

GSCN Travel Awards: Participation Report

Participant: Alec Foerster, Institute for Physiology, University Hospital Aachen

Venue: The Queen Elizabeth II Centre, Europhysiology 2018

Place and Date: London (UK), September 14 – 16 September

Dear GSCN Travel Award committee,

Thank you again for your generous support of my travel to the Europhysiology convention in September. In regard of scale and reach it was one of the biggest events in Physiology and was organized by the Scandinavian, the British and the German Society of Physiology held in the QEC, right next to Westminster Abbey. The variety of topics and formats was remarkable and although I really enjoyed the format of poster- or regular talks, the live discussion section between two experts was certainly a highlight and maybe something to be implemented at GSCN meetings. The discussion was on the astrocyte-to-neuron glucose transport shuttle, a current controversy. The experts (Felipe Barros, Santiago de Chile, and Lasse Bak, Copenhagen) took rounds where they debated critical points of their hypothesis back and forth. The discussion was on a high level but always kept understandable for the audience and held with good humor and respect. Throughout the debate we were asked to give our opinion on the topic via an app and updated on its development in the end.

Most of the time there were many talks held at the same time, and topics would often be hard to choose, as the options were intriguing. There were many topics from the field of neurophysiology and channel-biophysiology. Examples that quickly come to mind is Professor Siemens talk on TRP receptor function in thermoregulation or Philipp Rühl's Poster on genetically encoded fluorescent voltage indicators from the group of Stefan Heineman in Jena. Many posters were accompanied by bright talkative researchers and I learned a lot talking about our career paths and plans as well as our research, which often found ground for surprising overlap and advice. My poster was only allowed to be up for one afternoon, but the stem cell derived pain model was well received and I faced many questions and well-intended criticism. One professor from Austria in particular spend a lot of his time and gave me a valuable review of my work and what it needed for a satisfying publication.

The talks, some of outstanding quality from well-established researchers were nothing short of inspirational. I had a blast of a time in London. I got to know my lab and fellow researchers better and I grew as a scientist. I proudly presented my stem cell based work and I will keep these memories dear.

Thank you very much.

Many greetings,

Alec Foerster