



As you may recall from my piece in the Spring 2014 issue of *Acoustics Today*, please visit <http://goo.gl/Yqj4FS>, ASA is undergoing a process of strategic planning in order to achieve four goals, namely to:

- be prepared to meet future challenges in publishing and beyond;
- expand our value to members and the field of acoustics;
- focus on the highest impact priorities for practical action; and
- ensure that the organizational structures and processes needed for a vital future are in place.

Our most recent set of activities involved consulting with a broad range of constituencies in order to gather information, perspectives, and opinions about where ASA is today and where we need to focus our attention in the future. To accomplish this, the President, Past President, and President-Elect identified ASA's key constituencies including: Leader/Executive Council members; Leader/Technical Council members; Leader/Other (Past Presidents; Past Chairs, Medal, and Awards Winners, etc.); Leaders from Publishing (Publisher, Editors); Donors/Sponsors; Staff, Related Organizations; Students/Early Career; and international members.

Marybeth Fidler and Cate Bower, founding partners of Cygnet Strategy, LLC, conducted hour-long one-on-one interviews with 29 people from the constituencies identified above. They explored perceptions about ASA's external environment and the challenges acousticians face in carrying out their work. What, they asked, are the expectations for ASA in helping to manage these challenges? Are there opportunities to be seized or new roles the Society should play?

What competencies need to be in place in order for ASA to succeed in serving members and the profession well?

At the 2014 fall meeting in Indianapolis, Marybeth Fidler presented to the Executive and Technical Councils some headlines, as described below, from these conversations.

Perceptions

- Many members view ASA as the premier acoustical society in the world.
- The incredible diversity of fields in the acoustical science community is one of our greatest strengths and one of our greatest challenges.
- The *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America* and the meeting proceedings are high quality and highly respected.

Challenges to the Field of Acoustics

- Diminished research funding.
- Rapidly changing interest areas in the field of acoustics.
- The threat of a scientific workforce that exceeds the number of available jobs in the field.

Challenges to ASA

- Managing the breadth of scientific diversity amongst ASA members.
- Keeping ASA relevant, with scientists interested and renewing membership, especially young scientists.
- Improving and modernizing *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*.

Potential Roles ASA can assume to Address Challenges

- Create a database of what members want and need from ASA.
- Raise the profile of new and exciting things happening in acoustics for ASA members and the general public.
- Focus on young scholars and applied scientists.

ASA Governance Advantages

- Executive Council is small and pretty nimble.
- Not too many layers to negotiate before one's voice is heard.
- Grassroots approach makes governance accessible.

ASA Governance Disadvantages

- Rapid turnover of leadership makes it hard to have individual impact.
- Few non US members in leadership positions.
- Leadership service is exclusive because of the cost to travel to two meetings a year.

Continued on next page

We are grateful to all who contributed so generously of their time and thoughtful attention. One thing that stood out most from these conversations is the unusual degree of warmth, respect, and affection ASA members have for the Society. This is perhaps our greatest strength of all, and an important leverage point as we consider our collective future.

Next Steps

At the start of 2015, we convened an in-person meeting of about 60 individuals, again representing a broad cross-section of the Society, to the “Strategic Leadership for the Future Summit” held January 12-14, 2015. This meeting, based on the “Future Search” methodology was facilitated by Cate Bower and Marybeth Fidler.

Day 1 - We focussed on setting the stage. We reviewed our past, where we have been, and what this means to us as we move forward. We focussed on the present, what our world looks like now, and trends for the future.

Day 2 - We discussed what we are doing to address the trends identified on Day 1 and to envision what kind of future we want to create.

Day 3 - We confirmed our common ground and developed an agreement on what will be needed to achieve our future vision.

Our next step will be for the Executive Council to meet in Melville for two days, scheduled 30-31 March 2015, to take the results of the Summit and create the first draft of the Strategic Plan. In late April or early May this draft will be put out to members and all interested parties for comment. Those comments will help inform drafting of the final plan that will ultimately help us focus our invaluable time, attention, budget, and efforts toward these clearly articulated goals. To learn more about the ASA Summit visit:

<http://wp.me/P4zu0b-LT>

The process is designed to be as inclusive as possible. I am always interested in hearing from you and especially hearing your thoughts about ASA and the future of the profession and the Society. Please feel free to contact me at any time. You can reach me at sfox@acousticalsociety.org or via my direct line 516-576-2215.

Susan E. Fox
Executive Director, Acoustical Society of America

end of their year, and they get free registration at meetings they attend while they are in the position. AT Interns also have their name on our masthead and are invited to attend, and participate in, AT Advisory Committee meetings. Interns are advanced graduate students or early career people within three years of their terminal degrees, but we are most willing to be a bit flexible in requirements if the opportunity would benefit ASA and the person. If you are interested in exploring being an intern drop me a note and we can discuss ideas. And, you can find out more about being an AT intern, and see the application, at <http://wp.me/P4zu0b-IH>.

This Issue

I hope that everyone will enjoy the articles in this issue of AT. Without specific planning, three of the articles deal with underwater sound in various ways. These include a very interesting piece on underwater noise standards by Michael Ainslie, and Michael also considers how one might do a sonar study of a distant moon. Underwater ambient noise, a topic of particular interest to me, is discussed by David L. Bradley (former ASA president) and Stephen M. Nichols. Their article provides insight into measuring low frequency ambient noise in the oceans, a project that grew out of approaches to detecting nuclear tests. David Burnett does the third underwater paper with a discussion of how one can use acoustic scattering to find objects at the bottom of the ocean. Coincidentally, this issue's Technical Committee report is on acoustical oceanography.

The fourth paper in this issue is on acoustic cloaking by Andrew Norris. When I first read the article I was not sure what was meant by acoustic cloaking, but then I realized that cloaking is what the Romulans used to hide their space ships in Star Trek, and so I started to see the fascinating implications of the work discussed in this article.

Finally, I was very pleased that Leo Beranek, the honoree of our fall issue (on his 100th birthday) agreed to write a short article for this issue. It was an honor for me to meet Dr. Beranek at the Indianapolis meeting, and I was delighted to hear him speak about his work and to learn more about his amazing career.

Arthur N. Popper