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 AWARDEE REPORT FORM

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| NAME | Anne Thomas |
| TWITTER HANDLE\* *optional* |  |
| UNIVERSITY | University of Oxford/Newcastle University  |
| NAME OF AWARD | Barclay Smith Award |
| PURPOSE OF AWARD *conference/event attended/organised (full name) with city and dates.* |
| Anatomical Society Summer MeetingFrom Organ Homeostasis to Healthspan: 25th Anniversary of Aging Cell |
| REPORT: What were your anticipated benefits?*Minimum number of words between 200-400. Please write in coherent paragraphs.* |
| I had previously conducted a Summer Vacation Laboratory Studentship that was funded by the Anatomical Society (Summer 2023). This experience had been incredibly valuable for me, getting to work with and learn from researchers. I gained both technical and analytical skills. This positive experience also came with the opportunity to present a poster at one of the Anatomical Society meetings. I expected this to give me the opportunity to show the Society the work their funding had supported, how their funding had benefitted me, and how it advanced Neuroanatomical research. I also expected to benefit greatly from the opportunity to hear about current research in the field. As a young researcher, this would help to broaden my view of anatomical research and put my interests in a broader context. This would be incredibly valuable as I think that research is becoming increasingly multidisciplinary – therefore having a broad understanding aids communication between researchers. Finally, I was looking forward to meeting other researchers at both similar and more advanced stages in their careers. Meeting those that have had similar or different experiences in academic settings would be beneficial for my future career progression. These connections could help me to establish longer term links and to get advice.  |
| COMMENTS: Describe your experience at the conference / lab visit / course / seminar/ event.*Minimum number of words between 200-400. Please write in coherent paragraphs.* |
| The Summer Meeting was held in Edinburgh. Arriving at the conference I was able to meet my supervisor my Summer Studentship, Gavin Clowry. The first afternoon of talks featured research on Spinal Muscular Atrophy, tissue engineering, using VR to teach anatomy, and on digitising archaeological bones – a broad range of topics. I then had the opportunity to present a poster featuring the research I had conducted during my Studentship. I was able to talk to many attendees about the research that I had done; some who also had done electrophysiology research, as well as those who had very little background in neuroanatomy. During the evening, I attended the Student and Early Career Social, where I met others at a similar/slightly advanced level of their career compared to me. We shared our research focusses, current experience and background. During the second day of the conference, there was a stronger focus on aging, and quantification of the aging process, using model organisms, epigenetic analysis and studies of large population cohorts. During the afternoon, the cohort that joined the conference from Germany presented recent neuroanatomical research and new techniques they are developing. It was a long, but exciting day of talks that was followed by a lovely dinner and Ceilidh to celebrate. The conference finished well with a series of talks, many of which focussed on research into the aging and senescence in different tissues, with this being a therapeutic target for the future. This brought together other parts of the conference: linking the anatomy and aging themes.  |
| REPORT: In relation to skills, what were the most important things you gained? *(does not apply to equipment grant.* For public engagement/outreach awards what did your audience gain and how did you evaluate success?*Minimum number of words between 200-400. Please write in coherent paragraphs.* |
| As I had the opportunity to present a poster during the conference, I gained skills in how to communicate my research. It was important to learn how to explain what I had done to those with a variety of backgrounds: both those experienced in my area of research, and those from a very different area of anatomy research. During my poster presentation, I also had the opportunity to ask for feedback from a few of those that I spoke to. This was incredibly valuable as it will help me to improve my posters in the future to make sure that I communicate my research better. The other valuable experience that I gained from the conference was a broader understanding of what falls under anatomy research. It was interesting to see presentations that ranged from molecular and cellular research, research on how best to teach anatomy, and larger scale population studies of health data. This taught me how conferences can bring together diverse research, with this fostering collaboration and therefore inspiration and new ideas. Despite this not being a ‘skill’ *per se*, I think that broadening my horizons will help to guide future career decisions and bring a more holistic perspective to my research. |
| REPORT: How do you think you will put this learning experience into practice in the future? For public engagement/outreach awards how with the materials/knowledge generated by this activity be used in the future?*Minimum number of words between 200-400. Please write in coherent paragraphs.* |
| As I plan to continue with an academic career, this experience has been incredibly valuable. The skills and feedback on my poster presentation will guide future posters that I make. This will support communication of my research. This is valuable as it will help me to work with other scientists and grow collaborations in the community. The attitude of the scientists at the conference: a healthy questioning and discursive environment, also helped to develop an attitude of not accepting everything as it is presented, but making sure that claims made are backed by rigorous experimental detail. This will shape how I carry out and present research in the future. Alongside this, I was able to make connections with scientists who have worked in the University that I am soon to move to. This will be helpful when I move – making this next step less intimidating and giving me more confidence. Finally, the knowledge of the state of the current research in different anatomical disciplines will be beneficial as it may guide future research decisions and has brought new ideas to my attention. This is important for moving forward in a meaningful and systematic way, guided by current ideas.  |
| Data Protection/GDPR: I consent to the data included in this submission being collected, processed and stored by the Anatomical Society. Answer YES or NO in the Box below |
| YES |
| Graphical Images: If you include graphical images you must obtain consent from people appearing in any photos and confirm that you have consent. A consent statement from you must accompany each report if relevant. A short narrative should accompany the image. Answer N/A not applicable, YES or NO in the box below |
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| Copyright: If you submit images you must either own the copyright to the image or have gained the explicit permission of the copyright holder for the image to be submitted as part of the report for upload to the Society’s website, Newsletter, social media and so forth. A copyright statement must accompany each report if relevant. Answer N/A not applicable, YES or NO in the box below |
|  |
| SIGNATURE | Anne Thomas | DATE | 29.7.24 |

*If submitted electronically, a type-written name is acceptable in place of a hand-written signature*

*File: AS-Award-Report-Form-171023*

*File: BS Anne Thomas Report website - 300724*