

Thanks to a travel grant from the Society for Reproduction and Fertility, I could attend the 4th Annual Neuroscience R&D Technologies Conference on 4th - 5th October 2018, in Munich, Germany. I was invited to talk and present my research on "Development of a 3D human iPSC-derived neural culture system to study some early onset Alzheimer's disease mechanisms", among other senior academics and industry leaders. This was a great opportunity to highlight the work we have been doing in the last 3 years in Southampton on setting up a system to model some pathology aspects using induced pluripotent stem cells-derived neural cultures. Other presentations were on gene editing, biomarkers, therapeutic targets, brain-on-chip technology, induced pluripotent stem cells-derived models, nanotechnology, all focused on neurodevelopmental and neurodegenerative diseases. A great collection of experts with broad experience with the same focus, an excellent networking opportunity! I particularly enjoyed the presentation from Prof Richard Wade-Martins Professor of Molecular Neuroscience in the University of Oxford, UK, who talked about the hundreds of induced pluripotent stem cells derived from patients and healthy volunteers, available for Parkinson research particularly. Another of my highlight was the talk from John Isaac, Senior Director, Neuroscience External Innovation, at Johnson & Johnson London Innovation Centre, UK, who gave an interesting overview of the neuroscience research, its challenges and outcomes. One fact I will remember is that academics are at the origin of not less than 17% of the new medicines in the EU (2010-12)! This conference was also great to catch up with people I previously met at other conferences and to follow up the advances on their work in related areas.

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