

JAMES RENNIE BEQUEST

REPORT ON EXPEDITION/PROJECT/CONFERENCE

**Expedition/Project/
Conference Title:**

Molecular Approaches to Malaria (MAM) 2016

Travel Dates:

18.02.16 – 03.03.16

Location:

Lorne, Victoria, Australia

Group member(s):

Kathryn Milne

Aims:

To present my research to date, in poster format

To discuss my project methods and results in a highly relevant setting and learn from experts in the field, as well as other young researchers

To network with prospective post-doctoral supervisors

OUTCOME (not less than 300 words):-

Being awarded the James Rennie Bequest Travel Award has greatly assisted in my being able to attend the fifth Molecular Approaches to Malaria conference held in Lorne, Australia (2016). Given the location of this conference and thus the expense of flights, I would have otherwise been unable to attend. The topics covered at MAM 2016 (my first international conference) were highly relevant to my PhD project and brought together, in one place, the key leaders in the field of malaria research.

Over the 5-day conference, invited speaker sessions were split to cover a wide range of important topics such as drug resistance, Immunity, Vaccines and Drug discovery and development. Each of the invited speakers was a leader in their field and provided excellent and concise updates on their research. I feel I have greatly benefitted from hearing of such work, and it has helped me to see where my research fits in to the bigger picture.

As well as the opportunity to hear from “big names” in the field, there were also sessions allocated for short-talks and poster presentations from young researchers in the early stages of their careers. I had the opportunity to present my results to date in the form of a poster entitled “Early Host-Parasite Interactions in Controlled Human Malaria infection”. During my poster session, I received some great feedback and insightful comments as to how I can now build on my project plans. Furthermore, had the chance to interact and talk one-on-one with Prof James McCarthy and Prof Peter Crompton, both with whom I am greatly interested in working with upon completion of my PhD.

Additionally, I attended an “Early Career Researchers meeting” which was aimed at bringing together young graduate students, post-doctoral researchers and other junior scientists, to encourage interaction and exchange of ideas under the guidance of experienced researchers in the field. This was something I very much enjoyed being a part of.

Overall, I very much enjoyed MAM 2016. It was an extremely motivating experience having received some fantastic input and encouragement from fellow researchers. I feel

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that I made many useful contacts for my current project, as well as prospective post-doctoral supervisors, which will undoubtedly aid me in my future career.

Upon returning to my lab here at the university of Edinburgh, I plan to provide in depth feedback to the rest of my lab team, on the most up-to-date research on-going in the field. I am extremely grateful to the James Rennie Bequest for the financial support as it has allowed me to attend this invaluable conference in Australia.