

JAMES RENNIE BEQUEST

REPORT ON EXPEDITION/PROJECT/CONFERENCE

Expedition/Project/ Conference Title:	11th BioMalPar/EVIMalaR Conference and Symposium: "Biology and Pathology of the Malaria Parasite"
Travel Dates:	11 – 14 May 2015
Location:	Heidelberg, Germany
Group member(s):	Seth A. Amanfo (Francisca Mutapi & David R. Cavanagh Groups)
Aims:	Present poster on preliminary data of PhD work on malaria

OUTCOME (not less than 300 words):-

This year's edition of the BioMalPar/EVIMalaR conference on malaria was the 11th edition of this annual conference. The conference was held in Heidelberg, Germany, under the theme 'Biology and Pathology of the Malaria Parasite'. Over 300 researchers and postgraduate students (working in the field of malaria biology and immunology) from around the world attended the three day programme. There were presentations on ground-breaking findings on fundamental malaria research.

The programmes comprised of scientific sessions, keynote talks (given by distinguished malaria researchers), poster previews and poster presentations. The scientific sessions included topics on vaccines and immune avoidance, cellular mechanisms, immunology, var gene diversity and regulations, drug resistance and pathogenesis. Various speakers delivered a 20 minute presentation followed by questions and comments from the audience. Poster sessions were grouped into four clusters of immunology and pathophysiology, parasite molecular and cell biology, vector-parasite interactions, and modelling and systems biology.

I presented a poster on the 'Longitudinal Profiling of Antibody Responses to Multiple *Plasmodium* Species in Daraweesh, on the second day of the conference, for which I received very positive feedbacks. The conference gave me the opportunity to present preliminary findings of my PhD work, as well as learning from others, and the new developments and future directions of malaria research.

My supervisor, Dr. David Cavanagh whom I attended the conference with introduced me to some of his colleagues and this helped me to expand my network of scientific friends having had the opportunity to interact with both established and early career scientists in the field of malaria research. I had the opportunity to meet Belgian and German groups who have similar research interest as our laboratory and have established contact to visit their laboratories in the near future to learn of some of the techniques employed in their experimental designs.

I intend to take part in this conference again next year, by which time I would have had enough data to give an oral presentation.

I am grateful to the James Rennie Bequest for the funds which enabled me to have such a great experience in the historic city of Heidelberg, Germany.