The SSR Membership Committee held two meetings this spring and discussed items that are important to keeping a growing and thriving membership:

* 1. Value of membership – annual meeting opportunities and the member discount, BOR page charges and free direct access, email communication, addition of an Members’ online discussion forum
  2. MY SSR member portal on website -- provides direct access to the BOR journal and an updated searchable directory. We encourage all members to update their profiles with the additional research areas under the “Edit my Profile” section of the member portal
  3. Cost of membership – Means to offer discount if renewed early; concerns over foreign currency exchange rates and the cost for many international members

The Committee has identified areas to concentrate their efforts in the next year:

1. real-time forum for discussion of papers and techniques may give an idea of what the truly hot topics are in the field. Members’ Only Forums may increase a sense of community in SSR and at the Annual Meeting.
2. Add an Associate Members to Membership Committee. This is the largest growth category of membership and likely has different needs than other categories.
3. Attention to details regarding membership non-renewal trends (*i.e.,* members who only renew when attending meeting, and timing of renewal) may allow for targeted recruitment or efficient re-engagement efforts in the future. For example, if most people renew right before the meeting, we know we need to engage membership in our other ongoing yearly benefits.
4. Evaluation of the diversity of roles (*i.e.,* scientists, administrator, educators) and diversity of science (*i.e.,* models, diseases, focus, techniques) may be important to determine what the focus of SSR and the annual meeting should be. Diversity of membership is important to make people feel included and grow the society.
5. Marketing campaign should continue to highlight the value of SSR membership beyond the Annual Meeting.
6. Innovative means to support researchers within SSR are needed.
7. Establish clearer guidelines for Emeritus membership.

A survey was sent out to all 2013 through 2017 non-renewing members to determine cause for non-renewal. The 111 responses were helpful to the committee discussions:

* + 1. Cost of membership (n=42) + lack of apparent professional benefit for being a member of SSR (n=29)
    2. Others forgot to renew or were unaware that membership expired; or retired/left the reproductive sciences field.
    3. Responders were mostly regular members in academic institutions with an equal distribution of responders in the “1-2 year” range and the “more than 15 years of previous SSR membership” range.

From the survey comments were put into these general categories:

Lack of job diversity in membership – administrative and teaching primary appointments did not renew

Lack of diversity in science – lack of neuroendocrine, too much human orientation, too much molecular studies, too much mice, lack of agricultural science and lack of whole animal.

Elitism – little space for others to participate in the society

Expense – cost of being an overseas member

No value other than meeting – often rejoin when attending conference

Lack of research support of members – more support for mid-career researchers to keep them going; annual meeting lost the community feel; SSR moved away from helping its members to more about recognition and competing with other societies.

Technical issues – folks that thought they were or currently are emeritus members who got the survey for non-renewing members; folks who tried to renew and could not.