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 AWARDEE REPORT FORM

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| --- | --- |
| NAME | Prof. Albert Basson |
| UNIVERSITY | King’s College London |
| NAME OF AWARD | Symington Bequest Fund |
| PURPOSE OF AWARD *conference attended (full name) with city and dates* |
| Society for Neuroscience annual meeting: **Neuroscience 2018, 3rd to 7th November 2018, San Diego, California, USA**  |
| REPORT: What were your anticipated benefits? |
| * Experience cutting edge research in Neuroscience
* Present our recent findings to the Neuroscience community
* Meet and discuss recent findings with other experts in my field
 |
| COMMENTS: Describe your experience at the conference / lab visit / course / seminar. |
| The idea of attending these Neuroscience meetings used to fill me with dread - with almost 30,000 neuroscientists across the world attending, it sounded like my idea of hell. In fact, it turned out to be the opposite. Yes, with 28,497 attendees and over 1000 sessions, you have to accept from the start that you will only see or hear a fraction of the science being presented, and I found that much easier than anticipated. The meeting organisation is extraordinary - it has to be! With their own dedicated app, you can easily identify the posters, talks and sessions you want to attend. Posters are organised in themes so these turned out to be the best place to meet people working in the same field and discuss science. I found these far more helpful than poster sessions at smaller meetings. The 10-20 minutes it takes to walk from the one side of the poster session (starting at poster A1) to the end (JJJ33) always bring a few surprises, either running into someone you want to talk to, or seeing a poster on the positive effects of classical music (and not easy listening or other genres tested) on fear memory extinction in rats.Scientifically, it was great to be able to talk to others working on one of the genes we’re interested in and hear about their experience working in different model systems. My talk was well received with some nice feedback in the SfN 2018 reactions blog in Spectrumnews ([https://www.spectrumnews.org/news/reactions-sfn-2018/)](https://www.spectrumnews.org/news/reactions-sfn-2018/%29) and it was a great honour and fun experience to chair my first session on “autism: from genetic models to insights”, with some fantastic talks.There was a huge amount for anatomists and I would strongly encourage those interested in neuroanatomy to attend future meetings. Session after session reported on powerful, high resolution new methods to study the anatomy of the mouse brain in 3D with clearing methods from “old-school” CLARITY, via iDISCO to OPTICLEAR, together with powerful imaging, data acquisition and analysis tools. Many fantastic open-access resources were described e.g. NeuroMorpho with almost 100,000 different neurons reconstructed in 3D from human, mouse, Drosophila and C. elegans ([http://neuromorpho.org/)](http://neuromorpho.org/%29). In addition to favourite organisms like the mouse and human, fascinating new model organisms to study different aspects of neuroscience (like the endearing deer mouse to study parental care) were topics of discussion. Interesting anatomical findings include the much larger corticospinal tracts in the forest-living sub-species of the deer mouse with significantly enhanced climbing and balance abilities, compared to their prairie-living cousins. |
| REPORT: In relation to skills, what were the most important things you gained? *(does not apply to equipment grant)* |
| Experiencing the widest possible view of neuroscience research.First-hand knowledge of current developments in the field. |
| REPORT: How do you think you will put this learning experience into practice in the future? |
| I will not avoid large, international meetings like SfN and will propose ideas for symposia and panel discussions at future meetings. |
| SIGNATURE |  | DATE | 15/11/18 |

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

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