strong candidate for the APS Max Delbruck Prize in Biological Physics, which recognizes and encourages outstanding achievement in biological physics research. You are among the most highly cited and well respected leaders in our field and it would be my honor to work with a nominator to prepare a packet for nominating you for this award. The instructions for preparing a nomination packet can be found below. The deadline is June 1<sup>st</sup>. Please let me know if you have more questions for me or questions about the selection process of the Delbruck Prize. If you wish, please provide the contact information of a nominator whom I can further reach out to.

<https://www.aps.org/programs/honors/prizes/delbruck.cfm>

Sincerely,  
XXX, Ph.D.

Chair, APS Division of Biological Physics

*Delbruck prize committee:*

2023 Committee: Zuzanna Siwy (chair), Xiaoqin Zou (2024 vice chair), Arup Chakraborty, Ajay Gopinathan, Carlos Bustamante (note: Honors committee such as Fellowship, Delbruck, Early Career, and Doctoral Thesis award, will need an overlapping Vice chair on the committee who will serve in the next year's committee from now on according to the APS' pending policies.

2024 Committee: Xiaoqin Zou (Chair), Arvind Murugan (Vice Chair), Steven Block, Eric Siggia (2024 Recipient), Arpita Upadhyaya

- Composition: See Bylaws. Fellows may be drawn on for this duty. Committee members must agree that all their deliberations, and the contents of all nominations, are confidential. No Early Career members on this committee.
- The Canvassing Chair (DBIO Chair) solicits nominations for those persons to help ensure a strong pool. Candidates are not restricted to be DBIO members, nor even to be APS members, or in physics departments.
- APS supplies committee Chair with detailed procedures and with all nominations, once the deadline has passed.

- DBIO Chair charges committee to consider diversity in all the above aspects. Diversity can also involve levels of biological organization, theory vs experiment, class of institution, established versus new research areas.
- Committee Chair discusses a selection rubric for evaluation and scoring and the case of conflict of interest (e.g. conflicted committee member is excused for part of the discussion). Committee members should not themselves nominate any candidate, though they may previously have done so for an active holdover candidate.
- Before examining nominations, each year's committee should begin by coming to a consensus on philosophy of the award; for example, "To consider the impact of nominee's research on Biological Physics and Physics more broadly." The committee has had the flexibility to decide for themselves the relative weights of these considerations as well as:
  - Single breakthrough versus sustained career accomplishment.
  - Impact outside Biological Physics versus inside.
  - Impact through mentoring versus primary literature contributions.
  - International vs US, with the overarching goal that we wish to identify a scientist whom we are proud to hold up as a model. We prefer to award the prize to one scientist in the same year.

### **An example selection rubric for evaluation & scoring (used in 2022)**

The selection committee met to create a rubric for evaluation of the nomination packets. The following selection criteria were evaluated and used in the quantitative scoring:

- A. Quality of research achievement (onetime or lifetime) (eg. originality, innovation...)
- B. Discovery of new principles or invention of new technology in biological physics
- C. Impact on physics, biology, and/or medicine (biol. Phys. research is often multidisciplinary)
- D. Diversity (gender & ethnic groups)

The first three criteria were equally weighted in the scoring. The averaged scores from the first three criteria (A-C) were used to rank the nominees. The diversity score was used as a tiebreaker if the top two nominees are close in their scores.

### **The quantitative evaluation data and the final selection in 2022**

We ranked the nominees based on their average scores. After scoring, the selection committee met via Zoom to discuss the research achievements and impacts of the top two nominees. The final selection was made by anonymous votes. One mechanism was designed in advance and used to ensure rational votes (not to be pursued by an eloquent committee member). The selection committee members were allowed to have more than 24 hours to process the information from the Zoom meeting before casting their anonymous votes

- DBIO Chair as an ex officio to confirm diversity is carefully discussed. DBIO Chair only votes in case of deadlock. Otherwise, the committee has no discussion with the Excomm to ensure independence.
- Committee chair forwards a decision directly to the APS and waits for APS approval. The committee chair sends the report and informs the decision to the Unit Chair as a courtesy. The decision is not to be shared with anyone else, including awardee. It is easy to forget this, so the committee chair firmly instructs the committee.

**In 2023**, the procedure as detailed for the 2022 selection was followed. Once the rubric for scoring had been established, the committee members reviewed the candidates they did not have conflict with. The scores were forwarded to the Chair who compiled all scores in all categories. A table with total scores was sent to all committee members and became the starting point for identifying the prize recipient in the subsequent meeting. In 2023, it was decided unanimously that the voting could occur during the meeting after the discussion.

The Chair prepared the documentation required by the APS and shared the draft with committee members for their input.

### *Community Engagement:*

2024 committee: Armita Nourmohammad (chair), Elena Koslover(Vice chair), Chris Lynn, Josh Shaevitz, Arpita Upadhaya, Sarthak Gupta

2023 Committee: Nancy Forde (Chair), Armita Nourmohammad (Vice Chair, chair for 2024), Margaret Cheung, Ajay Gopinathan, Sarthak Gupta, Sarah Marzen, Mohammad Nooranidoost, Alice Pyne, Orrin Shindell, David Sivak

For 2024-2025, the community engagement committee primarily organized and hosted three online events. Sarah Marzen also provided one newsletters to the DBIO community, which summarized the DBIO-sponsored events and promoted

APS-related opportunities such as awards, publications, etc. We are currently looking for new editors for the newsletters. We also decided to organize a DBIO public lecture invited session at APS in partnership with FOEP (to be organized at the 2026 March meeting).

The following is the operating procedure that was followed, which should be re-evaluated annually to see if this process best serves the ongoing needs of our diverse DBIO community.

The engagement committee met in April 2024 and planned a series of events during the year. Members each volunteered to lead one event in an area of interest to them. This helped to distribute the workload! The working spreadsheet is accessible here: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1wMcUkEQAKIYDhtfdgP8CJxqnsM2sl8rrA2GYeiV27kQ/edit?gid=0#gid=0>

When finalized, information about events was posted to the APS DBIO page, here: <https://engage.aps.org/dbio/resources/workshops-networking>

We decided to focus on the topics that were missing from the previous year's webinars. We aimed for a range of events that could cover a variety of interests in the DBIO community, hoping to have "something for everyone". Events were led by different members of the DBIO Engagement Committee, ranging from our postdoc members and assistant professors through to senior professors. When selecting panelists for the events, organizers were advised to ensure that diverse voices were found.

For each event, the following operating procedure was followed:

1. Once date, time, title, panelists and description were confirmed by the organizer, the committee chair (Nancy) did the following:
  - a. Request that APS set up a Zoom link for the event (request as seminar, not webinar)  
(<https://apsphysics.atlassian.net/servicedesk/customer/portal/14/group/30/create/10442>)
  - b. Once the Zoom link was set, request that APS update our events page with the description of the event and a Zoom registration link  
(<https://apsphysics.atlassian.net/servicedesk/customer/portal/14/group/30/create/10367>).
  - c. Once the website was live, request that the event organizer/moderator take responsibility for advertising. The following instructions were sent:



**Example Email to the event organizer/moderator:**

“The website and Zoom registration link for “your” DBIO event are now live: <https://engage.aps.org/dbio/resources/workshops-networking>

Can you please do the following?

- Post to Engage, advertising the event and including a link to the Zoom registration and to our Workshops & Networking page.
  - 2 weeks prior to the event, ask Andrew Mugler to send an email about the event to all DBIO members
  - Post a reminder to Engage ~5 days prior to your event
  - Send info to Sarah Marzen to Tweet [Sarah handled our DBIO Twitter account]
  - Ask panellists to complete the permission form so we can post a recording after the event: [APS Permission Agreement form](#)
  - Ask Sarah Marzen to include information about this event in the next newsletter.”
2. APS opens the event on Zoom and readies it for recording. They transfer host duties to the moderator and/or the Chair of the Engagement Committee 15 minutes prior to the event start. We hit record when the event starts. Chair of the Engagement Committee makes a brief intro to the DBIO engagement committee and encourages attendees to attend future events, view past events on our website. Then moderator runs the event. Scheduled for 60 minutes; good to keep to this, though some events had discussions that continued briefly afterwards.
  3. APS sends a notification to the Chair of the Engagement Committee that the recording is available on their YouTube channel. The Chair of the Engagement Committee requests a website update (<https://apsphysics.atlassian.net/servicedesk/customer/portal/14/group/30/create/10367>) to replace the Zoom registration link with a link to the video recording.
  4. The Chair of the Engagement Committee notifies Newsletter Editor (Sarah) that a recording is available, so they can review it and write up a description of the event for the DBIO newsletter.

Attendance at online events ranged from 16 to 44.

Membership Engagement Committee:

2022 Committee: (Chair) Jianhua Xing

2023 Committee: (Chair) Jianhua Xing, (Vice Chair) Noah Mitchell

2024 Committee: (Chair) Noah Mitchell, (Vice Chair) Chris Lynn

The principal task of the committee is to organize the membership engagement activities at the APS March meeting. The following procedure is followed:

- 1) Through discussions with the engagement committee members, the committee works out a purchase plan of swag and reusable materials, and sends the plan to the executive committee for approval. This should happen at least two months before the March Meeting. For items bearing APS logos, the committee should check APS policy and contact APS representatives for approval if needed. The committee has used a number of vendors, and one of them is 4imprint. It generally takes 4+ weeks to get the orders shipped.
- 2) In early February, APS (Jennifer Ruberto [APS] <[ruberto@aps.org](mailto:ruberto@aps.org)>) will send an email to the Unit Chair about the need of volunteers email addresses for Badge Scanning. The Unit Chair needs to look out for this email and delegate this communication to the membership committee chair. The membership committee chair sets up a signup sheet, solicits volunteers through division newsletters and other social means, and provides the list of volunteers to APS. An example signup sheet can be found [here](#). The volunteers need to install the APS app and activate before the meeting. It is imperative that the chair communicates with the volunteers in advance. Advertise the signup sheet on social media and email. Notify APS of the volunteers well in advance so they have badge scanning privileges.
- 3) During the meeting, the division will have one table for the committee members to interact with current and potential DBiol members, with swags imprinted with the DBIO logo distributed. The volunteers introduce the divisions, distribute the swags, and scan badges of potential new members.

To further reach out to potential members who may not attend the APS March Meeting, the committee also initializes an off-meeting membership drive. The committee has organized an image-contest to celebrate biological physics research. An Engage website showing a collection of the submissions is [here](#). The committee suggests adding to this in the future. Below is the procedure:

- 1) Using the APS DBIO Membership Google account, create a new drive folder for submissions with a Google poll form. Send out the solicitation through Engage, division newsletter, and other social media. Make sure that the letter includes the words “the submitters grant permission to APS DBIO to modify, reuse, and distribute the image”.
- 2) November: The committee reviews submissions, and selects top designs for membership-drive T-shirts, flyers, and stickers.

3) December: Design new flyers, from the submissions and distribute these. Design the T-shirts by placing an order through 4imprint. Make sure the shipped materials can be transported reliably (in someone's car is ideal) to APS MM.

3) Work with the APS engage team to update the [gallery webpage](#), distribute to the community, and encourage community members to help on distributing the flyers, and print out T-shirts themselves.

The DBIO compensates the MM registration fee for the Chair of the Membership Committee as this position requires the Chair to stay throughout most of the week during the MM and especially to arrive early to set up the membership Table at the MM site and coordinate the volunteers' schedules.

### **Example Email**

*Dear colleagues,*

*DBIO invites you to submit a striking image representing diverse research in biological physics for use on DBIO t-shirts which will be available at the 2024 March Meeting, as well as in DBIO flyers and other media.*

*To submit your design, upload your file at [this link](#).*

*Vector graphics, PDF, or PNG file formats are preferred. We recommend a resolution of at least 1200 x 1200 pixels. By submitting the image, you grant permission to APS DBIO to modify, reuse, and distribute the image.*

*Any researcher can participate. Please help on spreading the words. A membership of APS or APS/DBIO is NOT required. We would like to use this event to advocate biological physics research and attract new members to our division.*

*We have extended the deadline to November 1, 202XXXXX.*

*Thank you for your participation and support of our Division!*

*DBIO Membership Committee  
Noah Mitchell & Chris Lynn*

## Program Committee

### 1. Committee Composition:

According to the by-law:

*“The Program Committee shall consist of the Chair-Elect, the Chair, the Vice-Chair, the Secretary-Treasurer, and three Members-at-Large appointed by the Chair, upon the recommendation of the Chair-Elect, to staggered three-year terms. “*

#### 2021 committee:

Margaret Cheung (Chair, program chair for DBIO March 2022), Josh Shaevitz (2023 program chair), Margaret Gardel (2021 program chair), Moumita Das, Omar Saleh, Taras Pogorelov, Serena Bradde

2022 Committee: Josh Shaevitz (Chair, Program chair for DBIO March Meeting 2023) Ajay Gopinathan (Tutorial, 2024 Program Chair), Margaret Cheung (2022 program chair), Mugler, Manley, Xing, Forde

2023 Committee: Ajay Gopinathan (Chair, Program chair for DBIO March Meeting 2024), Arpita Upadhyaya (Tutorial, 2025 Program Chair), Joshua Shaevitz (2023 program chair), Andrew Mugler, Nancy Forde, Suliana Manley, Alison Patteson, Agnes Curatolo (PRL biological physics associate editor)

2024 Committee: Arpita Upadhyaya (Chair, Program chair for DBIO GPS 2025), Michelle Wang (Tutorial chair, 2025-2026 Program Chair), Ajay Gopinathan (2024 program chair), Andrew Mugler, Suliana Manley, Daniel Weissman, Alison Patteson

The APS March Meeting Handbook will be sent to the DBIO Program Chair at the end of April (April 25 for MM23, April 20 for MM 24, April 24 for GPS 25). At the same time, APS will also set up the first Program Committee meeting to begin planning the March Meeting (held on April 28, 2023 for MM 24, held on April 25 for GPS 25). It is advisable to have the program chair, vice chair and a representative committee member present as important information is covered in this and subsequent meetings. The MM handbook ([March Meeting 2025 Program Committee Handbook](#)) ([March Meeting 2024 Program Committee Handbook](#)) contains a large amount of information about running the meeting and all relevant APS deadlines. This set of Operating Procedures outlines the main tasks for the Program Committee and DBIO volunteers as a whole. There are many other smaller tasks that the Program Chair carries out and are not discussed below but are well-covered in the APS March Meeting Handbook.

## 2. Focus Session Topics

Focus sessions are the primary mode for DBIO talks. There is no limit to the number of focus topics that DBIO can sponsor at the March Meeting. *Note: In principle there is no limit, but one has to keep in mind the number of rooms and concurrent sessions. The APS program team makes an initial allocation of rooms based on last year's program. It is advisable to have the total number of focus sessions similar to the previous year's or only slightly more.*

Early in April (April 1, 2023 for MM24; April 17, 2024 for GPS 25), APS will send the Program Chair a sheet with all the focus topics from the last meeting along with their abstract counts and a request to finalize our list of focus session topics for the next March Meeting by a deadline (Initial deadline May 16 for GPS 25, then changed to May 31 upon request to extend) (May 11 in 2024, June 3 in 2023).

*Note: DBIO (and other SPLASHY units) would like to have a 7-8 week period between receiving the focus session report and the deadline for next year's focus topics. This will allow time for - a program committee meeting prior to sending the solicitation email, ~ 5-6 weeks for the solicitation of volunteers and new session topics, and another week for the program committee to review nominations and make the final selection. Ideally the focus topic deadline will be in early June, so there is time after semester ends for members to submit sessions, volunteer etc. APS staff agreed to this.*

Pre-identified Focus Topics: Based on the number of abstracts received in the previous MM (cut-off was 10 for MM 24) (cut-off was 10 for GPS 25 also), some topics were automatically carried over to the next year as "Pre-identified Focus Topics". Once these topics are agreed upon by the Program Committee, an email is sent to the DBIO membership asking for volunteers to organize the Pre-identified Focus Topics via a [Google Form for pre-identified sessions \(2025\)](#). The draft of the email sent to DBIO members is here: [Soliciting Focus Sessions for 2025](#). Volunteers are asked why they are interested, whether they would like to tweak the topic title, provide suggested invited speaker names, and how they intend to advertise the session to maximize abstract submissions.

New Focus Topics: New Focus Topics are solicited at the same time from the DBIO membership via a [Google form for new focus topics \(2025\)](#) and in the same email as above: [Soliciting Focus Sessions for 2025](#). Volunteer Organizers are asked for a title, a description, estimates of anticipated abstract submissions, suggested invited

speaker names, and how they intend to advertise the session to maximize abstract submissions.

Submissions for both Google Forms were due on May 23, 2024. Submissions are discussed and approved by the Program Committee. The committee's main goal is to make sure there is not significant overlap between two topics, to encourage a merging of topics if there is and to select topics that are more likely to be successful (based on abstract counts of the past year and justification for new topics). While there is no cap on the number of topics, the number was kept to be somewhat similar to 2024 (with a few additional ones). 35 focus topics (23 pre-identified and 12 new topics) were selected for GPS 2025.

Organizers were assigned by the program committee from the list of volunteers based on fit and interests expressed, while maintaining a reasonable distribution across sessions. The selected focus session organizers were then informed that we were moving forward with their sessions. A master list of focus session topics and organizers for each focus topic was shared with them: [GPS 2025 final sessions and organizers](#). Organizers were asked to provide descriptions of their focus session topics and select invited speakers (see section below on target number of invited speakers) and broadly advertise their sessions. For GPS 2025, there ~ 85 volunteer organizers.

Focus topics and any “Standard Sorting Categories” (8 for DBIO in 2024) make up the set of sorting categories available during contributed abstract submission. DBIO had 43 total sorting categories in 2025. The final list of categories was due to APS on May 31, 2024, while the focus topic descriptions were due June 21, 2024.

### **3. Invited Symposia and the APS’ “Invited Nomination System”**

For the past three years, DBIO has “opted in” to the APS Invited Nomination System (Request due May 9, 2024 ). This is a very flexible system and different units use it differently. DBIO is closing in on an effective pipeline but there is room for improvement in the future. The system opened June 17 and closed on July 31, 2024. Invited Symposia: The APS MM logistics team provides the quota (8 for 2025, 2024 and 2023) for Invited Symposia for each unit based on the size of participation over the past 5 years. It has also been the tradition for several years to host a Symposium organized by the Delbruck Prize winner (which is not decided by the nomination deadline), and thus the Program Committee must choose (N-1 or 7) Symposia.

Invited Symposia are nominated through the APS Nomination System which opened on June 17, 2024 and had a submission deadline of July 31, 2024. Nominators are asked for a topic description, list of (confirmed) speakers, and talk titles. If the number of submissions is larger than (N-1), then the Program Committee must meet to select the final slate of symposia. Note: The Nomination System allows submissions with speakers that are not confirmed. This has caused issues in the past and DBIO should make a concerted effort to make it known that nominators should secure commitments before submission and the Committee should only select symposia with confirmed speakers.

*Note: There is room for improvement in this process. Session organizers are asked to provide a list of confirmed speakers, but some speakers decline later on. Ideas: 1) The two step process of first a nomination letter from APS in August and then an actual invitation letter in late October, can lead to confusion - speakers accepting the 'nomination' in Aug as it's not a commitment and then declining in Oct/Nov. Do we need the step with the nomination letter from APS? We make the selections by Aug 1 - so we can ask session organizers to get a firm confirmation from speakers in Aug (have an internal DBIO spreadsheet with confirmation status), and ask APS to send out formal invites for accept / decline in late August (APS staff have said they can work with us on unit specific emails). 2) The official invitation letter needs to clearly state that there will be NO reimbursements without a disclaimer about unit level reimbursement (this is often the reason for late declines as speakers often do not appreciate it even if they have been informed by session organizers – this info needs to be very clearly communicated). 3) Alternate speakers (these are listed but not very practical if cancellations are later on).*

The Program Chair and the Delbruck Prize Winner work together to select an appropriate set of diverse speakers for the Delbruck Symposium after the winner is selected. This is often a rushed process (in October / November) but has been successful in the past.

Invited Talks for Focus Sessions: The Focus Topics Volunteer Organizers are tasked with selecting invited speakers for the Focus Sessions. Each single focus session can have one (ideal) or two (APS discourages) invited speakers—a hard line for the APS. As the invited speaker nominations are due before the contributed abstract submission deadline, there is some noise in this process as we don't know the final number of sessions for each topic. (*Note: For the 2023 meeting, some focus topics had far too many invited speakers relative to the number of contributed talks which caused problems during the sorting process*). To alleviate potential problems arising from too many invited speakers relative to the number of submitted talks, for the 2024 and 2025 meetings **a target number of invited speakers per focus topic** (column E in the session list for 2025: [GPS 2025 final sessions and organizers](#)) was assigned for each topic. This was based on the number of contributed abstracts from the previous March Meeting for these sessions, and was essentially the number of



sessions we projected for the topic with 1 invited speaker and 12 contributed abstracts. Target numbers for new focus sessions were set at 1 unless they are a combination of 2 distinct proposals (in which case it is 2). The purpose of having a target number was to make sure that we do not have too many (or few) invited speakers relative to contributed, which makes it hard to construct meaningful, full sessions. If speakers felt that their target number needed revision, they could petition (with a strong justification) and the program committee would adjust as needed. A few requests were made and some were accepted.

#### **4. Sorting the Contributed Abstracts**

The deadline for contributed abstract submissions was October 31, 2024 (the initial deadline was October 25, but it was moved to October 31 on the last day). After abstract submissions are closed, DBIO abstracts need to be sorted into sessions. Contributed sessions have either:

- 15 contributed talks
- or 12 contributed talks + 1 invited talk
- or 9 contributed talks + 2 invited talks

In the sorting process, APS pushes for completely full sessions so the process must have some flexibility. Based on the total number of submissions, APS allots DBIO a number of total contributed sessions  $N = (\text{Num\_contributed} + 3 * \text{Num\_invited}) / 15$ . This is basically a hard cap from APS. For 2023, DBIO had 690 contributed submissions and 72 invited talks for focus sessions which resulted in 61 total sessions. For 2024, DBIO had 774 contributed abstracts and 76 invited talks for focus sessions which resulted in 70 total focus sessions.

The sorting team consisted of 54 sorters and 9 lead sorters. Sorters were obtained from session organizers who were asked to volunteer so that each focus session had at least one sorter. For the larger focus topics, there were 2-3 sorters. It's a good rule of thumb to have 1 sorter per distinct focus session. DBIO had a team of A small group of 9 lead sorters helped coordinate the sorting process. Each sorter team lead was in charge of 4-5 focus topics and had the following duties:

In 2024, the sorting process occurred over a longer time period: between Nov 7 and Nov 25. The first sorting meeting was held by APS on Nov 7 during which sorters were provided with instructions. All sorting - assigning each abstract to a session - was done on a spreadsheet. The initial phase of sorting of abstracts into sessions was completed by Nov 21. In the second phase completed by Nov 25, sorters worked with lead sorters to finalize these sessions which often involved exchange of abstracts with



other sessions to create coherent and complete sessions. On occasion, abstracts may require to be exchanged with or transferred to other units if appropriate.

### **General sorting guidelines:**

The goal is to sort abstracts into focus sessions from those submitted to specific sessions and to the general sorting categories. A full focus session is:

- 1 invited talk + 12 contributed talks (recommended)
- 2 invited talks + 9 contributed talks (if needed depending on abstract numbers)
- 15 contributed talks (if no invited talks)

Sorters should try to create sessions that are as close to complete as possible. For focus session topics which did not receive sufficient abstracts to make a full session, sorters can:

- select abstracts submitted to the general sorting categories which are thematically appropriate
- abstracts submitted to a different focus session which received more abstracts than needed can be placed into a different focus session with a related theme. The sorter team leads will facilitate this process.

A separate virtual meeting was abandoned for 2024 and 2025 and instead there are virtual-only sessions simultaneously with the in-person meeting. 20 abstracts were received for virtual sessions.

~ 100 abstracts were received for poster sessions.

## **5. Tutorials/Short Courses**

Tutorials are separate workshops held on the Sunday before the March Meeting (March 16; 2025; March 3, 2024) consisting of four one-hour pedagogical talks on a specific topic. Each tutorial is four hours long (Morning tutorials are 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM, afternoon tutorials are 1:30 - 5:30 PM). Tutorials should be designed to bring researchers up to speed on a new or rapidly developing field or teach a technique to new users. The deadline to submit proposals for Tutorials is typically in July (August 1; July 21, 2023). This needs to be submitted to Kieran Mullen, who will then select and approve the Tutorials.

Short Courses are unit-led and feature an intensive course on a particular topic relevant to that unit. They are typically one full day (8:30 AM to 5:30 PM) but may vary depending on the course structure and needs. Courses are designed for graduate students, postdocs, and other early-career scientists, though they are open to all

conference attendees. The deadline to submit proposals for Short Courses is typically August / September.

Proposals for Tutorials/Short Courses should include:

1. A descriptive title
2. A one-paragraph description addressing timeliness and relevance of the topic. This should include a list of potential specific topics that will be covered by each speaker.
3. Names of confirmed speakers with their affiliations and email addresses
4. Target audience

A reasonable procedure is to solicit the membership for tutorials/short courses of interest - both interest in attending and interest in delivering - in June or earlier. In the last few years, the Vice-Chair has been the organizer of the Tutorial and determined the Tutorial topics and recruited speakers. (Alternatively, the responses from the membership can help identify interested individuals who can serve as organizers who would then be responsible for recruiting speakers and organizing the Tutorial. The Vice-Chair should decide how to do this.)

A [Google Form](#) was used to solicit potential topics from the DBIO membership.

In 2023: Two themes were chosen – Super-resolution imaging methods and analysis in Biological Physics and Topological Methods in Biological Physics. DBIO also joined with several other units (GDS, DPOLY, DSOFT, GSNP) to propose an all day tutorial on Data Science for Physicists. The Tutorial Chair contacted several experts in these fields who might potentially be interested in delivering these. 3/4 lecturers for each tutorial were finally confirmed for the DBIO only tutorials. The Chair collaborated with each set of lecturers separately to come up with the details of the proposal (see above) by the deadline. Submissions were made to the APS Tutorial Organizer. The tutorial on Super-resolution Imaging (half day) and the Tutorial on Data Science for Physicists (full day - to be run as two sessions) were accepted by APS in September. Four speakers were confirmed for the Tutorial on Imaging, and one DBIO selected speaker confirmed for the Data Science Tutorial.

In 2024: one proposal on Physical Principles of Biocondensates was submitted and accepted. DBIO also co-sponsored a short course primarily organized by GDS and also co-sponsored by GDS, DPOLY, DSOFT, GSNP. Four speakers were confirmed for the Tutorial on Physical Principles of Biocondensates. One DBIO invited speaker was confirmed for the short course on Data Science - which was run over two days- the Saturday and Sunday preceding the meeting.

The Tutorial organizer sets up meetings with the lecturers to help coordinate the lectures. The organizer should emphasize that the lectures should be largely pedagogical and geared towards students / postdocs including some recent research advances as examples, rather than entirely research talks. Hands-on activities should be encouraged, if the topic permits. APS then follows up with lecturers regarding paperwork for honorarium, materials to share etc. in January. APS sets up a website on Engage for materials to be shared with participants and discussions. Both Tutorials were well attended.

Helpful comments: It is vital to advertise the tutorials sufficiently in advance (especially before the early registration deadline) to ensure strong participation. The typical APS-DBIO outlets (Engage), emails to the membership, as well as Twitter/Linkedin feeds of the organizers, speakers and DBIO leadership are good means of dissemination.

Things to be aware of: 2023: There was not sufficient time between when the March Meeting program went online and the early registration deadline of January 17. There was a problem with the Tutorial registration website. People who had already registered for the March Meeting could not add the Tutorial after the fact. Those who wished to do a 1-day registration for MM could not add the Tutorial even at the time of registration. People not attending the March Meeting could not register for just the Tutorial. The APS staff have been notified about this, but this needs to be followed up on and the process to add Tutorials should be made more seamless.

In 2024: Upon the program chair's request, the APS program and website team included info in the schedule website indicating that interested people can sign up for the Tutorials / short courses after having previously registered for the meeting, by emailing the Registrar. This may need to be followed up on every year.

## **7. Timeline of Activities**

Note: the dates below are for the 2025 meeting and change from year to year.

March 22 : Email sent by APS to 2025 Program Committee members to schedule first meeting on April 25, 2024.

**April 9: DBIO program committee meeting:** DBIO program chair organized the first DBIO program committee meeting to discuss the process, review focus topics from last year based on the 2024 DBIO sorting sheet i.e. remove focus topics which

recruited a very small number of abstracts, and decide on the focus topics which will be carried over as “pre-identified” topics.

*Note: it's ideal to have this meeting after APS sends the session report, which was delayed last year. But the same information is available in the DBIO sorting sheet. Based on the 2024 sorting sheet, DBIO had 34 focus topics; the committee decided to remove 12 (those with < 10 abstracts) and carry over 24 focus session topics.*

April 17: APS sent an email to the program committee with the MM 2024 session report and a deadline of May 16 to submit sorting categories and focus session topics.

*Note: Given the DBIO process of reviewing last year's session report, sending a call for volunteers to organize sessions or propose new topics, review by the DBIO program committee before finalizing the topics, this process can take **7-8 weeks**. We requested an extension of the deadline - which was then extended to **March 31**. **APS has agreed to have this extended timeline of 7-8 weeks going forward.***

April 24: Email sent to DBIO members to solicit volunteers for pre-identified focus sessions and proposing new focus session topics.

- Email sent to DBIO members: [Soliciting Focus Sessions for 2025](#).
- [Google Form for pre-identified sessions \(2025\)](#)
- [Google form for new focus topics \(2025\)](#)

(Initial deadline was May 16, then changed to May 23)

April 24: APS meeting 2025 MM 24 Handbook received ([March Meeting 2025 Program Committee Handbook](#))

May 2: Reminder email sent to DBIO members for volunteering to organize sessions and propose new topics

May 10: Reminder email sent to DBIO members for volunteering to organize sessions and propose new topics - **new deadline May 23**

- [Email draft: Reminder: Soliciting Focus Sessions for 2025](#)
- Program chair also posted this solicitation email on Engage (it is a good idea to do this initially and as a reminder)

May 9: Deadline for units to request use of the APS invited nomination website  
DBIO opted in the Invited Nomination Systems (similar to previous years)

May 23 : Deadline for volunteering to organize pre-identified sessions and suggesting new focus topics from DBIO members.

**May 29: DBIO Program Committee Meeting:** Meeting to finalize the selections of New Focus Topics, pre-identified focus session topics and existing sorting categories. Note: The DBIO Program Chair also held meetings with Program Chairs of DSOF, DPOLY and GSNP to discuss overlaps and co-sponsoring both sets of topics. There is effectively no penalty to co-sponsoring sessions with another unit. Final list was due to APS May 31.

May 31: Deadline for submitting **focus topics and sorting categories** to APS.

June 3: Deadline to submit unit member message announcing the opening of nominations to [units@aps.org](mailto:units@aps.org)

June 10: DBIO Program Chair emailed the list of focus sessions, last year's descriptions for the chosen pre-identified sessions, names of organizers and target number of invited speakers to all session organizers in a spreadsheet: [GPS 2025 final sessions and organizers](#). Organizers were asked to finalize focus topic descriptions by June 19 (these were due to APS by June 21). The session organizers used the descriptions from the last cycle, or wrote a new one.

June 17: APS Nomination System opens

June 21: Deadline to submit **focus topic descriptions** to APS.

The Program Chair submitted Focus Topic descriptions on a google sheet to the APS. *Note: The focus topic descriptions were to be submitted via a google form, one for each topic, which means filling out > 30 forms! Upon the program chair's request, APS provided a google spreadsheet to provide this information, which made things easier. Focus session organizers need to be reminded multiple times (via emails from the Program Chair) to provide this information.*

June 21: Email sent to DBIO members to solicit proposals for invited sessions - deadline for submissions was July 31.

- Draft email: [Invited Sessions solicitation email 2024](#)

July 8, July 18: Reminder emails sent for invited session proposals

July 31: APS nomination system closes. Deadline to submit **nominations** for invited sessions / speakers and invited speakers for focus sessions..

August 1: Deadline to submit Tutorials and short courses

(For 2025, they had the same Aug 1 deadline for Tutorials and short courses but there may have been some additional flexibility in the short course deadline).

August 6: Invited session and invited speaker nominations available for review by DBIO program committee

**August 26: DBIO program committee meeting** to review and select invited sessions and discuss plans for the DBIO early career prize session. 7 out of 10 submitted invited sessions were selected. *Note: this meeting can be held sooner (shortly after the Aug 6 when nominations are available for review, based on program committee availability).*

September 7: Deadline to submit invited session and speaker nominations.  
(*Note: DBIO program chair submits this based on APS instructions via a google spreadsheet with the nomination report provided by APS.*)

September 9: APS Abstract submissions open

**September 23: Meeting of SPLASHY program committee chairs** / vice-chairs to discuss co-sponsoring of invited sessions, and invited session scheduling to avoid overlap of invited sessions with similar topics

September 24: Email sent to DBIO members regarding abstract submissions open.  
Draft of email: [APS Meeting Abstract Submissions Open](#).

Notes:

- Reminders sent on October 16, October 23, October 30.
- DBIO social media coordinator posted these on X and BlueSky accounts
- DBIO program chair posted these on Engage

September 25: APS March Meeting Program Committee (including the DBIO program chair) meets to discuss invited symposia grid and scheduling

September 27: Deadline for program committee to review invited session grid and provide session chairs for Invited Symposia sessions to APS.

October 4: Email sent to DBIO members with the prize session announcement: [DBIO Early Career Prize session 2025 - announcement](#).

(Reminders sent on October 21 and more)

(*Note: Initial deadline was October 25 - same as the APS abstract deadline; the deadline was extended to November 6. Note: the later deadline was right before the start of sorting, hence not ideal (but it was done to recruit more applications; it's better to have that deadline 7-10*

*days before the start of sorting so the program committee can review this and make the selections prior to when sorting begins)).*

October 2: Email sent to focus session organizers to advertise sessions

October 7: Email sent to focus session organizers to volunteer as sorters (to be indicated on spreadsheet with list of sessions and organizers) and confirm invited speaker status for each focus session.

October 14 : Deadline to provide the list of sorters and lead sorters to APS.  
*(Note: DBIO program chair does this by inputting names into the APS provided spreadsheet. The number of sorters should be similar to the previous year's (~ 65 for DBIO) - APS provides this spreadsheet as well).*

October 17: APS sends invitation letters to all invited speakers

October 23: reminder email: APS DBIO abstract submissions, travel award and prize session reminder

October 25: Deadline for Abstract Submission

*Note: On October 28, APS sent an email extending the deadline to October 31.*

### **Sorting timeline:**

The APS [sorting timeline](#) extended through the month of November.

**10/29/24 - Lead Sorter's Meeting** - APS goes over the general sorting guidelines

11/01/24 - APS to Format Sorting Sheets

11/04/24 - APS sent sorting instructions to Committee Members

**11/07/24 - Sorting Kick-Off! First Day of Sorting (FOR MARCH & SPLASHY UNITS)**

APS goes over the sorting process and instructions. All sorters and lead sorters are strongly encouraged to attend this meeting.

11/12/24 - APS Help Desk Week #1

DBIO program chair held DBIO zoom breakout room during the help desk hours for sorters to discuss questions with DBIO program chair, other session organizers or lead sorters. Many abstract exchanges between sessions or other issues that arose were more easily resolved in the zoom room than via email.

11/19/24 - APS Help Desk Week #2

DBIO zoom breakout room during the help desk hours for sorters to discuss questions with DBIO program chair, other session organizers or lead sorters.

11/25/24 - APS Help Desk Week #3

All DBIO sorting to be completed by 11/25.



All session organizers were asked to indicate session chairs for each focus session which needed to be confirmed by this date. Session organizers also provided preferred times and dates for their sessions, as well as any conflicts for speakers or cross-session conflicts. 11/26/24 - Program chair prepares a draft schedule for the DBIO program in the scheduling grid provided by APS. The scheduling accounts for session organizers' preferences and conflicts, as well as room size allotments based on attendance from previous years, ensuring as much as possible that thematically similar sessions do not overlap and room organization makes sense. The scheduling grid is reviewed by lead sorters and program committee and any remaining conflicts are resolved.

**12/02/24 - All sorting, scheduling and session chair information for in-person sessions completed and finalized.**

12/09/24 - DBIO program chair completes the virtual sessions sorting. There were only 20 abstracts and these were sorted into 2 sessions (10 max each) based on the time zone preferences of authors.

12/19/24 - Author notices sent with session information.

Dec 1 - March 14: Many small changes are made to the schedule, speakers pull out, etc. The Program Chair is heavily involved at this point in keeping the system at a simmer.

Feb - March 14: Unit Chair and S&T reach out to APS' Vinaya Sathyasheelappa <[sathyash@aps.org](mailto:sathyash@aps.org)> to arrange refreshment, coffee for breaks, and conference rooms for the Executive Meeting and Business Meeting.

## **8. General Notes**

1. For the most part, the APS March Meeting team will only respond to emails from the Program Chair. All communication re. speakers, invitations, problems with sorting etc. should go through the Program Chair.
2. APS will vet invited speakers (both kinds) and complain to you if (a) a speaker is ineligible (technical invited talk the previous year), or (b) a speaker has been asked to give two invited talks this year (typically in DBIO and some other unit, so you weren't aware). You'll have to resolve those conflicts in cooperation with any other unit involved.
3. The selected invited speakers will be sent letters from APS directly in late October. Suddenly at this point speakers will start to say "well of course I won't come unless you pay my registration." **Remind session organizers up front that the APS or DBIO won't waive registration fees.** The organizers are welcome to raise funds for their invited speakers, although this did not happen in 2023 and 2024.
4. While the nomination system seems very rigid, there is a lot of flexibility if problems arise. It is good for the Program Chair to be well-acquainted with APS staff.
5. It is common to cosponsor sessions with other units, notably DSOF, DFD,



DCOMP, DMP, DCMP, DPOLY, GSNP, DFED. For focus sessions this involves no cost, as noted above. If an invited session is co-sponsored, it ends up counting only 0.5 towards our quota of invited sessions (so these need to be done in pairs!). Because the abstract numbers affect the assignment of conference rooms, most Units were cautious about co-sponsoring.

6. It is highly recommended to have a meeting with the program chairs of DSOFT, DPOLY and GSNP before finalizing focus sessions as there may be overlaps and redundancies and opportunities to cosponsor and share abstracts as needed can be discussed. Another meeting before finalizing the program after sorting is also recommended to look at conflicts in scheduling of sessions with thematic overlap. Note: The SPLASHY program chairs and vice chairs held periodic meetings to discuss various scheduling and related issues.
7. APS doesn't have a hard deadline for invited abstracts. This means that for every FOCUS session, DBIO must manually keep track of what invited abstracts are still missing and trust those speakers not to pull out. The Program Chair should encourage the sorting volunteers to nag the invited speakers to submit their abstracts sooner rather than later. Note: There is room for improvement in this process to avoid last minute cancellations.
8. Late in the process, the Program Chair requests a room for the annual DBIO Business Meeting. The Program chair should inform the Session chairs who have award winners/new fellows in their sessions that the person is an award winner. Ask for the award to be mentioned in the introduction of the person.
9. Logistics and payment regarding the Execom meeting, refreshments for the business meetings, and Town Hall were communicated with APS via DBIO's S&T.
10. The APS MM Logistics team will pay the hotel expenses for the Unit Program Chair and the Unit S&T.

### *Nominating committee:*

2024 Committee: Joshua Shaeitz (Chair, DBIO Past Chair), Mo Das (2022, 2023, 2024), Hugo Sanabria (2023,2024, 2025), Daniel Goldman (2024, 2025, 2026)

The Nominations Committee is in charge of identifying capable candidates willing to be put on the ballot for open DBIO Executive Committee positions. Below "Chair" refers to Nominating cmte chair.

1. The Nominations Cmte typically meets 2-4 times in August/September so that the election may occur in October. In 2024, the committee met on 8/21 and 8/28 over Zoom.
2. Nominees must meet the membership requirements in the Bylaws.

3. Over the summer, the DBIO secretary will poll the membership for nominations (including self-nominations) for all open positions. Per Bylaws, if by October 1 as many as five percent of the total Division membership (determined on December 31 of the year preceding the election) suggests the same person for the same office, and that person agrees to run, then that person shall be nominated. The Nominations Committee must then provide enough other nominations for a slate. In 2023, there was consensus that fielding more than the required number of candidates for each open position was undesirable (this means 2 candidates for each open seat (Vice Chair, Early Career MAL, and 3 candidates for each open seat (MAL).
4. At the kickoff meeting, the committee discusses the process, with the goal of each committee member coming up with 2-4 nominees for each open position before the second meeting. During the second meeting, the committee agrees on ordered lists of candidates for each position.
5. Ways to identify candidates and considerations:
  - a. DBIO volunteer and nominating Google form. Advertised at the Annual Meeting in March and again on other occasions via email. All were added to the working list and annotated as above.
  - b. Canvassing Chair sends an email to the general membership asking for ideas for nominees including self-nominations via the tip sheet. This email must be sent early (April just after the meeting), so that the suggested nominees can be vetted by the nominating committee.
  - c. List of past candidates from prior year's Nominations Cmte Chair
  - d. Active solicitation of candidates over the course of the year by Executive Cmte members (and in some cases over several years)
  - e. Brainstorming by the Nominations Cmte
  - f. Past service in a lower office was a plus when being considered for higher offices.
  - g. Any candidate who ran unsuccessfully in the recent elections (<3 cycles) should be considered again.
6. Chair ideally consults with APS (Unit Operations Manager, Ericka Stansbury) to make absolutely sure we know which candidates meet eligibility criteria **before** the nominating committee members meet and discuss candidates. Note that APS employees, including full-time journal editors, are ineligible due to COI. Also, no one may run for DBIO office while also running for office in any other APS unit.
7. Cmte gives consideration to diversity along several axes: balance of sub-fields of biological physics, balance of approaches used to study problems (experiment/computation/theory), geographic diversity, institutional diversity. Two candidates from the same institution can not compete for the same office.

8. As names are selected, the Chair proposes to vice chair candidates by email phone, outlines the duties, and offers them a few days to think it over. Other committee members shared the workload by reaching out to other candidates for a rapid turnaround. When a candidate declines to run, cmte goes down the ordered list if necessary adding names until a full slate of willing candidates has been found.
9. When a candidate agrees to run, the DBIO Secretary/Treasurer requests a photo, short bio, and short statement (<250 words but can be much shorter). In 2023,, S/T circulated some samples of past statements. (Photos are not required, but if submitted must be in a 100:124 aspect ratio to upload without skewing. APS can assist with this.)
10. DBIO Sec/Treas, who communicates with the APS (through the Unit Service Desk Email Request Form) submitting the short bios, photos, and statements. The ballot's "Welcome Page" should also include names of all officers and MALs (and now Early Careers) who will carry over, to let members assess overall diversity.
11. Sec/Tres conducts election online ASAP. Nov 1 – Dec 1. Election closes Dec 1.
12. Nominating cmte Chair informs all candidates of results of the election (see 2021 sample letter below). Then S/T announces results to members.
13. Sec/Tres informs new ExCom members of the calendar for the ExCom activities to begin orientation, and specifically communicates the dates for their required participation at various events, depending on role.
14. Something to think about in the future: According to the DBIO by-laws, the Nominating Committee can also suggest candidates to run for positions at the general elections. We haven't done that, but it will require coordination with the DBIO officers as the voting of the general election happens in May-June.

Article VIII.1: " The Nominating Committee shall advise the Chair on suitable candidates for Society committees, including relevant Society Prize and Award committees, and on candidates for Society offices."

*Sample letter from cmte Chair:*

Dear XX

Thank you for running for the position of XX of the Division of Biological Physics executive committee, and especially for offering your time, energy, and creativity to DBIO. Congratulations: you have been elected by the DBIO membership to serve the division!

Your service will start this March at the end of the 2022 APS March Meeting.

Your term is a XX years (20XX–20XX).

You are expected to be present for the DBIO Executive Committee dinner and meeting and the DBIO Business Meeting each year.

Traditionally, the Executive Committee meeting is on-site at the March Meeting on Monday.

Traditionally the DBIO Business meeting is on-site at the March Meeting on Tuesday; you will be introduced as a newly elected member of the DBIO executive committee.

The Secretary-Treasurer will be in touch soon to confirm those dates.

I am attaching for your reference:

- The current Bylaws, which outline how DBIO operates. In the attached copy I have highlighted passages about duties of the XXX. We also have a less formal set of Operating Procedures; the current S/T will transmit these to you after a few updates get made.
- A list of other election results appears at the end of this mail.

I will be making an announcement to the membership soon, but it takes a few days for APS to send those notifications.

Thank you again for your commitment to making DBIO a vibrant community of scholars. Your service helps us to function, grow, and thrive!

Phil Nelson  
DBIO Past Chair  
Chair, Nominating Committee

*A shorter mail was sent to unsuccessful candidates.*

### [Fellowship committee:](#)

2024 Committee: Wang (Chair), Fakhri, Koslover, Manley, Mehta, Upadhyaya

2023 Committee: Upadhyaya (chair), Koslover, Manley, Fisher, Gopinathan

1. The Fellowship Committee's role is to review and rank the qualifications of all nominated fellowship candidates and can not themselves be candidates.

2. The fellowship committee is led by the DBIO Vice-Chair. See Bylaws for its composition. No Early Career members are allowed on this committee. It is recommended that the DBIO Chair-elect sit on the committee.
3. Solicitation of fellowship nominations: The chair in coordination with the S/T sent out a call for nominations to the APS DBIO membership (April 20, 2023), describing the fellowship criteria and encouraging the nomination of outstanding candidates reflective of the DBIO membership (see example email below). Executive committee members (who are not on the fellowship committee) are encouraged to further solicit nominations.
4. Nominations are due to the APS by June 1. This can be extended by one month through request to the APS. On May 1, one month before the nomination deadline, the committee Chair reviews the roster of nominees and contacts the Canvassing Committee if the pool needs to be expanded.
5. The APS has set out guidelines for Conflicts of Interest (COIs, <https://aps.org/programs/honors/committee.cfm#hTab-conflicts-of-interest-427789-5>) along with Ethics Guidelines (<https://aps.org/policy/statements/guidlinesethics.cfm>).

In 2023: On May 26, 2023 the chair convened an initial meeting before the nomination deadline to discuss best practices, scoring criteria and rubrics, how to handle conflicts etc. before starting reviewing of applications. The following rubric was adopted:

- Research (1-5)

- Pedagogy/Mentoring (1-5)

- Service/Outreach (1-5)

The committee will also give an overall score:

- Overall ranking (1-5)

(The maximum score of 5 being the best)

The committee also discussed the process of handling conflicts of interest.

6. After the nomination deadline, the committee receives the list of nominees (June 6, 2023). Committee members review the list of nominees and disclose to the entire committee any conflicts of interest as described above. The committee then unanimously decides on a response (ranging from case-by-case recusal to replacement) based on the level of the conflict.
7. The APS describes the fellow selection as follows, "The criterion for election is exceptional contributions to the physics enterprise; e.g., outstanding physics research, important applications of physics, leadership in or service to physics, or significant contributions to physics education." The committee will primarily consider and score each candidate in three categories: (i) scholarship, (ii) service to community, and (iii) teaching and mentoring. The committee is also encouraged to consider as secondary contributions: uniqueness of personal

trajectory, barriers overcome, and other unique factors of the candidate's portfolio. There is no difference or preference for fellows from the US compared to non-US.

8. The committee reviewed the nominations and scored these according to the rubric above.
9. The scores are compiled by the Chair and shared with all committee members. These scores are used to guide discussions during a video conference meeting of the committee held to rank the nominees. It is recommended to reserve ~ 4 hours for this meet to ensure in depth discussion of the nominees and consideration of all factors. In 2023, two shorter meetings (~ 2h each) were held on June 26 and June 29, 2023 to discuss the nominations and make the final selection.

Note: It is recommended that the Chair does not participate in the ranking process but facilitates the discussions and uses their vote only in case of ties. The chair reads all of the nominations carefully to be able to facilitate this.

10. Following this meeting, the committee recommends, via an unranked list, the number of fellow candidates that APS has requested from DBIO, in addition to a ranked list of qualified alternatives. (Note: In 2023, the APS website asked for one ranked alternative). The APS Committee on Fellowship will use these alternate candidates to assign any additional slots not used by other units. The lists as well as a Chair's Report of the procedures followed and COI procedure is then sent by the DBIO Vice-Chair to the APS by August 1.

Note: The committee chair reports the selected nominees on the fellowship nomination site along with the ranked alternatives, conflicts of interest and how they were handled, as well as the suggested citation for each nominee. No additional report was required. Ratings do not need to be entered into the nominations site.

11. The outgoing DBIO Chair-Elect communicates directly with nominators of specific candidates whose applications the committee felt could be strengthened for next year. It is recommended that this is done only if the nominators reach out to the committee for feedback.
12. Candidates must be a current APS Member (<https://www.aps.org/programs/honors/fellowships/nominations.cfm>). If a candidate's membership with the APS has lapsed on the membership, they can petition a waiver by directly emailing to the APS honors program.
13. Nominations are good for two years. Past year's nominations are automatically included in the APS online ranking system for the current year.

Note from 2023: According to an email from Delia - [Since 2020, nominators are required to resubmit carryover nominations as they are \*no longer automatically added to the nominee pool\* for that year. Nominators receive email reminders to do this at the beginning of the year and on a monthly basis up until the deadline.](#)

The APS can send thank-you letters to the applicants who were not selected before the announcement of the awards. The Committee Chair can request to customize the thank-you letters that encourage the applicants to apply again next year.

**Example email to membership to solicit fellowship nominations (April 20, 2023):**

Dear DBIO Community,

Have you ever wondered what an APS Fellow is? APS Fellows have made exceptional contributions to physics, as recognized by their professional peers. DBIO-nominated Fellows have made these advances to biological physics through significant research, service, or pedagogy. Fellows are typically mid-career or later and are nominated by community members like you.

Think about your DBIO heroes. You might be surprised at how many are not yet Fellows. You can fix that!

Nominations are due June 1, 2023. More information to follow.

The membership of APS is diverse and global, and the nominees and recipients of APS Honors should reflect that diversity so that all are recognized for their impact on our community. Nominations of members belonging to groups traditionally underrepresented in physics, such as women scientists, LGBT+ scientists, scientists who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), disabled scientists, scientists from institutions with limited resources, and scientists from outside the United States, are especially encouraged.

**[Early Career Award:](#)**

2024 Committee: Greg Stephens (Chair), Patricia Soto (Vice Chair), Sujit Datta, Riina Tehver

2023 Committee: Xie (chair), Stephens (2024 chair), Parthasarathy, Desai, Tehver



This is a unit level award that was created in 2021. It is expected that the Operating procedures will need refinement over the next several years. As a unit-level award, the Executive Cmte can alter the eligibility and procedures with a simple vote. No other APS approval is required. This award is not mentioned in the bylaws. It is expected that this will change if/when the award becomes a APS-level award. A description of the award is found here:

<https://engage.aps.org/dbio/honors/prizes-awards/dbio-early-career-award>

2021 DBIO chair (Margaret Gardel) selected a full committee that does not include the member from the Executive Committee with staggered terms. She sought feedback from chair line in this process. It is expected that future chairs will re-appoint the members whose terms are staggered, and appoint new members as needed.

2022 DBIO Chair (Margaret Cheung) received a note from the APS that this unit level honor selection committee should have a vice chair. There is also a term limit of two consecutive years. However, several members on this committee has agreed to serve 3 years. ([H4.2 Selection Committee Composition](#)) Each committee should consist of a chair, a vice chair, and members. After serving as vice chair, that individual should become the chair in the next cycle. Members should not serve for more than two consecutive years. Terms should be staggered to prevent the entire committee turning over at once.

2022: The committee met on Wednesday Sept. 7, and had had several email discussions in the months prior about methodology, including scoring rubrics and criteria. Like last year, the committee emphasized work done during the candidate's independent career, originality of the research, impact on the field of biophysics, and citizenship / activity in the biological physics community. The committee also considered diversity and adversity, noting especially the candidate statements. Also like last year, the committee felt that the award should be targeted towards faculty who are truly early career, i.e. pre-tenure or five years from start of independent position. All applications were reviewed by each committee member (except in cases of conflict).

The meeting followed the assignment of numerical scores by each committee member based on the following criteria (the same as last year): Originality of research (1-5), Impact of research (1-5), Citizenship in the scientific community (1-5), Diversity / Adversity (yes/no) (0/1). All scores were shared prior to the meeting, and served as the starting point of discussion.

The following are some suggestions for future committees as well as the APS leadership:



- This award should be targeted towards faculty who are truly early career, i.e. pre-tenure or five years from start of independent position.
- The applications should include a section on citizenship and service to the APS/Biological Physics community. This was a criterion for the committee but applicants did not sufficiently highlight their contributions.
- The committee would like to note that it deeply impressed by all the applicants, and we suggest that in DBIO's communications with those who weren't selected, it be conveyed that they are warmly invited to apply again next year (assuming eligibility).
- The award should be widely advertised to get applications from early career international applicants and broaden the reach of the fellowship and recognition of biological physics research.
- All applications should be vetted for current memberships at the time of application. This should also be clearly stated in the fellowship application guidelines.
- We also note that one very strong candidate is at a primarily undergraduate institution, and has nonetheless been able to conduct an impressive research program. We suggest that DBIO may wish to consider a separate award for candidates at primarily undergraduate institutions, or two tracks of this award. (We are aware of the APS undergraduate institution prize, which is APS-wide, and not early-career.

Note: This is not a unit-wide award, so the APS will not announce our selection with other society-wide awardees in their news release. Therefore, the news of our selection was not embargoed. The Unit Chair can inform the awardee about the selection. The APS can send thank-you letters to the other applicants who were not selected before the announcement of the award. The Committee Chair can request to customize the thank-you letters that encourage the applicants to apply again next year.

### **Example Letters:**

#### *Regret Letter:*

Dear Dr. XXX (nominator),

On behalf of the APS DBIO unit, I regret to inform you that your nominee was not selected for the 2022 APS DBIO Early Career Award this year. The awards committee would like to convey that it was deeply impressed by all the applicants, and it would like to encourage applicants to apply again next year if eligible.

Sincerely,  
Margaret Cheung, DBIO Unit Chair 2022-2023  
Raghuveer Parthasarathy, DBIO Chair of the Early Career Award Selection  
Committee 2022.

*Congrats Letter: Unit Chair and the Early Career Award Chair sent this letter.*

Dear Professor XXX

On behalf of the APS DBIO unit, I write to congratulate you on receiving the 2022 APS DBIO Early Career Award!

This award recognizes outstanding and sustained contributions by an early-career researcher to biological physics. The Division of Biological Physics presents the award annually, consisting of \$2,000, a certificate, up to \$1000 U.S travel reimbursement, and a registration waiver to receive the award and give an invited talk at the APS March Meeting in 2023. In its citation, the award committee notes your selection "XXXX."

The DBIO would be pleased to recognize your achievement at the APS March Meeting 2023. We hope to see you there!

Congratulations!

Sincerely,  
Margaret Cheung, DBIO Unit Chair 2022-2023  
Raghuveer Parthasarathy, DBIO Chair of the Early Career Award Selection  
Committee 2022.

### [Travel Awards Committee:](#)

2024 Committee: Patteson (2024 chair; due to personal circumstances P. Soto came in as chair).

Following procedures started in 2022, the DBIO Execom has expanded the eligibility of the DBIO travel awards to all early career DBIO members, including students, postdocs, or early career faculty/researchers, as well as the number of the travel awardees per year.

As part of the award restructure, the application form was changed from a fillable pdf (submitted by email) to a web-based application form, which is tailored to applications at different career stages. For students and postdocs, the form allows applicants to send letter requests to advisors, making the application self-contained.

1. Applicant Qualifications:

- a. Applicant can be a graduate or undergraduate student, postdoctoral researcher, or early career faculty.
- b. Applicant must be the first author of a contributed paper (talk or poster) in a session sponsored by DBIO at the March Meeting. Applications will be evaluated based on merit, with specific attention to applicants with strong financial needs or from underrepresented and historically marginalized groups.
- c. Applicant, domestic or foreign, must be members of DBIO, not just of the APS. New members can sign up and are encouraged to do so before Dec. 31 for verification purposes (it is only \$8 for APS members to become also DBIO members!).
- d. Applicant cannot be a former recipient of the award.
- e. Applicants must use the online application website to submit an application and request a letter of support from research advisor

2. Committee Responsibilities:

- a. Committee will set a deadline for the travel award that aligns with the abstract submission deadline for the annual APS March Meeting. Award announcement and solicitations will be made by the Sec/Tres. The award announcement and deadline should be staggered by one week relative to the abstract open-close date.
- b. APS provided a consolidated PDF file with all applications. Someone (either APS staff or Committee chair) should check for all applications being complete, including Letters of Recommendation. Contact recommenders if letters are missing.
- c. Applications will be shared by the APS point-of-contact with the committee chair and will be distributed to the rest of the committee, with clear instructions for COI and for a deadline for application reviews.
- d. Committee will rank applications by mid-December and put together a short list of potential awardees. Committee chair must check the institution of the awardees to ensure institutional diversity (besides demographic diversity).
- e. The ranked list will be sent to Sec/Tres to check DBIO status of applicants.
- f. Committee will finalize the list of awardees by early January.

- g. Email sent to awardees should come from a verified email address. More than one 2024 awardee misinterpreted the email as spam.
- h. Email the applicants that did not receive travel award to inform them of the status of their application.
- i. Committee chair will send the list of awardees to APS to be published on the award webpage.
- j. For cohort awarded in December 2024, 20 awardees were selected and awarded \$400.
- k. Committee chair will contact session chairs before the APS March Meeting to encourage the announcement of the travel awards while introducing awardees before their talks.
- l. Email sent to awardees:

*Dear DBIO member,*

*We are pleased to inform you that you have been selected for the 2025 DBIO Travel Award from the APS Division of Biological Physics. Congratulations!*

*The award amount is \$400 and is meant to support your attendance and presentation at the 2025 APS Global Physics Summit. Receipt of this award is contingent on you being an active DBIO member.*

*This award will be dispensed after the meeting as a direct deposit to your bank account. To do that, the following forms need to be completed and submitted in a single email to [payable-units@aps.org](mailto:payable-units@aps.org):*

• **Electronic Payment Form** (attached): Direct Deposit for US banks, Wire Transfer for non-US banks.

• **Tax Form** (attached): W9 for US residents, W8 for international awardees. This is an IRS requirement.

*We hope that you enjoy the conference, and we look forward to your presentation in the DBIO sessions!*

*Best wishes,*

*DBIO Travel Award Committee*

—

*Andrew Mugler*

*DBIO Secretary-Treasurer*

### [Award for Outstanding Doctoral Thesis Research in Biological Physics:](#)

2024 Committee: Andrew Mugler (Chair), Daniel Weissman (Vice Chair), Noah Mitchell, Michelle Wang

Nominations were [collected](#) by APS, due June 3, 2024.

The Chair conveyed the following information to the committee by email on May 24, 2024:

- Useful guidelines can be found at these links:
  - [Selection Committee Guidelines and Rules](#)
  - [APS Prize & Award Executive & Selection Committee Guidelines](#)
  - [DBIO Operating Procedures](#)
- I will send the applications once they become available (after Jun 3).
- If you have a conflict of interest with a candidate (defined [here](#)), let me know. During the meeting we will move you to the breakout room and bring you back after the discussion of that candidate.
- The award selection will be based on scientific impact of the thesis work, going off of the application materials as well as any paper(s) or preprint(s) associated with the work.
- We will each rank candidates on a 1-5 scale (5 is best) prior to the meeting.
- The chair (me) will not vote, except to break a tie, per standard operating procedure.
- We will reach a consensus and report our choice, along with a citation, to APS.

The 2024 Award had 9 applicants. All committee members read the nomination packages for all applicants. The committee members (other than Chair, per APS guidelines) were asked to score the applications on a scale from 1 (worst) to 5 (best) before the deliberations meeting on Tuesday, June 18, 2024 at 1:00pm ET.

Committee members were asked to report any conflict of interest before reviewing the applications. Two committee members reported a conflict with one applicant each. The conflicted committee member did not score that applicant, and during the meeting the conflicted committee member was excluded from the discussion of that applicant.

Based on the scores and the discussion during the meeting, the committee reached a consensus on the selection of the winner.