

ESF RESEARCH CONFERENCES

Rapporteur Report

Partnership:	ESF-JSPS Frontier Science Conference for Young Researchers
Conference Title:	Cutting Edge Immunology and its Clinical Application
Dates:	1-6 March 2011
Chair:	Prof. Åke Lernmark - Department of Clinical Sciences, Lund University and CRC, Lund, SE Prof. Kazuo Sugamura - President of Miyagi Cancer Center Research Institute, JP
Rapporteur:	Dr. Jona Freysdottir, Landspítali University Hospital, IS

General Comments

Any general comments you might have concerning the conference, your role, the scientific area covered by this conference, etc.

This was the first Research Conference I have attended. The conference was exceptionally well organized with Ms Alessandra Piccolotto doing fantastic job. I was provided with overheads from the ESF in order to prepare my presentation which was very helpful. I prepared a short presentation about ESF which I gave at the beginning of the conference and it was very well received.

Quality of Scientific Programme, Presentations and Discussion

Comments on the balance and scope of the scientific programme, the scientific quality of the presentations and discussions.

As being an immunologist myself, I had a great interest in the scientific programme. The speakers were a mixture of more experienced researchers and professors on one hand and less experienced students and young researchers on the other hand. The quality of the presentations was very good, also from the younger generation, and it was pleasant to observe how all the scientists participated in discussions, regardless of age.

Informal Networking and Exchange; Atmosphere

Was the schedule and the atmosphere conducive to an easy exchange of information? Was there time and space for an informal discussion? Were younger researchers integrated?

There was ample opportunity for informal discussion during breaks. I noticed quite a lot of informal (and maybe even more formal) discussions going on, which is, apart from the science programme, very important during scientific meetings.

Balance of Participants

Was there an appropriate balance between young and senior participants? Was a balance of national groups and researchers from different (sub)fields achieved?

In my opinion there was a good mix of both young and senior participants. In addition, there was a good balance between European and Japanese participants. It was most intriguing to notice how eager the participants were to mix during the breaks and how, at the end, many cheerful social groups had emerged.

Outlook and Future Developments

Will new collaborations emerge from this conference? (How) could the conference outcomes be utilized further? Are there suitable (ESF) programmes or instruments to further the work of the conference?

In the view of how often participants sat down with notebooks and had serious discussions during breaks, new collaborations are very likely to have been formed during the conference.

Follow-up

What immediate and long term follow-up would benefit collaborations and dialogues that may have begun at the conference?

Most of the follow up will most likely be dealt with on individual bases and hopefully some potential collaboration will be achieved.

Organisation and Infrastructure

Were venue, catering and accommodation appropriate for this conference? Were participants satisfied with the on-site administration and support?

The venue, catering and accommodation were very good and the participants were satisfied. Being isolated in the countryside had the advantage that no one was tempted to sneak off and probably increased the overall attendance to the meeting.

Summary & Overall Assessment

Was the conference successful; were its aims achieved?

The conference was a huge success. It was scientifically very interesting, and the participants were eager and enthusiastic in discussions and informal talks after the sessions. In addition, the social atmosphere was very relaxed and led to further informal discussions and networking.

About ESF Research Conferences

The Scheme

This conference is part of the European Science Foundation's (ESF) Research Conferences Scheme. The Scheme aims to promote scientific excellence and frontier level research throughout Europe and the rest of the world. Conferences aim to provide leading scientists and other participants, including young researchers, with a platform to present their work, to discuss the most recent developments in their fields of research and to network.

Conference Format

The core activities should be based on lectures by invited speakers, who are leaders in their respective fields, followed by extensive discussion periods. An informal exchange of ideas, both inside and outside the lecture room, should be encouraged, and the number of sessions in the daily timetable should be limited in order to allow sufficient time for interaction between the participants. Time should be reserved for a 'Forward Look Plenary Discussion' about future developments in the field.

Participants can take all their meals together to encourage further contact and networking, which can be particularly beneficial to younger researchers who may be less outspoken in the formal lecture room setting. In order to gain optimum benefit from the conference, both the speakers and the participants are asked to stay for the whole duration.

Division of Tasks

The Conference Chair is responsible for ensuring the quality of the scientific programme through the selection and invitation of speakers, and through the selection of participants.

The ESF Conferences Unit is responsible for managing all the logistical aspects of the conference organisation, including the provision of an on-site secretariat.

Further information: www.esf.org/conferences