



AWARDEE REPORT FORM

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UNIVERSITY	University of Birmingham
NAME OF AWARD	Symington Bequest Fund 2025/26 Round 3
PURPOSE OF AWARD <i>conference/event attended/organised (full name) with city and dates.</i>	
To attend and present at the 22nd Congress of the International Federation of Associations of Anatomists (IFAA), Melbourne, Australia, 13–16 August 2026. I delivered an oral presentation entitled “<i>Beyond prosections: Designing and evaluating a multimodal anatomy intervention for post-registration trauma nursing and allied health professionals</i>” and presented a poster entitled “Learner Engagement and Perceived Impact of Immersive Virtual Reality for Cranial Nerve Neuroanatomy Teaching in First-Year Biomedical Science Students”.	
REPORT: What were your anticipated benefits?	
<i>Minimum number of words between 200-400. Please write in coherent paragraphs.</i> As this was my first time attending an IFAA Congress, I was particularly looking forward to experiencing a large international anatomy meeting and seeing how anatomy education and research were being approached in different countries. I hoped that attending would give me the opportunity not only to present our own work, but also to learn from anatomists and educators outside my usual academic environment. I was especially excited to present two different anatomy education projects. My oral presentation focused on a multimodal anatomy intervention for post-registration trauma nursing and allied health professionals, while our poster explored learner engagement and the perceived impact of immersive virtual reality for cranial nerve neuroanatomy teaching in first-year Biomedical Science students. I hoped that presenting these projects would allow me to receive feedback from other anatomy educators, discuss how our approaches might translate to different settings, and identify areas that could be developed further. Another anticipated benefit was networking. I wanted to meet anatomy educators from other institutions and countries, build professional connections and explore possible future collaborations. I was also interested in meeting educational technology and anatomical-model companies exhibiting at the Congress, as these resources are increasingly relevant to how we teach anatomy. Finally, I hoped the meeting would give me new ideas that I could take back to the University of Birmingham as we are currently thinking carefully about the future design of our anatomy curriculum, so exposure to different approaches to curriculum design, educational technology, histology, embryology and clinically applied anatomy was particularly timely. As a member of the Anatomical Society Meetings Committee, I was also keen to observe how a large international anatomy congress was organised and delivered, and to learn from this for my own involvement in future Society meetings. I saw IFAA as an opportunity to return with practical ideas that could influence both my teaching and my wider contribution to the anatomical community.	

COMMENTS: Describe your experience at the conference / lab visit / course / seminar/ event.

Minimum number of words between 200-400. Please write in coherent paragraphs.

Attending IFAA in Melbourne for the first time was a very memorable experience. One of the most rewarding parts was being able to present our work in both oral and poster formats. Following my oral presentation, I had further discussions with anatomy educators, including colleagues working in UNSW Sydney, Rivers State University and Flinders University, about the teaching approach we had used. I enjoyed being able to move beyond the formal presentation and discuss why we had designed the intervention in that way, what our learners appeared to value, and how similar approaches might be adapted elsewhere. During our poster, it was useful to discuss the practical place of VR for cranial nerve neuroanatomy alongside more established anatomy teaching methods rather than viewing technology as a replacement for them.

There were many presentations that gave me ideas for my own teaching. A particular highlight was *Min Suk Chung's* work using anatomy comics to support the teaching of embryology and histology. I found the approach creative because these are areas students can find conceptually difficult, and the use of visual storytelling offered a different way of making complicated developmental and microscopic concepts easier to follow.

The social and networking side of the Congress was equally valuable. I met anatomy lecturers from Australia, India, South Africa, United Kingdom, Nigeria and other countries, as well as members of the Anatomical Society (AnatSoc). I was particularly pleased to introduce a Nigerian-resident anatomy lecturer to *Hannah Shaw* from AnatSoc, which opened a conversation about him joining AnatSoc as a member. It was also interesting to hear how surprised some international colleagues were by the size and activity of the UK anatomical community and by the fact that the Anatomical Society holds two scientific meetings a year.

It was enjoyable to engage with the different sponsors and exhibitors, explore new anatomy teaching resources and take away some anatomy-themed souvenirs, including tote bags, anatomical stickers and educational items. These informal interactions also provided an opportunity to speak directly with companies such as Primal Pictures and exhibitors from Huayi Science, China producing realistic silicone anatomical models about their resources and potential future collaboration.

After the Congress, I also had one day to experience Melbourne itself, including visiting the State Library, National museum, Luna Park, Art Centre and simply enjoying the atmosphere of the city.

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.

One of the skills I gained from attending IFAA was greater confidence in presenting and discussing anatomy education research in different formats. During my oral presentation, I had to explain the rationale, methods and key findings of our trauma anatomy teaching intervention clearly within a limited presentation time and then respond to questions from anatomy educators afterwards. The poster session was different because discussions were more informal and one-to-one.

I also developed my ability to defend and reflect on educational decisions. Discussions following the oral presentation made me think more carefully about why we had combined different anatomy teaching

resources and how the same approach might work in other institutions or learner groups. It was interesting to learning the ESCAPE LAB talk in the Anatomical Science Education session.

The Congress also improved my confidence in professional networking. I approached and spoke with anatomy educators from institutions including UNSW Sydney, Flinders University and Rivers State University, as well as lecturers from India and other countries. I also became more comfortable initiating conversations with exhibitors and discussing how their resources might support anatomy teaching or future collaboration. Unfortunately, due to circumstances beyond my control, I was unable to attend the pre-Congress workshop, which I had been looking forward to as another opportunity to learn and develop new skills.

Finally, because I am a member of the Anatomical Society Meetings Committee, I also attended IFAA with an interest in how the meeting itself was run. I observed how the meeting was ran, how oral and poster sessions were managed, how exhibitors were integrated into the meeting and how delegates moved between different parts of the programme. This gave me practical ideas about scientific-meeting organisation that I can bring back to my involvement with future Anatomical Society meetings.

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.

The most immediate way I hope to use what I learned at IFAA is through my teaching and curriculum-development work at the University of Birmingham and in the design of the new curriculum 2030 project which we are currently developing. So, attending the Congress came at a particularly useful time. It allowed me to see approaches being used internationally and consider which of these could realistically be adapted within our own programme.

One idea I would particularly like to take forward is the use of visual storytelling and anatomy comics following Min Suk Chung's presentation on embryology and histology. These subjects can be challenging because students need to understand developmental sequences and microscopic relationships rather than simply identify structures. I would like to discuss this approach with colleagues involved in curriculum development and explore whether a small visual or comic-based resource could be introduced or piloted alongside our existing teaching.

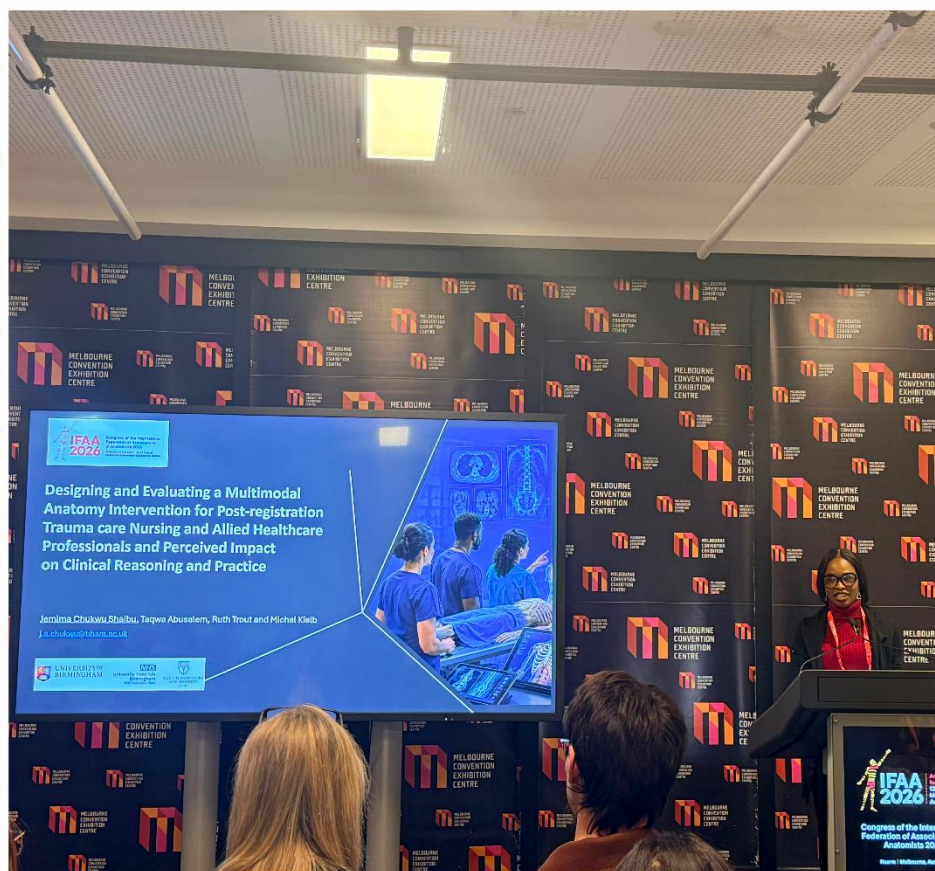
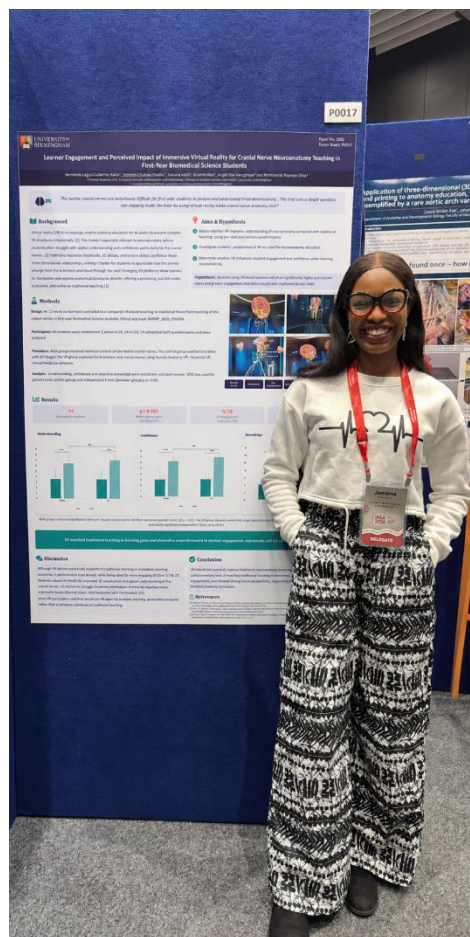
I also intend to continue developing multimodal anatomy teaching. The work I presented at IFAA reinforced the importance of choosing teaching resources according to the learning objective rather than relying on one method. In future teaching, I want to think more deliberately about where prosections, imaging, digital resources, immersive technologies and anatomical models add the most value, particularly when helping students move from anatomical knowledge to clinical application. The experience will also influence how I evaluate new teaching approaches. Rather than introducing a resource simply because it is innovative or visually engaging, I want to consider learner engagement, perceived usefulness, knowledge development and clinical applicability when judging whether it is genuinely effective.

I hope to apply what I observed about the organisation of IFAA to my work with the Early Career Anatomist and Anatomical Society Meetings Committee. Seeing how a large international meeting coordinated its programme, poster sessions, exhibitors and delegate activities gave me practical ideas that I can draw on when contributing to future Society meetings and taking on greater responsibility within the committee.

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Short narrative:

A selection of photographs from my first IFAA Congress in Melbourne, showing my oral and poster presentations, participation in the conference programme, and engagement with the wider exhibition and delegate experience.

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YES

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DATE

02/09/2026

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