

Report for SRF Travel Grant – Selene Jarrett

Attending the 2016 International Embryo Transfer's Society's (IETS) Annual Meeting in Louisville, Kentucky was of great value to me and my research project. My background knowledge in embryology was solidified by attending talks from venerable scientists in the field from all over the world. A talk that was of particular interest to me was given by a student from Utrecht University on the benefits of secretions from the first eight hours of *in vitro* maturation (IVM) of cumulus-oocyte-complexes has on developmental competence. Her efficient experimental design has also influenced me on how I might plan my own project.

Jeremy Thompson of the University of Adelaide gave an inspiring talk on measuring embryo metabolism to predict embryo quality. His talk described how he used combined technology from different scientific disciplines such as chemistry and physics to measure important metabolites during embryo culture. It gave real insight into the direction future research is heading.

A panel discussion on practical aspects of handling *in vitro* produced embryos and semen for *in vitro* fertilisation (IVF) gave a real-world perspective on the research. The panel included representatives from Ovatech, White Oak Vet Clinic, Boviteq and Transova, and the discussions between them and the audience were very engaging.

However, the most useful part of the conference for me were the networking events organised by IETS student body, the Morulas. During the Morulas and Mentors Lunch I met Dr Rebecca Krisher and Dr Gabriela Mastomonico who had several pieces of advice regarding my work with porcine IVM and IVF, which I had faced many difficulties with in my own project. Additionally, the Morulas Career Luncheon talked through the directions people had taken, both academic and non-academic, after their PhDs and discussed the options available to students in the field.