|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| NAME | Catherine Hennessy |
| UNIVERSITY | University of Southampton |
| NAME OF AWARD | Symington Fund Award 2014/15 – Round 3  |
| PURPOSE OF AWARD *conference attended (full name) with city and dates* |
| Experimental Biology 2015: Joint meeting of Anatomical Society and American Association of Anatomists (AAA).Boston, USA.28th March 2015 to 1st April 2015.           |
| REPORT: What were your anticipated benefits? |
| I anticipated that by attending this conference I would be able to showcase my research into the use of Twitter as an educational tool with my fellow anatomists and medical educators. I believed that this conference would be a great place to receive feedback from colleagues on whether they thought Twitter had a place in their workplaces or indeed if they had been using any social media as an edicational tool. As an ealry career medical educator and anatomist I also thought that this conference would be an excellent opportunity to meet colleagues and make connections in anticipation of embarking on collaborative work in future projects.  |
| COMMENTS: Describe your experience at the conference / lab visit / course / seminar. |
| I had a fantastic experience. I shared with colleagues from around the world that Twitter had been popular amongst students in a recent module I had been teaching - Neuro/head and neck anatomy at the Univeristy of Southampton. I showed that 91% of the student group either viewed or interacted with a Twitter hashtag that I had set up specifically for this course. Students used it mainly to share learning ideas such as memorable songs and acronyms and to pose questions to their teachers. They liked this way of communicating with teachers because responses were quick and concise. The surprising result was that students used Twitter to boost morale and relieve stress which they described as being hugely important to them as a way of coping with the module and getting through it. There was no correlation between how highly students scored in their exams and how much they engaged with the Twitter feed. However the Twitter feed created a supportive network for students as they were learning this difficult module and this appeared to enhance the student experience of the module. One colleague suggested that I look at the module evaluation scores from previous years to see if having the Twitter feed increased these scores which may suggest that levels of enjoyment of the module changed as a result. This helped me plan how I may expand and continue my research. I discovered that my colleagues from across the world were interested in using social media to enhance the student learning experience and this motivated me to continue my research. I enjoyed meeting these colleagues, particularly my fellow anatomical society members and I feel much more part of a communtiy of anatomists and educators as a result. It was motivtaing to hear my colleagues speak passionately about how they are working to improve medical education. I believe this will push me to maximise my work as an anatomist and educator. |
| REPORT: In relation to skills, what were the most important things you gained? *(does not apply to equipment grant)* |
| I gained skills in networking effectively by attending the networking skills lunch. I believe this will help me to collaborate with colleagues in the future. I gained communication and poster presentation skills after spending two poster sessions describing my work with colleagues. I feel that I was able to take my colleagues opinions on board but managed to effectively defend my work when needed which I believe will be a valuable skill to have in future. |
| REPORT: How do you think you will put this learning experience into practice in the future? |
| By attending this conference I was able to meet and build relations with anatomists in Ireland and discovered that we have mutual research interests in social media as an educatioinal aid. We intend to collaborate in a future project and hopefully we will be presenting this work at future anatomical society meetings. |
| SIGNATURE | Catherine Hennessy | DATE | 09/04/2015 |

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