



# **ASTS STRATEGIC PLAN**

2022 – 2027

## Mission

ASTS advances the art and science of transplant surgery through patient care, research, education, and advocacy.

## Vision

Saving and improving lives through the transformative power of organ donation and transplant surgery.

## Areas of Primary Focus – Blazing our own TRAIL!

- **Training & Certification** – ASTS will attract and support a diverse workforce of potential transplant surgeons and providers as they enter and advance the field of transplantation surgery worldwide.
- **Research** – ASTS will promote a robust transplant-scientist workforce by providing educational, mentorship, funding, recognition, and networking opportunities and through advocacy on a national level.
- **Advocacy & Patient Care** – ASTS will advocate for our patients, members, and the transplant community by promoting donation and transplantation and supporting continuous improvement and innovation for better outcomes.
- **Innovation** – ASTS will foster and support the development and implementation of novel technologies to enhance organ recovery, transplantation, and innovative patient care.
- **Lifelong Learning** – ASTS will be the national leader in educating transplant surgery teams through member connectivity, mentorship, and knowledge exchange.

## Organizational Excellence

ASTS is dedicated to continuing the stability and longevity of the organization. Our leadership has committed to implementing this strategic plan over the next 5 years by ensuring that the necessary resources are available to advance our mission. We will do this through:

1. Maintaining and building a strong, diverse, and loyal membership by creating member experiences that are positive, memorable, and reflective of their needs.
2. Enhancing connection with membership to maximize collective expertise of engaged members & stakeholders to support ASTS activities & initiatives.
3. Continuing to foster strong partnerships between members and staff.
4. Using cutting-edge technology to communicate with and educate our members.
5. Building and maintaining a strong financial base on which to pursue mission-driven activities.



## ASTS operates by these core values:

**Integrity** – We hold ourselves to a standard of professionalism that includes an awareness of our own imperfections as we seek fairness, justice, and inclusivity. Our behavior is guided by the awareness that we must continuously earn the public trust that makes transplantation possible.

**Excellence** – We commit to setting and achieving ambitious goals as we serve our members, our patients, and society at large.

**Forward Focus** – We look toward the horizon and support those who are crafting innovative solutions to the problems our members and their patients face.

**Respect** – We treat our patients, our colleagues, and our collaborators with respect, engaging in constructive debate and supporting each other in our work to save and improve lives.

**Diversity** – We cultivate the diversity of personal characteristics and individual qualities both in transplantation and among our members. Diversity is integral to the moral code by which we connect lives.

**Compassion** – We strive to emulate the generosity and courage of the donors and their families who make transplantation possible and to offer hope to our patients.

## TRAINING & CERTIFICATION

ASTS will attract and support a diverse workforce of potential transplant surgeons and providers as they enter and advance the field of transplantation surgery worldwide.

### Strategic Initiatives:

1. Establish a robust pipeline of students, surgical residents and advanced practitioners through proactive and purposeful engagement.
  - Increase engagement with surgical residents.
  - Engage with medical schools and market to medical students to create a pipeline of budding transplant surgeons. Connect with undergraduate premedical societies and premedical counselors to create opportunities for undergraduate students.
  - Engage and promote APPs in transplantation by:
    - increasing number of APPs involved in ASTS organization,
    - supporting curriculum development specific for APPs in transplantation to include core patient management and leadership training and mentoring.
  - Expand transplant research opportunities for students, residents, trainees and advanced practitioners and opportunities to present their work.
  - Re-establish transplant surgery as a core requirement of general surgery residency.
  - Identify centers with robust pipelines and disseminate best practices among membership.
2. Refine fellowship program accreditation standards and training opportunities.
  - Optimize the standards for accreditation for transplant surgery training programs to include competency criteria and professional development requirements.
  - Utilize fellow feedback and involvement to allow the TACC to assess training program performance.
  - Formalize the program accreditation requirements for FIST track/4+2 training models.
  - Establish career development curricula for fellows within the Academic Universe and at ASTS meetings.
  - Further develop and implement the TACC Certification pathways.
  - Establish international fellowship training opportunities or exchange opportunities.
3. Develop strategies to ease the transition from fellowship to faculty and establish programs to support early career faculty development.
  - Develop resources to help demystify the job search process.
  - Develop additional surgical skills training courses.
  - Develop more career development focused content at ASTS meetings.
  - Develop a formal mentorship program for members who are 1-5 years out of training.
  - Promote wellness and explore the rewards of transplant surgery among early career faculty.

## RESEARCH

ASTS will promote a robust transplant-scientist workforce by providing educational, mentorship, funding, recognition, and networking opportunities and through advocacy on a national level.

### Strategic Initiatives:

1. Build a diverse pipeline of surgeon scientists by increasing funding for junior faculty research.
  - Collaborate with the ASTS Foundation to set fundraising goals for annual research grants.
  - Promote expansion and success of the surgeon scientist workforce over the next decade.
  - Increase funding for transplant health disparities research.
2. Reduce barriers for underrepresented groups in obtaining research funding.
  - Encourage increased representation/diversity in applicants.
  - Enhance awareness of supplemental funding for minority trainees on NIH grants.
  - Expand the transplant research community by promoting team science.
3. Cultivate relationships with NIH and other governmental agencies to support transplant research areas that align with advocacy efforts.
  - Work with NIH and other government agencies to promote transplant collaborative workgroups.
  - Advocate for increased surgeon-scientist career development awards for surgery residents such as “stimulation of research in residency” R38/K38 STaRR awards.
  - Explore a partnership with the American College of Surgeons to establish a pre-K award ACS/NIH mechanism for transplant surgeon-scientists.
  - Explore partnership with NIH to provide education on the surgeon-scientist education and training path for training grant and career development award study section administrative staff and reviewers.
  - Explore partnership with NIH leadership and the NIH Division of Biomedical Research Workforce to designate codes for PIs who are surgery trainees or surgeons to permit longitudinal tracking of surgeon applicants/awardees of career development grants, training grants and research grants.
4. Provide mentorship, education and training that stimulates innovation and successful research grant applications to diverse research sponsors.
  - Develop research mentorship programs for trainees and junior faculty.
  - Track the longitudinal outcomes of promising early career surgeon scientist junior faculty.
5. Develop ASTS technological infrastructure to connect research mentor/mentee individuals across diverse programs.
  - Enhance recognition, communication and celebration of surgeon-scientists.

## ADVOCACY & PATIENT CARE

ASTS will advocate for our patients, members and the transplant community by promoting donation and transplantation and supporting continuous improvement and innovation for better outcomes.

### Strategic Initiatives:

1. Maintain and build a robust public policy agenda, inspired by dedication to serving patients, and cultivate relationships within the transplant community.
  - Solicit advocacy priorities from ASTS committees, ASTS Council, and other transplant community partners to strengthen and build relationships with governmental, political and administrative bodies to realize our priority goals.
  - Search out new, and strengthen current, alliances that support the transplant community and our Society.
  - Establish and cultivate an expert cohort of ASTS members to champion the Society's public policy agenda. (Example: ASTS members, ASTS fellows, aspiring students interested in a career in transplantation.) Establish guidelines to ensure this cohort is diverse and representative of our patients.
2. Utilize multiple platforms and approaches to educate government officials, community stakeholders, patients, and our fellow members about the latest transplant advocacy issues.
  - Develop a media and branding campaign showcasing the Society's policy and advocacy efforts. Promote ASTS as the transplant community's most well-informed, representative, and effective voice.
  - Cultivate deeper member interest and opportunities for involvement in advocacy issues.
  - Communicate the value of member engagement and clinical expertise in responding to important regulatory and legislative developments in the field.
  - Create an independent source for data analysis to support our advocacy efforts.

## INNOVATION

ASTS will foster and support the development and implementation of novel technologies to enhance organ recovery, transplantation, and innovative patient care.

### Strategic Initiatives:

1. Partner with ASTS members/investigators to develop, pilot, and deploy new technologies and techniques in collaboration with key strategic partners.
  - Improve effectiveness, efficiency, and safety in organ recovery practices by iterative building of an organ recovery collaborative network (ORCN).
  - Establish an innovation community within the ASTS to support members seeking clinical applications for novel approaches to organ preservation, resuscitation, transportation, and transplantation care.
  - Promote ASTS as the primary source for information on technology innovations in transplant care for industry and government.
2. Engage transplant candidates, recipients and donors to advise ASTS leadership.
  - Identify innovative strategies to increase living donation for kidney and liver transplantation.
  - Incorporate the patient voice into ASTS research agenda and advocacy goals.
  - Become the leading source of information on transplant care for patients and media.
3. Actively engage key stakeholders to ensure that ASTS members and their programs can develop and evaluate innovative technology & therapies.
  - Advocate to reform regulatory frameworks to ensure that quality improvement and innovative practices do not negatively impact program performance metrics (SRTR reports, Centers of Excellence, MPSC, etc.) and are legally protected.
  - Create a structure of sharing of data to improve quality and collaborative innovation.
  - Expand cross institutional collaboration and learning/mentorship opportunities.
  - Create opportunities to foster and promote emerging transplant specialties.
4. Expand Hands-on and virtual education opportunities focused on novel treatments and emerging therapies.
  - Incorporate more video, go-pro style training, and virtual reality (VR).
  - Facilitate the presentation of interesting cases outside of traditional annual meeting opportunities.

## LIFELONG LEARNING

ASTS will be the national leader in educating transplant surgery teams through member connectivity, mentorship, and knowledge exchange.

### Strategic Initiatives:

1. Create mentorship programs for the education continuum for both surgeons and APPs, increase opportunities for technical training, strengthen partnership with other organizations, and disseminate knowledge among members.
  - Create a mentorship program that serves all ASTS members.
  - Foster connection, exchange of wisdom/experience and new/best practices among members.
2. Expand a variety of learning methods for ASTS surgeon and advanced practice provider members.
  - Create on-demand education for new knowledge.
  - Create forums to discuss new knowledge within AJT.
  - Create pathways to certification for new techniques/procedures.
  - Create surgical oriented material.
  - Establish guidelines with white papers concerning important issues to ASTS membership.
  - Create course week for surgical skills courses.
  - Expand the educational venues for teaching surgical techniques & procedures.



## Member Engagement & Committee Alignment

ASTS leadership is committed to utilizing the experience of membership to support the efforts of the strategic plan. Below is a list of current committees, task forces, and strike forces that align with our strategic goals. It is anticipated that new groups may be added and others sunset, as the work of these groups will change as our goals are met.

### Training & Certification

- Curriculum Cmte
- Fellowship Training Cmte
- Surgical Skills Cmte

### Research

- Donor Research Policy and Advocacy TF
- Grants & Awards Cmte
- Scientific Studies Advisory Cmte
- Surgeon Scientist Cmte
- Cell Transplant Advisory Cmte
- Thoracic Cmte

### Advocacy & Patient Care

- Diversity Equity and Inclusion Cmte
- Legislative & Regulatory Cmte
- Pediatrics Advisory Cmte
- Liver Oncology TF
- Surgery Policy Assessment Advisory Cmte

### Innovation

- Standards & Quality Cmte
- NSQIP Transplant TF
- Living Donation Cmte
- VCA Advisory Cmte
- Transplant Therapeutics Consortium

### Lifelong Learning

- ATC Planning Cmte
- ATP Cmte
- Business Practice Services Cmte
- CME Cmte
- Pipeline Cmte
- Vanguard Cmte
- Wellness Cmte

### Organizational Excellence

- Communications Cmte
- Council
- Finance Cmte
- Foundation
- International Relations Cmte
- Membership & Workforce Cmte
- Nominating Cmte
- Bylaws Advisory Cmte
- Ethics Advisory Cmte

### Organizational Liaisons

- ABS Liaison
- ACS Liaison
- AMA Liaison
- OPTN/UNOS Liaison
- The Alliance Liaison

### Other Affiliations

- Transplant Accreditation & Certification, LLC
  - Oral Exam Cmte
  - Program Accreditation Cmte
  - Knowledge Assessment Cmte
  - Application & Certification Review Cmte
- ASTS Foundation (501 (c)3)
- National Living Donor Assistance Center (NLDAC)



*\* See Appendix for detailed approach to achieving results*