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AWARDEE REPORT FORM

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| NAME | | Ms Clara Deady | | |
| TWITTER HANDLE\* *optional* | | @clara\_deady | | |
| UNIVERSITY | | University College Cork | | |
| NAME OF AWARD | | Symington Bequest | | |
| PURPOSE OF AWARD *conference/event attended/organised (full name) with city and dates.* | | | | |
| To attend the 37th European College of Neuropsychopharmacology (ECNP) Congress (Neuroscience Applied) in Milan, Italy from September 21st – 24th | | | | |
| REPORT: What were your anticipated benefits?  *Minimum number of words between 200-400. Please write in coherent paragraphs.* | | | | |
| In attending this congress, the main expected benefit was to present my work at the poster session and engage in discussions about the findings with researchers also working in the areas of maternal stress and neurodevelopmental outcomes. I hoped to gain valuable feedback, discuss next steps and future work, and also the implications of the findings. Most interest in my work came from those working in the same area and I was able to discuss their own work and findings with them. This proved to be the biggest benefit of the whole congress. Networking with other early career researchers provided me with great insight into not only my own work, but also other exciting topics.  I also expected the symposia and plenary lectures to expand my knowledge, not only in my own field of prenatal and neurodevelopmental health, but other upcoming hot topics in neuroscience. I gained insight into the field of opioid addiction, epigenetics and anxiety, and the science behind anorexia nervosa to name just a few. I believe that widening my understanding of these topics helps me greatly in becoming a more well-rounded scientist, this well help me in planning future experiments and also help me to interpret my data from different perspectives. | | | | |
| COMMENTS: Describe your experience at the conference / lab visit / course / seminar/ event.  *Minimum number of words between 200-400. Please write in coherent paragraphs.* | | | | |
| I was very lucky to receive the opportunity to attend the ECNP Congress in Milan. It was a positive and rewarding experience that greatly benefited me. The Congress lasted for 4 full days and was packed with various sessions, from plenary lectures from world-renowned scientists that filled up large auditoriums to more intimate discussion sessions which allowed us to ask questions and troubleshoot with experts in the field. Some highlights from this include the effects of prenatal exposure to cannabis by Dr Yasmin Hurd and the role of the microbiome in pregnancy my Dr Tamar Gur.  On the second day, I presented my poster. Across the congress, there was approximately 1500 posters on display with topics ranging from schizophrenia to anatomical changes in the brain following trauma exposure. Having such a wide range of scientists and clinicians at the congress proved to be incredibly exciting and allowed me to present my work to people I would never get the chance to speak with normally. This was a true highlight for me and one that helped me to reevaluate my work from various perspectives and gave me some suggestions for future work that I perhaps would have not thought of alone.  The congress gave ample time for networking with others, especially those whose works is relevant to mine and have helped me gain ideas for my own experiments and writing. | | | | |
| 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.* | | | | |
| There are both pros and cons in attending such a general conference and not one specific for your work. This congress was substantially made up of clinicians and preclinical scientists that mainly focus on *in vivo* work and would have limited knowledge on *in vitro* work, which was the topic of my poster. When previously presenting this work at lab meetings in my university, all the attendees also have experience in *in vitro* work, so discussing my work with those that are unfamiliar in this area proved to be very beneficial. I believe that these discussions helped me to build upon my communication skills and presenting skills. Explaining research to either a lay audience or those with no background in this specific field in a key skill and one that is becoming increasingly more important in the scientific community. Therefore, I was very excited to be able to build upon what I already have and to strengthen it. I believe that this will greatly help me in the future as these skills are necessary for giving easy to understand presentations, communicating and disseminating your findings with the public, and is also required when applying for grants later in my career. | | | | |
| 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.* | | | | |
| To get the most benefit out of attending the ECNP Congress, I hope to implement various things that I have learned at the conference into the remainder of my PhD. Firstly, this includes applying new knowledge and theories I have learned to my own work. Discussions surrounding prenatal stress and various suboptimal exposures proved to be incredibly beneficial and I have learned a substantial amount. Different techniques that researchers are using, and other models of prenatal stress are definitely something that I am eager to incorporate into my own work. Building upon this further, I believe what I have learned will help to enhance my future work, allowing me to explore different prenatal stressors and environmental manipulations that have not yet been done in our lab.  Attending this congress exposed me to exciting emerging trends in the field of neurodevelopmental neuroscience that are not very popular in Ireland. This particularly includes the recent interest of prenatal exposure to both cannabidiol and tetrahydrocannabinol. I have made great connections with others that are experienced in these topics and believe that this could open up potential collaborations for both the remainder of my PhD, but also possibly beyond when I will be applying for funding for postdoctoral positions. | | | | |
| 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 | Clara Deady | | DATE | 30.09.2024 |

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

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