

Society for Reproduction and Fertility Travel Grant 2018

Recipient: Miss Natasha Walker

Position: PhD student at the University of Aberdeen

Conference: International Federation of Placenta Associations, 21st-24th September 2018, Tokyo Japan

I would like to extend a thank you to the SRF committee for allowing me this great opportunity to travel to Tokyo, Japan for an international placental conference (IFPA2018). This meeting is very relevant to my PhD project looking into maternal lifestyle choices on expression of placental molecular transporters. The annual meeting brings together both early career researchers and eminent researchers in the field for an exciting scientific program. I presented a poster on my latest data on how maternal BMI can alter expression of vital placental uptake transporters of nutrients, hormones and neurotransmitters. There was significant interest in my work due to the uniqueness of our human cohort. Subsequently, many people asked questions about my research which has led to new ideas and useful tips for experiments for future manuscripts.

There were too many interesting talks to list but “The metabolic components of serotonin synthesizing pathway is expressed across gestation and are altered in human fetal growth restriction” was the highlight as the data complemented some of my results. I also had the opportunity to speak with this presenter and we are currently in discussion for a collaboration on follow-up experiments. The symposium “DOHaD and the Placenta” was also very inspiring and relevant to my thesis.

This was a very productive meeting as I have made many contacts; along with the chance to explore Tokyo which is an experience I will never forget. Thank you again to SRF for enabling this opportunity.

Natasha Walker
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