

Time-table: Preparing to apply for ACNP membership

Thinking of applying for ACNP membership this year? The deadline for receipt of application materials is mid-September each year. Please consider the following steps:

1. Be sure to read the material on the ACNP website (<http://www.acnp.org/membership/default.aspx>) that is designed to help you decide between Regular and Associate Member categories. If your credentials match the Associate level, but you apply for regular membership, the pool of candidates that you will enter will be more accomplished and you will be less likely to be successful. If you are a Travel Awardee or Past Travel Awardee, remember you are eligible to attend the 4 annual meetings immediately following your award year. You should consider your years of eligibility when making a decision about whether to apply this year or to wait and attend additional meetings, as a past award recipient, gaining experiences and additional ACNP participation activities to strengthen your application.

2. If you fall into the “not this year” category, then this is an excellent time to begin positioning yourself to apply next year. Here is a suggested list that will help you approach the application process efficiently and effectively.

- a) Consider attending this year’s meeting. Having attended and presented at the ACNP meeting will not only demonstrate your interest in the College but will also help you decide if ACNP is a good investment of your time and give you a chance to meet members who may be able to write letters of nomination.
- b) If you would like to attend the meeting, and if you have not yet received an invitation please talk to ACNP members at your institution, or ask your mentor, colleagues or department chair if they know ACNP members. Many members do not use their invitations. As a last ditch possibility, there are “invitation banks” – consult an ACNP member if you want to check on this possibility.
- c) Prepare a draft of your application, so as to identify potential deficiencies while there is still time to do something about them. Here are three strategies:
 - i. Check the ACNP website. It is full of information about membership requirements. Below are links to two of many helpful pages: FAQ on membership and the Membership Advisory Task Force Poster (which contains membership statistics):
 - FAQs: <http://www.acnp.org/membership/faq.aspx#11>
 - Poster: <http://www.acnp.org/membership/default.aspx>
 - ii. Find an ACNP member at your institution, preferably one who has served on the Membership Committee. Show them your draft and ask them to identify areas for improvement.
 - iii. If you don’t know anyone in ACNP, ask your mentor or department chair for help.
 - iv. Briefly, other than papers and grants, the things that count are:
 - participation in the meeting
 - what you say about what you will bring to the college
 - the letters of nomination
 - reviewing for the ACNP journal (*Neuropsychopharmacology*)
 - for regular membership – mentorship

3. Find ACNP members willing to nominate you. It is best to do this early, before they commit to other people. If you attend the meeting, the poster sessions offer an excellent opportunity for informal interactions. If you are not able to attend the meeting, ask mentor/colleagues/department chair to identify ACNP members in your research field. Ask them to introduce you (in person or by email). Follow up with a brief email describing what you hope to gain from ACNP and what you will offer the college. Attach your CV and Research Statement.

Feel free to contact the ACNP Executive Office (acnp@acnp.org; 615-324-2360) if you have specific questions or need assistance.