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AWARDEE REPORT FORM

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| NAME | | Dominic O’Brien | | |
| TWITTER HANDLE\* *optional* | | @DomathyOBrien | | |
| UNIVERSITY | | Brighton and Sussex Medical School | | |
| NAME OF AWARD | | Symington Bequest | | |
| PURPOSE OF AWARD *conference/event attended/organised (full name) with city and dates.* | | | | |
| Attendance to IFAA 2024, Gwangju, South Korea  5-8th September 2024 | | | | |
| REPORT: What were your anticipated benefits?  *Minimum number of words between 200-400. Please write in coherent paragraphs.* | | | | |
| Attending IFAA was my first international conference of this scale. Having attended AnatSoc and ECA conferences prior, I was keen to attend a conference of IFAA’s size and scope; with over 1,000 attendees and with a focus on bringing more international academics together.  The wide breadth of topics that were to be covered by the various presenters was also something I anticipated being beneficial, as there was a strong representation of both clinical and education focused research, which marries both sides of my position in the teaching of medical students.  By being able to network with so many international academics I was also interested to hear how different medical schools operate outside of my usual sphere with my UK based colleagues and peers. By training medics to enter differing healthcare systems, I assumed the learning outcomes and so the teaching would differ somewhat to my experience working with UK based institutions following the GMC objectives for qualifying medics.  I was also keen to hear from researchers in the areas of Extended Reality (xR), and hear about current projects on its utilisation in education. As this is an area of research I am currently exploring, it would be hugely beneficial to hear more about the current state of the field, and also explore potential opportunities for future collaborations with academics also working in this area. | | | | |
| COMMENTS: Describe your experience at the conference / lab visit / course / seminar/ event.  *Minimum number of words between 200-400. Please write in coherent paragraphs.* | | | | |
| My experience at the conference was incredibly positive. The sheer amount of content through the talks, posters and symposia discussions available to engage with bordered on overwhelming, and made for difficult decisions of which sessions to attend as they all contained very interesting work.  The welcome to the conference was very warm and featured a performance of traditional South Korean dance and music, which was a beautiful and impressive way to begin feeling immersed in the local culture.  The frequent opportunities for networking were great opportunities to catch up with old colleagues, meet those in person who I had only previous had email exchanges with, and talk further in depth with those whose presentations I had attended earlier.  Giving my own presentation was a fantastic opportunity for me, where I presented my research on the use of virtual reality resources I had helped create to teach anatomy to our BSMS medical students. The chance to share my research and resources with such a wide selection of anatomists, clinicians and educators was a wonderful way to gain insight on others’ thoughts on the field of VR in education. The feedback I received from attendees to the presentation was overwhelmingly positive, which has served a good motivation for me to continue my work in the area. | | | | |
| 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 experience of once again presenting to peers rather than solely to students is a skill that I am always grateful to have the opportunity to improve. I find I approach conference presentations somewhat differently, as I am always aware that it is somewhat likely to have attendees very well versed or experienced in the area that I am presenting on. This allows me to practice the skill of digging deeper into topics within my research rather than devoting more time to explaining the basics within the area, but still maintaining the balance of giving adequate foundational knowledge for attendees who may not have knowledge of the field.  I also found I was able to gain important insight into differing views on anatomy education, be that with medical students or the wider public. There are often very strongly held, passionate opinions about how anatomy teaching should be conveyed to others (especially the public), and the ability to discuss these productively was something that was aimed to be done in several sessions at the conference. Taking the time to understand and compare opposing views is a good exercise in critical thinking and something that always warrants further practice in a field such as academia, and this conference was a great opportunity for that. | | | | |
| 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.* | | | | |
| I felt very lucky and heartened to see the large amount of talks that were focussed on the use of ultrasound technologies in medicine, research and teaching; as this is one of the focuses in my position as POCUS lead within anatomy at BSMS. Attending these talks was useful for me in gaining insight into how and why the technology is used clinically, and how I may be able to translate that into my teaching.  A surprising insight was how useful ultrasound has proven for many in cosmetically focussed procedures, such as the administration of Botox injections and other aesthetic procedures.  I was also able to meet several other academics who had an interest in the area of xR, or had colleagues who were conducting research in the area. I was able to spend a good deal of the networking time sharing ideas on how Extended Reality can be implemented in teaching, and achieve introductions to other academics similarly interested in the area. These conversations, and further conversations going forward, with these individuals will inform the direction of my research and teaching provisions, thanks to now knowing much more about practices across other medical schools. This ability to share ideas and work collaboratively with international colleagues is something I will definitely be pursuing, and attending this conference was vital in highlighting the opportunities available to me this. | | | | |
| 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 | Dominic O’Brien | | DATE | 24/10/24 |

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

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