

Aspiring Meeting of Young Researchers in Kuala Lumpur

We were extremely honoured to receive IUBMB–FAOBMB Young Scientist Program (YSP) Travel fellowships to attend the YSP and the 27th FAOBMB and 44th MSBMB Conference in August in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The YSP was hosted by the impressive Taylor's University at its leafy Lakeside Campus, on the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur. The YSP event was a huge success that instigated collaborative networks among the 36 early career scientists from five different regions including Asia, Oceania, America, Africa and Europe, of which female attendees made up more than 50% of the participants. Australia was well represented in this year's program, including three YSP awardees and one student observer. In addition, a number of participants, although not directly representing Australia, have had PhD/postdoc training in Australia or have collaborated extensively with Australian universities.



From left: Nan Hao (University of Adelaide), Kai Dun Tang (Queensland University of Technology), Sushma Anand (Monash University), Paul Gleeson (University of Melbourne) and Crystall Swarbrick (Duke-NUS Medical School Singapore and Griffith University).

The organising committee, led by Adeline Chia Yoke Yin of Taylor's University, put up an excellent program and arranged a warm welcome for all the YSP participants. The event kicked off with two invited lectures. Paul Gleeson from the University of Melbourne shared his research on the role of Golgi apparatus as a cell sensor and Carmay Lim from the Institute of Biomedical Science, Academia Sinica, Taiwan, discussed the importance of metal ions in brain signalling. The YSP program continued with two days of scientific sessions where participants gave oral and poster presentations to share ground-breaking research in their respective fields. The topics covered in the YSP were extremely broad, ranging from proteomics, molecular biology, plant biochemistry and structural biology, to cancer biology and immunology. The oral presentations were divided into five sessions, providing an excellent opportunity for all YSP participants to showcase their research and to learn about each of the projects in detail. The oral



YSP awardees and organising committee.

sessions were very interactive as the chairs allowed the participants to ask lots of questions. Day 1's session also included a half-day tour to the Malaysia Genome Institute (MGI), a non-profit organisation that provides the nation with core research infrastructure. The visit to MGI was a thrilling experience, where we got the chance to see the state-of-the-art DNA sequencers and the cutting-edge protein characterisation equipment suite, including high-end mass spectrometry, NMR and X-ray crystallography facilities. The laboratory visit ended with a tour to the institute's on-site stingless bee farm, where we all got to taste some fresh sour honey.

In addition to science, we enjoyed the delicious food throughout the YSP event. Spending time with YSP participants during our stay in the SAMA Living guesthouse helped us to build a close friendship that will be invaluable for our career development.

The last day of the YSP event was a social program. We went on a Kuala Lumpur city tour which gave us a taste of Malaysia's diverse and inclusive culture. We visited the famous Batu Caves and Petronas Towers. There was a charming Malaysian cultural dance during a delightful lunch. We had discussions about our science, career paths, future collaborations and on visiting each other's country. We feel very proud and fortunate to have been a part of such an inspiring event. Thank you to the ASBMB, FAOBMB and the YSP organisers for giving us the opportunity to travel to Kuala Lumpur for the YSP and the FAOBMB Conference.

**Sushma Anand, Monash University
and Nan Hao, University of Adelaide**



*YSP participants
in front of the
Petronas Towers,
Kuala Lumpur.*