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AWARDEE REPORT FORM

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| NAME | | Dr Claire Conway | | |
| TWITTER HANDLE\* *optional* | | @claireconwayphd | | |
| UNIVERSITY | | RCSI | | |
| NAME OF AWARD | | Symington Bequest Fund Awards 2023/24 – Round 1 | | |
| PURPOSE OF AWARD *conference/event attended/organised (full name) with city and dates.* | | | | |
| Conference attendance :  9th International Conference on Mechanics of Biomaterials and Tissues, Waikola Beach, Hawaii, USA  16th to 20th December 2023 | | | | |
| REPORT: What were your anticipated benefits? | | | | |
| The 9th International Conference on Mechanics of Biomaterials and Tissues brought together different communities to discuss new materials concepts, their spatial patterning and 3D printing, their modeling and simulation, biological and biomedical functions, and finally applications of bioinspired design  The field of implant materials is now moving from static concepts to dynamic biomaterials that can adapt to stimuli from the living environment. It is an exciting time for biomaterial research. Getting to discuss my team’s work relating to mitral valve mechanics on this international stage would be very beneficial. I expected there would be many opportunities to both formally and informally discuss findings with peers, post-docs and PhD students from across the world, aiding my scientific network and the development of new exciting collaborations. | | | | |
| COMMENTS: Describe your experience at the conference / lab visit / course / seminar/ event. | | | | |
| On arrival to Hawaii, we were greeted with some very much welcome, warm weather which set the tone for a thoroughly enjoyable conference. The conference venue was at the impressive Waikoloa Beach Marriott Hotel, which is ideally located in the beautiful coast of Hawaii. This meant conference delegates were close to many activity options during conference downtime.  The conference began on December 16th with a welcome address and a range of talks from distinguished keynote speakers which was a nice opening to the conference. This was followed by a Welcome Reception and a Poster Session teaser. This gave me the opportunity to network which was an ideal start to the conference.  The conference continued for five days with a diverse range of talks, poster sessions and speakers. I presented my team’s work at the poster session on the evenings of December 18th and 19th. Overall, the work was very well received and I obtained numerous new ideas in relation to progressing our areas of research. | | | | |
| 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? | | | | |
| The ability to forge strong professional connections was one of the primary outcomes of this conference. The way in which the poster sessions and welcome reception were organised was particularly amenable to ensuring this was a successful networking environment. In addition, the location of the venue and room arrangement made it easy to arrange to meet other delegates. This enabled a relaxed friendly atmosphere and simplified the process of networking and was very enjoyable.  Importantly, throughout the conference, new concepts and ideas were generated for future studies and potential collaborations, and grant applications. With my own aim to complete a sabbatical in a couple of years in the Boston area, I received invites for talks for several universities for this planned secondment.  Additionally, exposure to a different cohort of researchers that I rarely meet allowed me to observe and listen to a variety of different presentation styles giving me ideas on how I can improve on my own presentation skills, which is of immense value. | | | | |
| 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? | | | | |
| Networking can be a challenge but the mantra ‘practice makes perfect’ comes to mind. Attending this conference and engaging with other delegates was an honest pleasure. I feel much more comfortable since this opportunity in discussing my team’s work and exploring with other PIs potential areas and opportunity for collaboration. Overall, the attendance at the conference was highly productive and would not have been possible without funding from the Anatomical Society, for which I am extremely grateful. | | | | |
| 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 | | | | |
| YES – link to tweet with image  <https://x.com/claireconwayphd/status/1737652917249900697?s=20> | | | | |
| 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 | | | | |
| YES | | | | |
| SIGNATURE | Claire Conway | | DATE | 19 – JAN – 2024 |

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

*File: AS-Award-Report-Form-171023*