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AWARDEE REPORT FORM

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| NAME | | Daiki Sugita | | |
| TWITTER HANDLE\* *optional* | |  | | |
| UNIVERSITY | | University of Cambridge | | |
| NAME OF AWARD | | Barclay-Smith Travelling Awards 2024/25 – (Round 4) | | |
| PURPOSE OF AWARD *conference/event attended/organised (full name) with city and dates.* | | | | |
| To cover the costs of the travel and the accommodation for the AS summer meeting held at Oxford from 14-16th July. | | | | |
| REPORT: What were your anticipated benefits?  *Minimum number of words between 200-400. Please write in coherent paragraphs.* | | | | |
| I expected to gain a new insight into human brain development at the conference. As a cell and developmental biologist, I anticipated various amazing talks from various speakers. My field of interest is cell and developmental biology, especially molecular organ biology, so I was particularly interested in how a complex organ, such as a human brain is formed during development, and what changes occur upon certain brain disorder by drawing a parallel with the organ systems I am investigating. I hoped to familiarise myself with cutting edge research of neurosciences and to gain technical knowledge, which would be useful to expand my scientific knowledge. In general, the conference has successfully met my anticipations in those aspects.  In the poster session I looked to present my summer internship work that was kindly funded by the Anatomical society. I was slightly concerned that my work on evolution and development of electroreceptor organs in teleost fish is not very relevant to the theme of the conference, but I have discussed my poster with several people and the discussions proved very insightful. I also anticipated to receive some feedback on my poster, such as figure arrangement and the layout of the poster.  In general, I sought the opportunity to exchange ideas with people from different scientific backgrounds. | | | | |
| 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 attended Anatomical Society Summer Meeting 2024/2025 that took place at St John’s College, Oxford University, from 14-16th July. The symposiums were organised into various sessions according to the topics over the three days. The theme was Human Cortical Development.  I attended most of the sessions to listen to the talks. The symposiums were full of interesting talks related to the brain. Despite the overarching theme of human cortical development, the topics presented were broad, from molecular neurobiology to anatomical studies and clinically oriented research.  There were two poster sessions throughout the conference. I presented my work that I carried out in a summer vacation of 2023 and that was kindly funded by the Anatomical Society Undergraduate Summer Vacation Research Scholarship. I discussed my poster with several researchers, which was very interesting and insightful.  Furthermore, I participated in social activities at the first and second night. It was a nice opportunity to engage with scientists at the similar career stage to myself to share the life as a graduate student in developmental biology. I was fortunate enough to have a chance to interact with the researchers in neuroscience and industrial researchers.  Overall, the conference provided a close-knit community in a cosy and vibrant setting in Oxford. I learned a lot about brain development, and it was a great opportunity to meet scientists from various backgrounds. | | | | |
| 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.* | | | | |
| As a cell and developmental biologist, I found the talks related to fundamental developmental biology fascinating, such as the ones given by Madeline Lancaster, Katie Long, and Flora Vaccarino. It was especially interesting to learn commonly used techniques in human brain research, such as brain organoids and organotypic brain slice. The technical difficulty to carry out genetics in human samples, as opposed to model organisms, is perhaps challenging, but scRNA-seq and advanced spatial transcriptomics can give a clue as to molecular and genetic architecture of brain development. Furthermore, a special lecture on the history of neuroscience given by Professor Zoltan Molnar was intriguing and engaging. I learned how neurosciences have progressed from descriptive anatomy to molecular biology-based studies that currently dominate the field. I was also exposed to the relations of fundamental research to the clinical and anatomical research through this conference, and I would like to carry this important connection in my career.  Another important skill that I gained is how to present a poster. Although my poster presentation is not directly related to human brain development, I enjoyed discussion with researchers who visited my poster. I gained an interesting insight into evolutionary developmental biology (evo-devo). The poster session was a great opportunity to present my work so I would like to keep practising my presentation skills throughout my academic journey. | | | | |
| 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.* | | | | |
| As I explained so far, I have learned a lot about human brain development, including the up-to-date research in the field and techniques used to study molecular mechanisms. I would like to regularly attend the academic conferences to gain knowledge and get inspiration for my own research as well as to form a network with the fellow scientists working in the similar discipline.  Brain development is not exactly the field my own research belongs to but I did enjoy interactions with scientists in that discipline and also industrial researchers. I found it critically important that one interacts with researchers in an academic discipline that is slightly different from their own. Exchange of the ideas between people in different fields is undoubtedly beneficial to each other and such an inter-disciplinarity is a key to advance the field in modern science. Therefore, in my research career, I would like to maintain the interactions and collaborations beyond the boundaries of academic disciplines to expand my scope and knowledge in biology.  Lastly, experience at an academic conference will be different depending on the career stage a researcher is at. I participated in this conference as a young career researcher (Masters student) so I am looking forward to different kinds of interactions in future conferences and workshops. I anticipate that I will be able to engage in a deeper and more specialised manner. | | | | |
| 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 | Daiki Sugita | | DATE | 15/08/2025 |

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

*File: AS-Award-Report-Form-171023 – International Conference*