



AWARDEE REPORT FORM

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UNIVERSITY	University College Dublin
NAME OF AWARD	Symington Bequest Fund 2025/26
PURPOSE OF AWARD <i>conference/event attended/organised (full name) with city and dates.</i>	
Congress of the International Federation of Associations of Anatomists (IFAA2026) Melbourne, Australia 13–16 August 2026	
REPORT: What were your anticipated benefits?	
<i>Minimum number of words between 200-400. Please write in coherent paragraphs.</i>	
Attending the IFAA 2026 Congress in Melbourne was expected to provide significant benefits to my academic, research, and professional development. As one of the major international gatherings of the anatomical sciences community, the Congress offered a valuable opportunity to engage with emerging developments across anatomy and related disciplines and to place my own academic activities within a broader international context. Another anticipated benefit was exposure to new scientific concepts, methodologies, and technological advances influencing contemporary anatomical research and education. I was particularly interested in developments that extend the traditional boundaries of anatomy and demonstrate its increasing integration with imaging, computational approaches, biomedical technologies, and translational research. I expected these interactions to generate ideas that could inform both my research and teaching and help identify new directions for interdisciplinary work. I also anticipated substantial benefits from presenting and discussing my work with an international audience. Receiving perspectives from anatomists working in different research and educational environments was expected to help refine my ideas, identify potential applications of my work, and stimulate future research questions. I took the opportunity to contribute actively to the international anatomical community while further developing my professional identity within the discipline. The Award was therefore expected to provide benefits extending considerably beyond attendance at a single congress, by fostering longer-term academic collaborations and professional development.	
COMMENTS: Describe your experience at the conference / lab visit / course / seminar/ event.	
<i>Minimum number of words between 200-400. Please write in coherent paragraphs.</i>	

Attending the IFAA 2026 Congress in Melbourne was an immensely rewarding academic and professional experience. The Congress brought together anatomists, educators, researchers, and representatives of anatomical societies from across the world, creating an environment in which both established areas of anatomy and emerging directions within the discipline could be explored.

The scientific program was particularly valuable for its diversity. The presentations and discussions demonstrated how contemporary anatomical science increasingly intersects with advanced imaging, digital technologies, computational approaches, clinical disciplines, and other areas of biomedical research. Exposure to this diversity provided me with new perspectives on how anatomical research and education are evolving and encouraged me to consider opportunities for greater interdisciplinary integration within my own academic activities.

An equally important aspect of the Congress was the opportunity to interact directly with colleagues from different countries and academic backgrounds. Discussions during scientific sessions and informal networking provided opportunities to exchange ideas, learn about different approaches to anatomical research and education, renew existing professional relationships, and establish new connections. I particularly appreciated the openness of the international anatomical community to discussing potential collaborations and sharing experiences across institutions and national boundaries.

The event also provided an important opportunity for me to engage actively with the wider anatomical community and reflect on my own role within the discipline. Conversations with colleagues reinforced the importance of international cooperation in ensuring that anatomy remains innovative, relevant, and connected to developments across biomedical science and healthcare.

Overall, I found IFAA 2026 intellectually stimulating, professionally enriching, and personally memorable. I returned from Melbourne with new ideas, strengthened professional connections, and renewed enthusiasm for contributing to anatomical research, education, and the wider anatomy 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.

One of the most important skills I gained from attending IFAA 2026 was the ability to communicate anatomical and interdisciplinary research more effectively to a diverse international audience. Listening to presentations across different areas of anatomical science and engaging in subsequent discussions provided valuable insights into how to communicate complex research questions clearly while remaining accessible to colleagues with diverse scientific and educational backgrounds.

The Congress also strengthened my scientific critical-thinking skills. Exposure to a wide range of methodologies and research approaches encouraged me to evaluate how emerging technologies and interdisciplinary methods can be incorporated into anatomical research. In particular, the meeting enhanced my ability to identify connections between anatomy and areas such as advanced imaging, digital and computational technologies, clinical sciences, and translational biomedical research.

I also developed skills in professional networking and international collaboration. Interacting with researchers, educators, and representatives of anatomical organizations from different countries improved

my confidence in initiating discussions, identifying shared research interests, exchanging ideas, and exploring potential collaborative opportunities.

Finally, the Congress strengthened my ability to reflect critically on developments within the discipline and consider how new knowledge can be integrated into my research and teaching. I returned with a broader perspective on contemporary anatomical science and a better ability to identify opportunities for interdisciplinary research, educational innovation, and international collaboration. These skills will be valuable not only for my immediate academic activities but also for my longer-term professional development within the anatomical sciences.

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 intend to translate the lessons learned from IFAA 2026 into my future activities in research, teaching, collaboration, and professional engagement within the discipline.

In research, the Congress reinforced the value of interdisciplinary approaches to contemporary anatomical questions. I plan to explore greater integration of anatomical knowledge with areas such as advanced imaging, computational and digital methodologies, nanomedicine, and translational biomedical research. The scientific discussions at IFAA have also encouraged me to consider new methodological approaches and potential collaborative projects that extend beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries.

In my teaching, I will incorporate relevant concepts, examples, and emerging developments from the Congress into my educational activities. Exposure to diverse perspectives on anatomy education has provided ideas for making teaching more engaging, research-informed, and aligned with developments in clinical and biomedical sciences. I also hope to share relevant insights from the Congress with colleagues and students, thereby extending the benefits of my attendance beyond my own professional development.

Another important outcome will be maintaining and developing the professional relationships established or strengthened during IFAA 2026. I intend to follow up discussions with colleagues where there is potential for collaborative research, educational initiatives, scholarly publications, and other forms of international knowledge exchange.

Last but not least, the experience has strengthened my commitment to contributing actively to the wider anatomical community. I hope to use the perspectives and connections gained in Melbourne to support future activities within the Anatomical Society and the international anatomical community, including conferences, educational initiatives, research collaborations, and professional service. In this way, I expect the benefits of the bursary-supported experience to continue well beyond the Congress itself.

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The IFAA2026 Congress at Melbourne, Australia.
[Photograph captured on August 15th 2026]

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SIGNATURE

Sourav Bhattacharjee

DATE

06/09/2026

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

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