



UZH, Anatomisches Institut, Winterthurerstr. 190, CH-8057 Zürich

Prof. François Karch,
Dept. of Genetics and Evolution
30, Quai Ernest Ansermet
CH - 1211 Genève 4
Switzerland

Arianna Baggiolini
Phone +41 44 635 53 41

arianna.baggiolini@uzh.ch

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Impressions about the ISSCR 2015 Annual Meeting

Dear Prof. François Karch,

The Annual Meeting of the International Society for Stem Cell Research (ISSCR) that took place in Stockholm in June is the biggest meeting in the stem cell field. It has been a great pleasure to be able to participate to such an important meeting and to be exposed to a multitude of outstanding international researchers.

The meeting covers different fields of stem cell biology, from basic research and breakthrough technologies to applied translational studies. It is extremely inspiring to participate to such an event, acquire new knowledge from different fields of stem cell biology, and still be able to discuss with people highly specialized in your particular field. At this conference the whole scientific community is indeed well represented, with terrific experts in every specific fields.

In my opinion, one of the highlights of the conference was the poster session, occurring on three consecutive days. During this time there was the actual possibility to interact with new people, not only with PhD students and Postdocs, but with professors as well. In fact, most of the professors that gave a talk at the conference actually stayed for the whole length of the meeting, increasing the chances of discussion.

Another thing that I am very glad of is that I was selected to give a talk at the concurrent session "Relationships and Clonality" (see program in the attachments). It has been a terrific honor to be able to present in front of such an outstanding audience and to share my results with the whole stem cell community. Moreover, thanks to my talk I could initiate fruitful discussions not only with students, but with professors as well.

Overall, I would like to summarize that the ISSCR Annual Meeting is an excellent opportunity to be exposed to breakthrough research, get inspired and interact with the best scientists in stem cell research. I definitively would advise this conference to every researcher working with or passionate about stem cells.

Sincerely

Arianna Baggiolini

Report about my participation at the MITO 2015 FEBS/EMBO course - October 2015 Creta Greece

The travel grant awarded to me by the SSMCB allowed me to participate in the FEBS/EMBO course on “Mitochondria in Life, Death and Disease”. This course is held every two years and has an excellent international reputation. Thus, highly renowned scientists from the field participated and presented almost exclusively unpublished data. For this reason the course was perfect to get up-to-date information about research on mitochondria. I especially enjoyed the talk of Prof. Trevor Lithgow from Monash University who presented a very sophisticated crosslinking approach which can be used for mapping of interaction sites between preproteins and the respective translocation channels.

Besides the oral and poster presentations, the organizers of the meeting had assembled sessions during which PhD students and PostDocs could meet the principal investigators and/or discuss current topics in round table discussions. Not least because of the positive and motivating attitude of the PIs, this framework program was a huge success. I enjoyed it a lot, as it gave me the opportunity to talk in an informal environment about my perspectives as well as my ongoing research.

Almost three years ago I started my PostDoc project in which I wanted to assess the composition and function of the protein import machinery in the inner mitochondrial membrane of *Trypanosoma brucei*. We were slightly surprised – but also delighted – to find substantial differences to mitochondrial protein import systems in other model organisms. Due to these differences, it took me quite some time to prepare a set of publishable data, but now it is almost complete. I presented these data at the conference in the form of a short talk and received very good feedback from the audience. Additionally, I was even rewarded with the FEBS journal oral presentation prize.

In summary, this meeting was huge success for me. As the scientific story I told was positively perceived, I feel highly encouraged to prepare the publication. Furthermore, I could expand my professional network and learned of several opportunities to develop my future career.

GRC 2015: Cell contact & Adhesion

Regarding my participation at the Gordon Research Conference for Cell contact and Adhesion, I'm very grateful to SSMCB for the travel grant. The participation at the conference has been a great impact at scientific and personal level. This conference is one of the best in our field and totally satisfied my high expectation about it. It was very well organized with cutting-edge talks in the field of cell adhesion, collective cell migration, development, proliferation and cancer. Furthermore, the organizers perfectly balanced time dedicated to talks, poster sessions and personal interactions.

It has been a great opportunity for me to listen and learn from top level scientists in my field, which shared in the conference their recent work with majority of unpublished data, a good point to know what are the advances in the field, get new ideas and have a preview of the publications of the next months.

I also had the opportunity to present a poster regarding my research project and I am very happy that I could share it with those outstanding scientists, from which I got a lot of positive feedback and suggestions to advance in my research and hopefully publish it soon. The participation at the conference was extremely good because I had the chance to meet many people and create good connections that for sure will help me in the future. It was also good because I could informally discuss about some problems and I got some ideas and also proposal for possible collaborations, of which I'm very excited.

In the end, the participation to GRC has been very fruitful and interesting, even better than I could expect.

Diego Guerrero

Impression report of GPCR Workshop 2015 in Kona/Hawaii

The GPCR Workshop organized by Brian Kobilka is one of the two big events in the GPCR field. It was a pleasure to participate the event. Due to the fact that this conference is kept very small (max. 100 participant), it gives an unique opportunity to interact with professors as well with all other participants.

The lectures were on an excellent level and the discussion time was long enough to get into details if necessary. The workshop gave as well the opportunity to discuss urgent questions in the field during the evening session. These kind of small talks and extensive discussion were an incredible enrichment for the conference itself.

My benefits from the conference were that I created some new ideas for my project. On the other side, new collaboration partners were found as well. Of course the networking opportunity was as well excellent and will help me for my future carrier.

I want to thank the SSMCB board for the generous founding my conference attendance.

Best regards,

Daniel Mayer



UNIVERSITÉ
DE GENÈVE

FACULTÉ DES SCIENCES

To: Prof. François Karch
Dept. of Genetics and Evolution
30, Quai Ernest Ansermet, 1211
Genève 4, Switzerland

Last two weeks I joined the Gordon Conference on Cell Adhesion in the beautiful campus of the Proctor Academy, Handover.

The big peculiarity of GRC was that it's focused on people interactions. The location, away from the big city, enhanced the interaction between all the participants that could spend most of their time together during seminars, but also in the free time.

Generally, mornings and evenings were filled with talks and poster sessions but afternoons were free. Hiking, kayaking, horseback riding, were scheduled, and joining in was strongly encouraged.

Especially people interactions were favors during meals where I had the possibility to introduce myself to different Professors, Pioneer in my field (but I also met numerous students), speaking about my PhD project and my future plans (find Post Doc position). All the Professors were very gentle and they kindly provide, during this informal time, a lot of suggestions and advices.

During this conference I had the pleasure to attend to very interesting seminars done by PI and Post Doc. The topics were various from cell collective migration to acto-myosin tension, signaling, development I different model system (mammalian cells, *C. elegans*, *D. melanogaster*) giving me the possibility to deepen different aspects of my field. During the talks were also introduced new techniques that could be useful to set-up in my lab. Usually, the talks were followed by discussion and students were encouraged to intervene.

I was very excited since my Boss presented my results during her talk and I was very proud to present my Poster, getting positive feedbacks, suggestions and comments.

Overall the conference was very satisfying and stimulating.

I would like thank you for the travel founding that give me the possibility to participate in this exciting "Junctional" meeting.

Domenica Spadaro

TEMTIA-VII The 7th International EMT Conference incorporating 2nd CTC Symposium and 1st TEMTIA ECR/MRC Forum, Melbourne October 11-14, 2015

As the name implies the topic of the conference was the “epithelial-to-mesenchymal transition” (EMT), a switch through which cells acquire invasive and migratory properties. EMT is a very important process during development, when cells migrate in order to build organs, as well as during disease, where EMT allows e.g. cancer cells to invade to different tissues and form metastasis.

The conference covered both of these aspects with sessions based on developmental EMT as well as more clinically relevant EMT. This was a point I particularly liked about the meeting, since I am investigating, whether there is a common signature linking these processes. The talks were very exciting and also included some unpublished data. In addition, the meeting included systems biology approaches to EMT as well as mathematical modeling and epigenetic control of EMT.

Another part of the meeting I particularly enjoyed was the ECR (early career researcher) session, where young investigators presented their work. This forum was scheduled in the first morning of the conference and thanks to its smaller size it facilitated interaction among participants and speakers. It was great to meet people who are at a similar step in their research career and it allowed to reduce anonymity and to start the conference in a more familiar atmosphere.

My personal contribution to the conference was a poster, which I presented during the “Developmental EMT and Circulating Tumor Cell (CTC)” poster session on Monday afternoon. I appreciated to receive critical feedback and questions about the (developmental) part of my project as well as useful input for future (clinical) perspectives.

Unfortunately, the plenary talk of Prof. Robert Weinberg was cancelled on short notice. However, the “replacement” presentation of Prof. Jean Paul Thiery addressing several aspects of growth factor and EMT signaling pathways was very exciting and opened interesting discussions.

Since I entered the field of developmental and EMT biology only on the level of a post-doctoral researcher, the attendance to this conference was a crucial step to grapple with the current research in the field and to get to know people behind the publications I am reading. It also helped me to decide, where I want to take my project and personal career in the future.

In summary I am looking back to a conference with fascinating scientific talks and interesting discussions. Moreover, I am happy to have been well integrated into the EMT community and to have become a member of the “EMT International Association”. Therefore, I am already looking forward to the next meeting in 2017!

Lausanne, June 22nd 2015.

Meeting summary: FASEB Mobile DNA in Mammalian Genomes 2015

Gabriela Ecco - EPFL

I have attended to the FASEB Mobile DNA in Mammalian Genomes 2015. It is a bi-annual meeting that groups specialists on mobile DNA, such as John Moran, Haig Kazazian, Dixie Mager, and Cedric Feschotte. It had mainly participants from labs from the U.S., but also from Europe and Asia. One advantage is that we get to interact with labs from the U.S. that normally do not come to the conferences in Europe. Overall the meeting was very interesting and productive and I believe that both I and the lab benefitted to my attendance.

The meeting was not too big and very specific, but since it was in the same topic my thesis subject, most of the talks and posters were of high interest. It was great to see the new researches on the field and see how it has been evolving in the past years. There was a lot of unpublished work and I got a good update on the latest techniques - such as the bioinformatics tools and methods to map high-throughput data on repeats. Furthermore, it was possible to see how the competition is increasing in the field, especially around control of LTR retroelements.

It was also a very favorable meeting for interaction between researchers. For example, during one of the lunches you could sit on a table with two invited speakers that you would like to speak to. And overall speakers were very available during the conference and willing to discuss research.

Another positive point of the meeting was that I could get a good feedback to my research topic. I had a talk in the meeting - which per se was a great training - that also allowed a bigger visibility of my work and more feedback. I could get the point of view of different researchers about my work and I will incorporate their suggestions in the upcoming manuscript I will write.

Finally, the meeting was not only useful to me but also to my lab colleagues. Upon return, I reported the main talks and the posters of interest to the lab. Many of my colleagues work on repetitive elements and the works and techniques presented are also useful for them. Hence I would like to thank USGEB for providing me with a travel grant to help with the costs of this meeting.

Summary of the Keystone Symposium “Dendritic cells and Macrophages Reunited”,
Montreal, March 8-13, 2015.

Keystone Symposia on Molecular and Cell Biology is a 43-years old non-profit organization whose aim is to connect scientists from different disciplines and promote the development of biomedical and life sciences.

Having worked during the past two years on a project about MHC class I regulation in DCs, in agreement with my group leader I took the chance to attend the Keystone Symposium “Dendritic cells and Macrophages Reunited”, as a good fit to learn more about the most recent development in DC biology. The meeting focused on both macrophages and DCs regulation, proposing daily topics (DC/M Φ biology, allergy, cancer, etc.) followed by a workshop session. Oral presentations have been integrated with poster sessions, where I could gain useful feedbacks on my project, particularly from other students.

Although it was an important conference, I found that the size of this meeting was quite cozy. In particular, I have appreciated the relaxed environment, either during the talks and the social moments (breakfast, dinner, coffee breaks, and poster sessions), which strongly encouraged the interaction among scientists with different background and status (either students, post-docs or group leaders). In addition, the quality of the speakers and the presented data were remarkably good, and as PhD student, to be exposed to such high level of research it has been extremely stimulating.

In conclusion, my experience in a Keystone meeting has been really positive and I strongly suggest to other PhD students, as me, to participate to this kind of conference. I think that it would be a great opportunity to present their data (for example, with a poster), and get useful input from other researchers. Moreover, Keystone meetings offer a broad view of the chosen topic, alternating molecular/cell biology to clinical studies/applied research. I consider this a really positive aspect that helps, in particular PhD students, to enlarge their knowledge and scientific background.

MY EXPERIENCE AT THE CONFERENCE

Conference on: Metastasis Initiation- mechanistic insights and therapeutic opportunities

Venue: CNIO, Madrid, Spain

Dates: 28-30 September 2015

My PhD thesis deals with the factors regulating differentiation of cancer cells. These factors are commonly dysregulated during cancer metastasis. As the conference was mostly on mechanistic insights into the formation of pre-metastatic niche and interaction of metastatic cells with the stroma, I found it to be a very thought provoking experience. The following, on a personal level, are the highlights of this visit:

1) We had conducted a microarray to understand the role of RIP4 in lung cancer. Multiple genes that came up in my microarray were the subjects of discussion in many of these talks at the conference. Having a broader understanding of these genes, I can now appreciate my results in a different light. For example, after the talk of Prof. Janine Emler on the effect of Lysyl oxidase on Extra cellular matrix remodeling, I would like to see if the effect of RIP4 on lung cancer differentiation is not just cell autonomous but rather due to an effect on the stiffness of the extra cellular matrix.

2) Through my poster, I was able to get a few comments from Prof. Borsig and Prof. Ghajar among others. This gave me an insight into how my work would be reviewed even before I submit it to a journal. As a result, I am now planning a few experiments for my project.

3) I was able to meet many students and post-docs from different institutes all over Europe and North-America. By talking to them I could get a feel for the facilities and work culture prevailing in different labs and institutes. As I will soon be looking for a post-doc, this insight is very useful.

As a whole, this conference helped me to evaluate my work and ask relevant questions to expand the scope of my work. On the social front, I made multiple friends and got a feel of Madrid and what it has to offer. I thank Prof. Etienne Meylan for giving me an opportunity to present my work and the board of SSMCB to support this visit. I would recommend this conference to all those working on cancer metastasis.

JAWAHAR KOPPARAM

To,
Swiss Society for Molecular and Cellular Biosciences (SSMCB)

To start with, I would like to thank SSMCB for accepting my grant application to attend Gordon Research Conference (Cell Contact and Adhesion) at Proctor Academy in Andover, NH, USA.

Previously, I have attended couple of conference in Switzerland but this was my first international conference. I had a great experience both in terms of gaining scientific knowledge (cutting edge non published data was discussed by several scientists) and in terms of establishing new contacts with different labs sharing similar research interests as ours.

In our lab we work on the cell junctions: its development, maintenance and regulation. Also cell junctions play an important role in various cell-signaling events. Most of the speakers and posters presented in the conference directly or indirectly revolved around these topics.

I also got an opportunity to present my latest data in the form of poster. In general it was perceived very well and I received some very good suggestions and ideas, which would certainly help me to improve my data in several ways.

I would again like to thank SSMCB to provide me with such a wonderful opportunity.

Thank you.
Jimit Shah

9th European Congress on Tropical Medicine and International Health

Meeting Report

The 9th European Congress of Tropical Medicine and International Health (ECTMIH) was held in Basel, Switzerland and attended by over 2000 participants from 102 countries. This meeting was a great opportunity for me to gain a better understanding of the global health research landscape. My own research focuses on innovative strategies to block the transmission of the malaria parasite by *Anopheles* mosquitoes. I was given the opportunity to present my research in a session entitled, "Innovations in Public Health Entomology". This presentation was well-attended and initiated much discussion. It was very useful for me to meet and discuss with distinguished scientists in the malaria field including Prof. Marcel Tanner, Pie Muller, Jerry Gileen and Fredros Okumu, amongst others. The meeting had numerous presentations focused on the success of Malaria control programs and the challenges that need to be overcome for eradication. My perception is that despite the recent advances, there is a great need for new technologies to sustain progress and proceed towards elimination, which renders my research highly pertinent.

ESITO 2015- meeting report (Lena van Giesen)

The ESITO (European Symposium for Insect Taste and Olfaction) 2015 was already my second time, participating in this meeting (after 2013). Like the first time, it was an extremely fruitful gathering. Since the meeting is relatively small and very specialized, all the sessions are highly interesting for me, as people are working in the same or closely related fields. The poster sessions are long and very interactive. As presentations are distributed over two days (odd numbers on one day and even numbers another day), everyone can visit most of the posters. Additionally the fact that the meeting is held in a Hotel adds another advantage to make contacts among collaborators all around Europe (and even the US), because people are not distributing after the sessions, but participating in meals and social activities. I feel that this meeting has strengthened my knowledge about recent research and I have embraced my contacts in the field. This was especially helpful as one of my collaborators supported me to get my future Post-Doc position in Boston. These and other contacts are very important for my scientific career especially because I plan to come back to Europe to start my own group in a few years.

Lausanne, 18.09.2015

Report Bonsignore about the RIKEN IMS Summer Program (RISP) 2015

Personally, I found the RIKEN IMS Summer Program (RISP) 2015 a very interesting and well organized program. Lectures for PhDs and Post-docs were from June 12 to June 17, 2015. Here many well known Japanese and foreign professors presented their work, they were really well open to speak about unpublished datas and give advice for our projects. During these five days there were also posters presentation by students. Additionally, the last two afternoons were dedicated to students project presentation. Here, it was really interesting to heard students project and see different manner to work and to see science. Personally, I found different visions of science between Europe, US, China and Japan. The students were well mixed; there were half pure immunologist and half biochemist so that people with one of that background can fit perfectly for this course.

After 5 days of courses for students there was the RIKEN IMS-JSI International Symposium on Immunology 2015, from June 18 to June 19, 2015. Here students could participate. Personally, I found it very interesting although many speakers were the same of previous course.

Taking all into consideration, it was an amazing experience and I came back home with plenty idea for my project. I will advice RIKEN program to every student with at least a well-advanced project due that the level was really high and competitive.

Dear SSCMB board,

I would like to thank you to support my travel and accommodation expenses. Attending an EMBO meeting, it is always a great opportunity for many different aspects, which should help in my future carriers.

Since I am still a PhD student, I have been tried to enrich my knowledge, whenever it is possible, but I haven't attend so many meetings so I don't not have a big parameter to compare with previous events.

Anyway, I would like to highlight that I really had marvellous time over there.

The location was perfect: Mediterranean sea and summery and lovely weather contributed to build up a sociable and relaxed mood along the people.

I met very big personalities, who belong on my field, therefore to associate name of big authors to faces and also interact with them, not only scientifically but also personally. This helped me in terms of thinking about next scientific projects and labs where to work with, but also to establish new connections and collaborations for this time.

Personally speaking, It was an excellent meeting: getting into the bio-networking, listening to different scientific stories, breathing this huge passion about science, knowing new people, as PhD student, young group leaders and established great scientists, making new friends and enjoying the awesome time together. I also received different point of views and comments about my poster, which I will to try to apply to my own project, for enriching it.

Everything rebooted my own passion and dedication about science, which I needed.

With my best regards

Melissa Berto

Report on Keystone Conference (8-13/02/2015, Banff, Alberta, CA)

Recently, the field of cancer immunotherapy is rapidly expanding. The development of new successful therapies requires the interaction between experts in different fields in order to discover innovative approaches that target the tumor cells, the anti-tumor immunity and the surrounding tumor microenvironment, which includes endothelial, epithelial cells, and the stroma. For this purpose, the Keystone Conference of this year (*Tumor Immunology: Multidisciplinary science driving combination therapy*) brought together multidisciplinary scientists from academia, clinic and industry in order to showcase the integration between this new challenging knowledge, which is rapidly translating in clinical applications.

The first outstanding talk was given by Axel Hoos (GlaxoSmithKline, USA) that did an overview on how cancer research evolved during the past years by shifting the main focus from fighting the tumor cells (i.e. with chemotherapy and radiation therapy) to instructing the immune system to fight cancer at different levels (immunotherapy). The latter approach normally has slower effect at the beginning, but as soon as the immune system becomes activated in the correct way then the effects are lasting longer. Different combination therapies with checkpoint inhibitors (mainly anti-CTLA4 and anti-PD1) were described by A. Hoos, and also by many other speakers throughout the conference that showed their effects in both mice and humans. Genomic approaches to cancer vaccines were described by Robert Schreiber (Washington University School of Medicine), that by studying the immunoediting process (process during which the immune system shapes immunogenicity of the tumor) during tumor establishment, tries to identify and clone tumor specific antigens, which can be used to expand antigen specific T cells. These genetically modified T cells can be transferred in the patient that will therefore receive a personalized cancer immunotherapy, specific for the tumor of interest. Ton Schumacher (Netherlands Cancer Institute, Amsterdam) showed the characterization of immune cells found in positive vs. negative sentinel nodes from breast cancer patients. Pia Kuistborg was pointing out how checkpoint inhibitor therapies can affect the tumor-reactive T cell repertoire by having an effect on neo-antigens. Carola Ries (Roche) was showing the promising effect of CSF1R antibody, which targets and modifies the phenotype of monocyte in the tumor microenvironment.

During the conference I had the opportunity to present also my work in a poster format. I received a lot of great inputs and everyone that was coming to discuss the project was showing great interest and enthusiasm and suggested to publish it soon.

As I mentioned before the interaction with both industry and academia people was challenging and stimulating. This allowed me to understand the different ways to do research and also to think about what I seek for my next career step.

Summary of Keystone Symposium on “Autoimmunity and Tolerance”

February 02nd – 08th 2015

Michele Vigolo, PhD student

Department of Biochemistry, UNIL, Lausanne (Switzerland)

The Keystone Symposia on Molecular and Cellular Biology is a nonprofit organization that connects the scientific community with meetings in six different continents every year. In particular I was selected to participate and present my project with a poster to the meeting on “Autoimmunity and Tolerance” that was organized in Keystone (Colorado, US) in the beginning of this month.

The subject of the meeting was developed in four days alternating basic research talks to mechanistic talks on mouse, human and clinical translation. Nowadays it's important to understand the immune regulation in autoimmunity and tolerance to formulate proper therapies for patients with uncontrolled autoimmune diseases. The novel view of autoimmunity presented in this meeting was to consider the presence of autoreactive cells as a deficiency of immunoregulatory cells; in other words the lack of regulatory cells leads to the loss of negative selection of the self-reactive B and T cells that causes autoimmunity.

The overall meeting started with talks regarding the balance of immune response between effector and regulatory cells, a mainly immunologic subject raising examples of broken tolerance to diet antigens and commensal antigens in bowel diseases correlated with the clinical approaches that study many of these disorders. The talks continued the next day with the role of cytokines in tolerance and inflammation in the context of Multiple Sclerosis (MS) and Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE) underlining the importance of a subset of regulatory T cells, called Th17, which are characterized by the secretion of IL-17 that has a role in many pathways, mainly to control homeostasis of immune system.

Although all the previous talks were given by high level speakers and with detailed and didactical presentations, I mostly appreciate the topic of the third day when the role of pathogenic and regulatory B cells was described in the context of autoimmune diseases, because it's closes to the subject of my work.

The project I presented in the last poster session of the conference was entitled “The flap region of BAFF is important not only for the 60-mer oligomerization but also for BAFF signaling” and shows how the survival activity of this cytokine, member of the TNF super family, on peripheral B cells is regulated by its own structure.

For this reason I was following with particular attention the talk of Jennifer Gommerman (University of Toronto, Canada) who presented the role of the TNF family member lymphotoxin in Th17 cell trafficking in the context of neuronal network in multiple sclerosis models.

Another talk of particular interest for me was given by Thomas F. Tedder (Duke University Medical Center, USA) who described a subset of B cells, so called B10 cells, known to have a regulatory role mediated by the secretion of IL-10 in inflammatory conditions. These cells are of particular interest because many treatments in clinical trials to deplete B cells or survival factors for them, are probably removing this subset as well and this event could explain the occurrence of many inflammatory side effects of these treatments.

In conclusion I was very satisfied by the quality and the organization of this meeting where I had the opportunity to be in contact with many new topics and see the scientific approach of all the high level speakers that presented their works.

Lausanne, September 4, 2015

EBRS/WCC Meeting 2015 - Personal impression

The EBRS/WCC Meeting 2015 (XIV European Biological Rhythms Society Congress and IV World Congress of Chronobiology), which features 9 symposia and 5 plenary talks from leading groups all over the world, has provided me with a wide knowledge and advances in the field, from molecular to organismal/behavioural levels. Personally I am focusing on the molecular mechanisms of the circadian clocks and I was happy to learn the latest advances (which are not published yet) that have been made so far. This will be very helpful for me to think about the projects that I want to implement for my postdoctoral training after my graduation in October 2015. I have noticed that the involvement of miRNAs in circadian gene expression has collected interest in the field but so far the physiological functions are not known yet. This can be one of my directions during my postdoctoral training. Moreover, with this meeting I was exposed to more physiological/behavioural and human studies in the field that I do not have a chance in Lausanne. Especially the meeting had a dedicated section for sleep studies, in rodents and human, that I found very useful and interesting since sleep is a process well connected with the circadian systems.

In addition, I was impressed by the presence of pioneered researchers in the field. From them, we have learnt how the circadian field has been evolving, especially in Europe, from the European Pineal Group Study to the European Biological Rhythms Society. The finding that the pineal hormone melatonin is a marker of circadian rhythms and can be used as chronobiotic was essential to drive attention of pineal researchers to switch to a broader, namely, circadian research. I am proud to continue this fruitful line of research.

Moreover, I was also able to contact with a professor with whom I share the same interest of research and who will possibly host me as a postdoctoral fellow in the near future.

In summary, I have profited immensely in this meeting, not only to share my data, but also to plan for my scientific future. I would like to deeply thank the Swiss Society for Molecular and Cellular Biosciences for supporting my attendance to this meeting.

Summary of European Biological Rhythm Society (EBRS) / World Congress of Chronobiology (WCC) 2015, Manchester UK

The study of biological rhythms has become a mainstream discipline in biological sciences in the last 15-20 years. The European Biological Rhythm Society (EBRS) aims to promote chronobiology and chronomedicine. The scientific goal of the EBRS is to study the circadian/seasonal organizations and mechanisms in a vertical approach that integrates molecular, cellular, system-physiological, behavioral and medical aspects. The EBRS was established in Frankfurt in 2005 as successor to the European Pineal and Biological Rhythms Society and the European Pineal Study group founded in Amsterdam in 1978.

The EBRS 2015 conference was organized at Manchester, UK by Prof. Hugh Piggins and other esteemed board members of EBRS. All the days in conference were jam-packed with very interesting talks from speakers across world. Every morning and afternoon session was dedicated to explore interaction of circadian rhythm field with the other fields. The first day had talks about Circannual Clocks, Photic Entrainment, Timekeepers in eye, Modeling circadian rhythm, and the most interesting session Clocks and Metabolism. The rest of conference was composed of some plenary talks, and short communications covering wide variety aspects of chronobiology field such as Clocks and Immunity, Human Clock, Sleep and Metabolism, Clock neurology and Psychiatry, Clocks and internal synchrony etc. These lectures were followed by intermittent refreshing coffee breaks, and delicious lunch breaks. These breaks gave us opportunity to interact with speakers, poster presenters (>120 posters), and other dignitaries in the chronobiology field. Especially, the plenary lecture given by Dr. Steve Kay titled "Time for Change: Chemical Biology Approaches to Circadian Therapeutics." was quite impressive. This lecture has unfolded the application of chronobiology knowledge to therapeutic field.

In summary, the attended EBRS 2015 congress was pretty excellent. It has covered all the content that one should expect from any conference such as organization and management of meeting, choice of topics, recent advancement in the field, scientific content of talks, invited speakers, interactive sessions with the researchers and speakers, outstanding poster session, nice expo of new equipment and devices useful for circadian studies, and good meal. Overall, the EBRS 2015 congress was worth to attend.

- Rohit Chavan

Summary EMBO meeting: “The multidisciplinary era of endocytic mechanics and functions”
Mandelieu-la-Napoule, 27.09.2015-02.10.2015

The EMBO endocytosis meeting takes place every two years and was held this year in Southern France. The meeting started on Sunday with the keynote lecture by Ira Mellman from Genentech. From Monday to Thursday there were talks in the morning from 9-13h and in the evening from 16-19:30. After the dinner there was the poster session starting around 21:30 and ending around midnight. The meeting ended Friday morning.

The program was extraordinary with a lot of renowned speakers in the field giving talks. Every session also had short talks, which were presented by PostDocs and PhD students, giving them an excellent opportunity to present their data in front of an interested and interactive audience. What was great was that people were not only showing published data, but also new results so that we as participants were exposed to the latest research going on in the field. This resulted in very lively discussions after the talks but also at the poster sessions. I especially appreciated the high attendance during the poster sessions, even though these were scheduled as the last event of an intense day. Discussions always continued way beyond the set time of the session and the majority even of the PIs attended the session. This gave the poster presenters the opportunity to interact with them and get important feedback on their research. I got some helpful comments on my experiments and also very positive feedback from experts on the topic, which was great. In general, there was ample time to interact with all the participants at the meeting and people were accessible and open to discussion.

During the meeting I also had the opportunity to discuss with two PIs about the possibility to pursue a PostDoc in their lab. Both discussions were not planned in advance but presented themselves as an opportunity during the meeting.

The organization of the meeting was great and I am very grateful that I was able to attend it. Especially at the end of a thesis, such as is the case for me, this meeting gave me the opportunity to get new input and new ideas or point of views, to be exposed to the top research in my field of interest and also to interact with potential future employers.

Impression of the meeting: PEGS Europe, Lissabon, 4-6 November, 2015

As a postdoctoral fellow, I have already been to several scientific meetings. However, since I started working in the field of protein engineering, I never went to a conference that specifically focuses on this topic. At the PEGS Europe, world-leaders on this topic came together and presented the state-of-the-art of this field, which means that I received a good sense of what is ongoing in the entire field. For me, this has been very helpful for positioning my own research in the broader context of the field.

The conference presented an interesting mix of speakers from academia and speakers from industry. Here, my impression was that the academic speakers were more focussed on designing and testing therapeutic 'concepts', whereas industry speakers spoke more about how lead candidates were selected and how well they performed in actual clinical trials. Together, this provides both insights into early development and clinical reality, with sometimes striking contrasts.

During the poster sessions, I was positively surprised that there was great interest in the work that I have been doing at the University of Zurich and which I presented through my poster. As an academic, I clearly provided an example of 'early work' regarding a innovative novel direction for therapy development, namely addressing 'intracellular targets using proteins'. Also here, the discussion with both researchers from academia and researchers from industry provided different kinds of insights, with academics more interested in concepts and industrial researchers more interested in long-term feasibility. I considered both types of discussions highly valuable. Even though my research is certainly 'early stage', it is certainly worthwhile to think about long-term strategies that might direct it towards actual drugs with therapeutic benefits.

With respect to my impression of the organization, here I can be short: the PEGS conference was very professionally organized, as one also might expect from the 7th conference in a successful series. The conference provided multiple session streams of grouped topics, but also provided ample time for poster viewing. All in all, the meeting has been a positive experience for me, which has not only provided new ideas for future directions in my research, but also clearly showed that there is great interest in what we have already accomplished in Zurich.

ASCB Annual Conference 2015 Report

I attended the ASCB (American Society for Cell Biology) annual conference in San Diego from December 12th to 16th, and this is the most satisfactory conference event that I have ever participated.

Before the conference began, I submitted my abstract to the committee, and my abstract was selected as one of the fourteen "Honor" abstracts for ASCB 2015 (<http://www.ascb.org/public-information-committee-announces-list-of-14-honor-abstracts-for-ascb-2015/>). I presented my research as a Microsymposium talk on Monday December 14th, and also presented my poster on Tuesday December 15th during the conference. My studies were well presented and received wide interest and enthusiasm from the audience. In addition, I enjoyed very much the free discussion part after my presentation, I met people from all over the world asking questions and providing their opinions and suggestions, I believe it will greatly and constructively help my further research.

The ASCB conference is the largest conference event I have ever attended. During the conference, I also participated in the "Grant Writing Seminar" organized by the ASCB committee. I learned a lot of new concepts I have never heard before in terms of scientific grant writing and application, it really opened my eyes and I learned how to strategically think and design scientific research that can run at the front end of the targeted research field when competing with thousands of other competitors. I believe this special seminar will make significantly impact on my professional development in the future.

The poster session of the conference is also wonderful. Almost a thousand posters were presented in the learning center everyday, and the topics were so wide that I feel this is the most efficient opportunity to absorb knowledge from all aspects of science in an interactive and joyful way. I was really impressed by the quality not just the quantity of researches in the US. Generally, I think the life science researches in the US are more courageous and bold in terms of innovation and creativity. I was deeply attracted by some medical as well as basic researches in some universities in the US. Previously I read their papers from the internet, and this time I can directly talk with them and knowing that there are new interesting progress going on. I think the conference makes science more personal and more alive for scientists, and provide precious opportunities for networking.

During the conference there were also symposia, minisymposia, company exhibition, new product release, and round table session with journal editors, PIs, also there were career development session, bioinformatics workshop and bioimaging analysis workshops running through the conference. All of them were really great and tailored to the need of scientists ranging from all status of their career. The problem is a lot of the interesting sessions were running in parallel, it was really important to select the events that are of best interests. I made myself a very tight time schedule, and participated in part of almost all these sessions. Overall, I feel the ASCB conference is really rewarding to me, and I am definitely looking forward to participating next year ASCB annual conference in San Francisco.

GPCR workshop, Hawaii, 1.-5. December 2015

GPCR workshop is a biannual conference organized by a winner of Nobel prize Brian Kobilka. It attracts people working in the GPCR field from all over the world and gives a chance to present and interact with each other in a relaxed environment. It consisted of presentations from the invited speakers in the morning, followed by the poster session and an evening session that allowed everyone to present current research or pose the questions that audience was able to discuss on.

I really liked the conference/workshop since it gave me the opportunity to interact with people in a very relaxed environment. The number of people was limited, so it was really not a problem to interact with everyone present. I had the opportunity to present my poster and had very good discussions with people coming around also getting a lot of useful input for my future research. I managed to get some connections with people that are developing tools that I would be able to use in my research that might help getting more results in the last year of my PhD. I also managed to get the connections with professors where I would like to do the postdoc, which is extremely important for the continuation of my scientific career.