

Following is an abbreviated version of the 2009 SSR Strategic Plan. Not included in this document is the detailed list of specific recommendations related to each of the Strategic Priorities and Objectives that are being prioritized and implemented by SSR Officers, Board Members, along with Standing and ad hoc Committees. This includes an ad hoc committee charged to oversee implementation of the strategic plan.

## Society for the Study of Reproduction Strategic Plan 2009

### **I. Executive Summary**

The new strategic plan will continue to build upon foundations based on previous strategic plans developed in 1997 and 2004. The Society for the Study of Reproduction (SSR) will continue efforts to increase the scientific impact of reproductive biology through our society's journal and annual meeting. We will promote the importance of reproductive biology, expand membership and enhance member involvement as well as fortify the organizational effectiveness and fiscal stability of SSR. We will strive to ensure that *Biology of Reproduction* will be the top-rated journal in reproductive sciences and to make the Society for the Study of Reproduction the society of choice for membership by reproductive biologists around the world.

### **II. Mission**

The 2009 Strategic Planning Committee emphasizes that the Mission of the Society for the Study of Reproduction is to: (1) promote discovery through the highest quality curiosity-driven basic research into biological and cellular processes involved in reproduction, (2) promote the reproductive health of humans and animals, (3) train the next generation of reproductive scientists, and (4) be the global leader in the discussion of issues related to reproduction and reproductive technologies.

### **III. Vision**

The Vision of the Society for the Study of Reproduction is to be the international leader in promoting the integration of basic, applied and translational reproductive biology research and interdisciplinary communication; and be the society of choice for membership by reproductive biologists around the world.

### **IV. Core Values**

The Society for the Study of Reproduction affirms the following values and culture:

- Integrity and rigor in curiosity-driven research
- Scholarship in peer review of research and dissemination of knowledge
- Use of knowledge generated to promote the health of humans and animals
- Contribute to society through research that addresses challenges facing humanity
- Excellence in the professional development of trainees
- Collegiality and inclusivity

## V. Strategic Plan

This Strategic Plan was undertaken during 2008-2009 to meet this challenge and to carry out the mission of the Society by focusing on strategic priorities that:

- Provide the Highest Quality Scientific Knowledge and Increase the Scientific Impact in Reproductive Biology through the Society's Journal and Annual Meeting
- Promote the Importance of Reproductive Biology
- Broaden the Membership Base, Meet the Needs of Members, and Enhance Member Involvement
- Fortify Organizational Effectiveness and Fiscal Stability

### A. Strategic Priority I: Provide the Highest Quality Scientific Knowledge and Increase the Scientific Impact of Reproductive Biology through the Society's Journal and Annual Meeting

**A. 1. Challenges Related to *Biology of Reproduction*:** The landscape of scientific publication by professional societies is rapidly evolving in response to opportunities provided by the digital environment along with the challenges and complexities of the issues surrounding open access publication. While most of the recommendations developed in the previous strategic plan have been successfully implemented, an overarching concern is how to reposition *Biology of Reproduction* from being perceived as a niche, specialty journal at the scientific periphery to one in which *Biology of Reproduction* captures its rightful place at the epicenter of life sciences journals. *Biology of Reproduction* must leverage the centrality of reproduction to the life sciences by using the universality of the biological and cellular processes involved in reproduction to convince relevant members of the broader research community, as well as SSR members, to submit their best work to *Biology of Reproduction*. The immediate challenge is for the SSR to ensure that *Biology of Reproduction* is the best journal in reproductive biology and to determine what is required to make the journal even more highly cited.

#### A. 2. Objectives Related to *Biology of Reproduction*:

A.2.1. Attract the best papers, maintain the highest quality of timely peer review, increase the quality of papers published in *Biology of Reproduction*, and ensure that *Biology of Reproduction* will be the best (and thereby the top-rated) journal in reproductive biology.

A.2.2. Maintain SSR membership/*Biology of Reproduction* subscription loyalty.

A.2.3. Identify a business plan and strategies to minimize the impact on revenue that will result from going to a completely online journal and develop a time frame for this inevitable transition.

**A.4. Challenges Related to the Annual SSR Meeting:** The Annual SSR Meeting provides a critical forum for showcasing the scientific impact of reproductive biology research. An exciting annual meeting is essential to the vitality, influence and future growth of the SSR and is arguably the most important resource for recruitment of new members. Many of the recommendations developed in the previous strategic plan were implemented successfully and have impacted positively the quality of, and SSR member satisfaction with, the annual meeting. The next

challenge is for SSR to develop its annual meeting as the most sought after venue for showcasing leading-edge science that attracts basic and translational reproductive scientists from around the world while building upon a tradition of providing an environment that attracts and promotes the professional development of trainees and new independent investigators.

**A.5. Objectives Related to the Annual SSR Meeting:**

A.5.1. Develop outward-looking annual meetings that incorporate breadth, innovation, emerging areas, and excellence at the cutting edge of research.

A.5.2. Continue to promote professional development of the next generation of reproductive scientists by creating a program, networking, and development opportunities for trainees and young professionals.

A.5.3. Promote and expand international participation.

**B. Strategic Priority II: Promote the Importance of Reproductive Biology by Increasing Awareness and Recognition of Achievements within SSR**

**B.1. Challenges:** Integral to increasing the scientific impact of reproductive biology is the development of strategies to increase awareness of the value of research in reproductive biology by policymakers and the public. SSR must assume an increasingly proactive role in increasing the visibility of SSR and its members as scientific leaders. Improvements in the ability to communicate with members, the public and policy makers will be of value to all aspects of the SSR vision. Dedicated efforts to improve marketing and communication will require identification of additional resources.

**B.2. Objectives:**

B.2.1. Develop persuasive justifications for the value of basic research in reproductive biology (e.g., research needs, critical gaps in knowledge, value in underwriting translational research).

B.2.2. Assume a proactive role in defining issues and effectively communicating the benefit of reproductive biology research and increasing the visibility of the Society and its members as scientific leaders and intellectual resources.

**C. Strategic Priority III: Broaden Membership Base, Meet the Needs of Members, and Enhance Member Involvement**

**C.1. Challenges:** The goal of making the Society for the Study of Reproduction the society of choice for membership by reproductive biologists around the world requires that the best opportunities for scholarly exchange and professional development are available to all members regardless of career stage. Over the past five years there has been a decrease in yearly membership due to a slight decrease in regular members and fluctuations in the number of trainee members. There is a need to reverse this trend and make SSR the society of choice for

membership by reproductive biologists around the world. Additional resources will be required to accomplish this strategic priority.

**C.2. Objectives:**

C.2.1. Expand SSR membership and diversity.

C.2.2. Evaluate member needs at all career stages by expanding data collection.

C.2.3. Enhance member resources and services.

C.2.4. Enhance member involvement.

**D. Strategic Priority IV: Strengthen Organizational Effectiveness and Fiscal Stability**

**D.1. Challenges Related to Organizational Effectiveness and Fiscal Stability:** There are complex challenges for a small society such as SSR to fulfill its mission by maintaining a top-tier journal, providing a high quality annual meeting, meeting the needs of its members, and supporting the business activities of the Society, some of which are carried out by volunteers. Further, to advance its vision, the SSR must have the structure to carry out its strategic plan and must align its resources to achieve its objectives. Major challenges in the current economic market require that the SSR continue to evaluate the most efficient, cost-effective and sustainable management strategies while dedicating sufficient resources to perform the expected suite of functions necessary to support *Biology of Reproduction* and SSR management activities.

Maintaining a balanced budget has been an important strength of SSR and this must continue to be a high priority for the Society. Philanthropic contributions make up a small fraction of SSR revenue and the building and optimal utilization of SSR endowments remains critical to the future financial security of Society activities and its Journal.

**D.2. Objectives Related to Organizational Effectiveness:**

D.2.1. Provide an efficient, cost-effective and stable management strategy for editorial and management services.

D.2.2. Determine the optimal management structure and align resources to provide these services.

D.2.3. Strengthen effectiveness of governance and committee activities to maintain continuity and stabilize operations of the Society that rely on volunteers (SSR Committees, Officers and Board Members).

D.2.4. Match the strategic vision with human and financial resources.

**D.4. Objectives Related to Fiscal Effectiveness:**

D.4.1. Maintain a balanced budget.

### D.3.2. Building and optimal utilization of SSR endowments.

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