**SRF Travel Grant Report,**

**Dr Fiona Cousins, Hudson Institute of Medical Research**

**Attending 51st Annual Meeting of Society for the Study of Reproduction, New Orleans, USA, 10-13th July 2018.**

Thank you to the SRF for their generous support for my attendance at the 51st annual SSR conference at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside. The theme of this year’s conference was “Pathways to Discovery: Development and Longevity”. The programme committee, chaired by Professor Moira O’Bryan and Associate Professor Bo R Rueda, delivered an exciting programme of symposia, lightning talks and informative poster sessions.

As an endometrial biologist with a keen interest in endometrial pathologies such as endometriosis it was encouraging to see a whole concurrent session on endometriosis, “Understanding the Development of Endometriosis”, and a number of additional posters. This gave me a great opportunity to network with other endometriosis researchers from around the world and to share ideas on how to advance our current research. Of note, the 2 invited speakers for this session, Dr Yingqun Yang (Yale University) and Dr Erin Greaves (Edinburgh University) gave great talks and shared some preliminary data.

I was fortunate to be selected to give an oral presentation during the concurrent session “Signals for Uterine Receptivity” where I spoke alongside Dr Greg Burns (University of Missouri) and Dr Shannon Whirledge (Yale School of Medicine). I received some great feedback and insightful questions on my data on my current project.

SSR has an amazing trainee-mentorship programme from which I have benefitted greatly over the last 3 years. This year at the trainee-mentor luncheon I spoke with Dr Brad Winn from Ferring Pharmaceuticals about his work as a medical science liaison in infertility.

This year I also took up the opportunity to become an SSR volunteer, where I was able to meet fellow early career researchers and develop new connections in the SSR community. SSR delivers not only on the scientific content, but in creating an environment that is friendly and sociable which allows younger scientists to make connections which will help them develop their careers in years to come.

Thank you again to SRF for their support for my attendance, I feel very fortunate to have attended SSR this year.