

JAMES RENNIE BEQUEST

REPORT ON EXPEDITION / PROJECT / CONFERENCE

**Expedition/Project/
Conference Title:** ASCB-EMBO CELL BIO MEETING 2023

Travel Dates: 2- 6 December 2023

Location: BOSTON , USA

Group member(s): Prof. Kenneth E Sawin

Aims: Presenting my research through a scientific poster.
Develop Scientific Communication skills.
Building Network and connections in the research field.

Photography consent form attached: Yes
(please refer to your award letter) No

OUTCOME (a minimum of 500 words):-

The ASCB Cell Bio Meet 2023, a joint meeting of the American Society for Cell Biology and the European Molecular Biology Organization, held in Boston, MA from December 2-6, 2023, proved to be a remarkable gathering of leading minds in cell biology. As an attendee, I found the conference to be an invaluable platform for engaging with the latest advancements in the field, presenting my research, and fostering meaningful connections with fellow scientists. The conference schedule was packed with 15-minute presentation talks by speakers, organized into 8-10 broad categories with morning and evening sessions spanning from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm. On the third day of the conference, Dr. Esther Zanin delivered a talk on her recent findings regarding spatially distinct regulatory inputs modulating mitotic-phase GAP activity to locally limit RhoA activity for successful cytokinesis. Her elucidation of the phosphorylatory mechanisms controlling GAPs and GEFs provided valuable insights into protein regulation, which directly enhances my understanding of my own PhD project focusing on the regulation of Cdc42 GEF Scd1 by stress in fission yeast. Additionally, afternoon sessions featured poster presentations, providing opportunities for in-depth discussions and feedback on research projects. One of the highlights of my experience was the engagement I had with esteemed scientists such as Professor Daniel Lew and Professor Kathy Gould during my poster session. Professor Lew, has shown positive feedback regulation of Cdc42 in budding yeast, which I am interested to study in fission yeast. Likewise, Professor Gould and her lab members are interested in the molecular basis of cell division in fission yeast and I have used some of her Phosphoinositide tagged strains for my own PhD Project. Interacting with members from Professor Maitreyi Das' lab, who are also working on similar projects, was exciting and enlightening. Sharing experiences and ideas with them further enriched my understanding of the field. The inclusion of industrial scientists added a unique dimension to the conference. Dr. Jung-Chi Liao's talk on SYNCELL's Microscoop technology, which is an innovative spatial proteomics platform that enables high -content microscopy guided photo-biotinylation was interesting to hear as I do lots of proteomics for my own PhD Project. The conference also addressed broader themes, such as the keynote lecture on "Cell Biologists and Climate Change: What Can Cell Biologists Do to Address Climate-scale Problems?" This session underscored the importance of considering the broader impact of cell biology research on global issues. Moreover, the conference provided valuable insights into career opportunities in life sciences consulting and venture capital through dedicated sessions, offering attendees a glimpse into alternative career paths within the field. Networking

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opportunities, such as Nikon Night with the Penguins at the Aquarium in Boston, facilitated meaningful interactions and connections with fellow attendees in a relaxed setting. This conference also provided me with the opportunity to spend time with Tim Mitchison and Christine M. Field. It was a great honor and an exciting experience to hear about their scientific journeys over a meal, and their insightful comments during my poster session were truly valuable, prompting me to consider early mechanisms in stress pathways. Finally, I am grateful for the support I received from the James Rennie Bequest, which enabled my attendance at this enriching conference. Overall, the ASCB Cell Bio Meet 2023 proved to be an immensely rewarding experience, fostering collaboration, knowledge exchange, and personal growth within the vibrant community of cell biologists.