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AWARDEE REPORT FORM

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| NAME | | Natalia Penar | | |
| TWITTER HANDLE\* *optional* | | natwpen | | |
| UNIVERSITY | | University of Edinburgh | | |
| NAME OF AWARD | | Symington Bequest Fund | | |
| PURPOSE OF AWARD *conference/event attended/organised (full name) with city and dates.* | | | | |
| EFEM European Student Symposium, Varna, Bulgaria, 10.10.2024 | | | | |
| REPORT: What were your anticipated benefits?  *Minimum number of words between 200-400. Please write in coherent paragraphs.* | | | | |
| I have expected the participation in symposium to allow me to work on a number of academic and personal skills, to build connections within the anatomical research community, and to gain better understanding of the current topics within the anatomical field.  Presenting my work is always a good practice when it comes to working on my communication skills. While I did not expect the researchers present at the symposium to be closely familiar with my research topics, I knew I would have to work on presenting my work effectively and clearly. I have also expected to be asked questions that would either challenge me and help me gain new insights into my work or further help me practice explaining my work.  Seeing the broad range of topics to be covered at the symposium, I expected to learn more about the current topics and trends in the anatomical research, both in areas familiar and new to me. I expected to gain inspiration both from the work of fellow students and established researchers.  I was also looking forward to meeting the fellow anatomical scientists, to engage in insightful discussions, and strengthen my connections within the research community.  Overall, I anticipated the symposium to be a fruitful and refreshing experience. | | | | |
| COMMENTS: Describe your experience at the conference / lab visit / course / seminar/ event.  *Minimum number of words between 200-400. Please write in coherent paragraphs.* | | | | |
| As expected, attending the symposium was an enriching experience, valuable for my development as a PhD student. One of the most important benefits was the opportunity of presenting my research to an international group of anatomical scientists. This allowed me to discuss my findings, gain constructive feedback, and develop my skills in presenting to broader audience. The experience was invaluable to improving my communication skills and practicing to present my research effectively.  In addition to presenting my work, I had the opportunity to learn more about anatomical research conducted all around Europe. The talks delivered by other participants covered a diverse range of topics, which helped me to broaden my knowledge and gain a better understanding of current anatomical research and cutting-edge technologies. This prompted me to think about how my own work relates to the wider landscape of anatomical research.  The symposium also offered a unique platform to connect with fellow students and scientists from across Europe. Engaging in discussions with peers and established researchers was a rewarding experience, helping me gain a fresh perspective on my work and build connections.  Overall, as anticipated, the attendance in symposium was a productive and insightful experience, helping me further my research skills, knowledge, and strengthening my connections within the academic community. | | | | |
| 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.* | | | | |
| The most important improvements to my skills during the symposium were tied to communication, critical thinking, and networking. Presenting my research to an international audience was a great opportunity to practice conveying my research effectively and understandably. It helped me refine how I structure and deliver my presentations, making sure that the talk is both clear and engaging. Talking in front of an audience is also a challenging skill, and every opportunity to do so is immensely valuable.  I was able to develop my critical thinking abilities while discussing the work of myself and others. It was the most important aspect while answering the insightful questions asked by the audience, and for preparing the questions for other speakers myself. I have also honed my analytical skills by trying to understand where my own research is placed in relation to others’ work, by evaluating the methodologies used, and considering how different approaches could inform my own research. I have also practiced my critical thinking skills while engaging in discussions with others after the talks.  Finally, the opportunity to network at the symposium strengthened my interpersonal and professional skills. I have practiced navigating academic conversations effectively, both by initiating discussions and joining the emerging ones. | | | | |
| 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.* | | | | |
| This learning experience has allowed me to work on some of the key academic skills, that I will certainly continue improving further in the future. I plan to put this experience into practice by actively participating in future conferences and academic events. Presenting my research at the symposium has prepared me to deliver more confident and well-planned presentations, which I will apply in my upcoming talks and conferences. I will continue working on my skills in explaining the research clearly, as well as engaging with the audiences. Feedback and insights gained during the symposium will be of great help to improve my delivery and adaptability.  I will also continue to critically evaluate research, both my own and that conducted by others. This will help me to meaningfully engage during discussions and arising collaborative projects.  The knowledge gained has helped me better understand the current trends in anatomical sciences, and it will certainly be an asset while looking for the further directions and opportunities in my research. It will help me engage with other anatomical scientists, which in turn will help me further deepen my understanding of the field, as well as critical thinking skills while engaging in the discussions.  Lastly, I will continue seeking opportunities to form professional connections, in which this practice in networking will certainly be beneficial. | | | | |
| 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 | | | | |
| N/A | | | | |
| 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 | | | | |
| N/A | | | | |
| SIGNATURE | Natalia Penar | | DATE | 20.12.2024 |

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

*File: AS-Award-Report-Form-171023 – International Conference*