**REPORT ON EXPEDITION / PROJECT / CONFERENCE**

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| **Expedition/Project/ Conference Title:** | APS March meeting |
| **Travel Dates:** | 02-03-19, 12-03-19 |
| **Location:** | Boston, US |
| **Group member(s):** | Leonardo Mancini |
| **Aims:** | - Present my work in a talk; - Network with other researchers; |
|  | - Attend talks from a wide range of topics. |
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| **OUTCOME (a minimum of 300 words):-** | |

The APS March meeting in Boston this year brought together more than 12000 scientists and journalists and covered many topics in Physics. It was organised by the American Physical Society, a century old society and the second largest in Physics, that also publishes 13 international research journals, perhaps the best known of which is Physical Review Letters.

Thanks to the contribution of the Rennie Bequest I was able to travel to the conference and give a talk in the section: “Controlling cells with electric fields”, with the title: “*Escherichia coli*'s physiology can turn membrane voltage dyes into actuators”. The conference was a great occasion to obtain some preliminary feedback and sample the interest of the community towards our recent work on the characterization of Nernstian dyes, which are molecules capable of reporting membrane voltage, an important phenomenon in cell physiology. Our results are currently in revision in a scientific journal.

I also had the chance to listen to a number of interesting presentations and network with students working on topics connected to mine and with potential postdoc supervisors. In particular, I was invited to two interviews that I attended immediately after the conference.

Because I had never been to the US before, during my visit I also had the chance to get an idea of a country and a culture in which I could potentially work in the future. Overall this was an important experience, enriching both under a personal and a scientific point of view.

This was the third time the Rennie Bequest provided funds for my travels to conferences. Because my scholarship did not provide travel money, this help was fundamental for my scientific growth as I learnt to present my work to a large audience, interact with other scientists in a professional context and visit other countries and academic hubs.

As I am finishing my degree, this was also the last time I could rely on the travel funds. I would like to take the chance to thank the committee and all the people involved in the establishment of the fund for the help provided to students that would have otherwise missed important development opportunities.