AWARDEE REPORT FORM



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| NAME | Ciara Shortiss |
| UNIVERSITY | National University of Ireland Galway |
| NAME OF AWARD | Barclay Smith Travelling Fund 2021/22 Round 4 |
| PURPOSE OF AWARD *conference/event attended/organised (full name) with city and dates.* |
| Anatomical Society Summer meeting July 4-6th 2022, Dublin, Ireland |
| REPORT: What were your anticipated benefits? |
| * Gain different perspectives on my project through discussion with others about my poster.
* Get advice on things to consider/ potentially weaknesses of my project and how to overcome/mitigate them.
* Introduce myself to other SCI researcher in Ireland and build a rapport with them.
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| COMMENTS: Describe your experience at the conference / lab visit / course / seminar/ event. |
| This conference was very enjoyable. I found that it gave me a different perspective on what Anatomy means, and opened my awareness to anatomical teaching methods and tools as well as other aspects of anatomical research I was previously unaware of.I was taken aback by the scope of work that falls under the remit of Anatomy and was grateful I got to hear about these areas I had previously not thought of as Anatomical. I attended all talks. Before attending was particularly interested in the talks that related to neuroscience and spinal cord injury as this is my area of research. These did indeed deliver by sparking my curiosity and with information I can relate to my own work. Other talks not related to my project exceeded my expectations in how interesting and engaging I would find them. I particularly enjoyed Mark Pinckerings, Matt Yousezadeh, and Sabine Koelle who’s research is on microscopes, aging and Reproduction. These filled gaps in my knowledge and gave me things to consider that I can apply to my own personal life. I will be following the research of these investigators in the future. I was also introduced with Matt Yousezadeh who works in the University of Minnesota. I am going on a research trip to Minnesota in September. It was really nice to hear form someone who lives there what the Minnesota Winter is like and how best to deal with the sub-freezing temperatures!The sponsored talk by Elsevier Complete Anatomy, who has recently launched their first female model body on their online platform, made me aware of the narrowness in example bodies and the focus on a white male standard ‘body’ in anatomy books that has a negative effects on surgical and medical procedure outcome.Everyone I met was friendly and easy to talk to making coffee breaks and evening events very enjoyable |

too. I feel I have left with more knowledge on my research, other research as well as friends that will help me out in my future research as I hope to help them. 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? I have improved my poster presentation and communication skills through presenting my poster and networking with other attendees.

From listening to so many presentations simultaneously I picked up a few tips as to what makes a presentation interesting and easy to follow i.e. at the end of every slide with data have the conclusion pop up over the centre of the slide and say it as your final sentence before beginning the next slide so people can easily follow along.

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?

The contacts that I made who also work in spinal cord injury research have attempted experiments that I am planning. I was not previously aware of this until meeting and talking to them. They have agreed to share their protocols with me and their first-hand experience with the techniques which is very hard to get when trying to replicate a paper. This will help me mitigate any potential problems/ weaknesses in my experimental approach from the get go. I will definitely be using the protocols generated by the RCSI and Dooley lab group who have successfully grown spinal slices on biomaterials as a starting point for my own research.

The RSCI spinal cord injury researchers have a Patient Public Interaction meeting with rugby players who have spinal injuries and their physician on a monthly basis. We are in discussion with them to see if I may be able to join one of these meetings to present my research to get patient and physician feedback. Also their contacts with this group may yield the start of a PPI spinal cord injury group in Galway.

From this conference I have gotten a better understanding of what makes a good presentation i.e. one that is engaging to a wide audience and also understandable/ communicates scientific data well. In particular Mark Pickering’s talk was captivating. He had an overarching metaphor of Hyphy music giving rise to punk rock as the former was overly complicated so the natural balance was found with a more simplified punk rock music arising after it. He talked about how sometimes overly complicated and highly specialised microscopes are not necessary for your research and how sometimes being ‘Punk’ i.e. taking matters into your own hands, going back to basics and making your own microscopes will give you the most efficient and best answer to your research question. In future I will try to include similes and metaphors to describe my research in a more engaging and memorable way for the audience. Mark’s talk also made me want to try turn a 3D printer into a microscope that is portable and able to be placed in an incubator for life imaging. It is a cheap idea which may yield better conditions than the enclosures around bought in microscope. If I have time I may try this in the future.

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| SIGNATURE |  Ms Ciara Shortiss | DATE | 13\_07\_22 |

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