

SRF Travel Grant Report

Recipient: Hon Yeung (Dexter) Chan

Position/Institution: 4th year PhD student, Robinson Research Institute & University of Adelaide, Australia

Conference: 14th World Congress of the International Society for Immunology of Reproduction (ISIR)

Date/Location of Conference: 13th-16th November 2019 / Nara, Japan

First of all, I would like to thank SRF for supporting my travel to ISIR in Japan. This conference brought together many specialists in the field of reproductive immunology. As it is a niche area of scientific research, being able to attend this conference was a great opportunity for me to meet other reproductive immunologists and to expand my knowledge in the field with recent research findings.

The conference had various scientific sessions covering different aspects of reproductive immunology and I was especially fascinated by talks about the influence of the immune system on endometriosis as it is a topic which I am not overly familiar with.

Furthermore, I presented a poster that highlighted part of my PhD study titled 'Maternal TLR4 impacts the female immune response at conception and contributes to normal pregnancy outcomes in the mouse'. This study highlighted that TLR4 is required to regulate gene expression in the female endometrium after insemination, potentially induced by sperm binding, which then influences subsequent pregnancy progression. I had a few discussions with other researchers in the field during the poster session and was glad they were all surprised that our data suggested sperm may play a bigger role in altering the physiology of the female reproductive tract than previously thought.

Overall, I was very pleased to have attended this conference as knowing other scientists are interested in my research gave me the motivation to complete my PhD thesis. Thus, I would love to thank SRF again for offering me the travel grant to make this happen.