



## ISEH 2020 Virtual Scientific Meeting - Final Thoughts



- September 25, 2020



We survived our first virtual ISEH meeting - our first, and hopefully our last! I'm sure it is safe to say that everyone missed the comradery and personal experience that is typical in an ISEH meeting, but as far as virtual meetings go, this one was as close as we could come to re-creating the real thing. Now that the ISEH 2020 Virtual Scientific Meeting has concluded, we thought it would be a good time to reflect on the overall experience.

To start off, we'd like to share with you a breakdown of a few features and demographics from the meeting:

### Registration

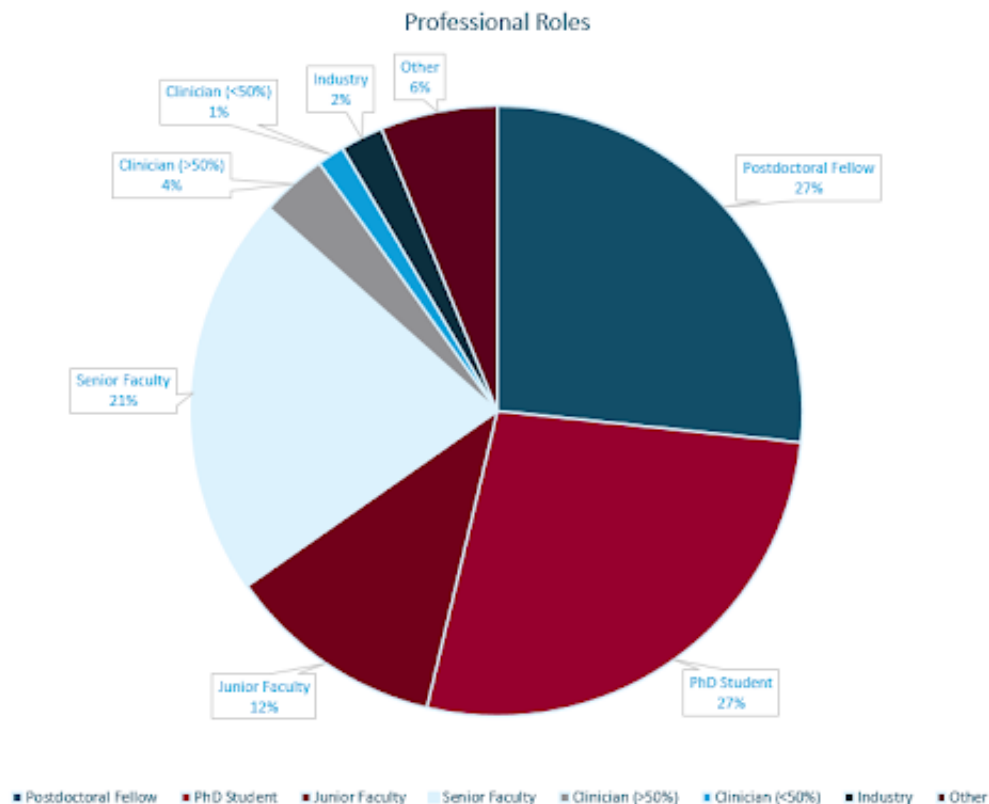
- There were 527 registered participants in the virtual meeting. This is including speakers, exhibitors, sponsors and paid attendees.
- Our attendees logged in from all over the world with 30% from Europe/Middle East/Africa, 61% from the Americas, and 9% from Asia/Pacific Rim. These attendees represented 28 different countries!

### Engagement

- Over the course of the live meeting we had:
  - 654 private messages sent among attendees
  - 2,044 public conversations (chats)
- ISEH 2020 also featured a handful of networking events with 385 overall attendees checked-in.

## Demographics

- 38% of our attendees identified as first-time attendees of an ISEH Annual Meeting.
- 56% of our attendees identified as female, 40% as male, and 4% preferred not to answer.
- More than 50% of our attendees were trainees (PhD Students and Postdoctoral Fellows). See a complete breakdown of professional roles represented below:



We asked a few ISEH Annual Meeting veterans their thoughts on some of the aspects of this year's virtual format.

## Overall Format

Attending every single session may have been brutal, but the format of a 3-day meeting (19-21 Aug) – with early morning and late night (US time) – worked well to integrate as many time zones as possible and accommodate most speakers. Pre-recording the talks helped work out all the connectivity issues usually associated with zoom type meetings, and the live portions worked without any major glitches. Some attendees had trouble getting the audio at first, but that was usually solved by refreshing the browser. The

chats were lively for the live sessions, both poster and other, and we often didn't get to answer all of the questions in each session.

## Extended Q&A Sessions

Each scientific session was followed by an extended Q&A session where attendees could ask their questions directly to our speakers. These sessions were filled with lively scientific discussions, and also allowed us to build new bridges and to catch up with colleagues that are abroad. It was a great addition to the scientific program and gave place to some much needed networking time. All extended Q&A sessions were extremely popular and filled up very quickly, even before the virtual meeting began. Should we host virtual meetings again in the future, we will increase the size the platform allows. In addition, we would recommend that you book these sessions as soon as possible.

## Social + Networking Sessions

One of the biggest surprises is how much people liked the social sessions. We never thought we could recreate that ISEH bonding feel, but chairs were instrumental in making these sessions memorable.

1. *Cocktail Parties*: Special guest cocktail artists/hematologists David Traver, Kellie Machlus, Aaron Vinny, Patricia Ernst, and others featured the submitted recipes of ISEH members as they discussed issues pertinent to the society, including thoughts about diversity and inclusion efforts that the society has. We never really crowned a winner, but there were some excellent recipes! These recipes are still available on the meeting platform as a downloadable PDF.
2. *Things You Keep Alive*: Len Zon and Mick Milsom led this networking session in which attendees were encouraged to show their families, roommates, pets, and plants they started to grow during COVID-19 lockdowns and other things in their zoom fields. They did a great job reaching out to attendees to introduce themselves so we all met new people!
3. *ISEH Dance Party*: Teresa Bowman, Esther Obeng, Katherine King, Kira Gritsman and Heather O'Leary were in charge of the first virtual ISEH Dance Party. They did a great job interacting with attendees in virtual social environments. They made us dance to some classic (and sometimes cheesy) music, and everyone joined in to the beats. We also travelled back in time by watching clips of past years' ISEH dance parties. It was very refreshing to chat and dance with people outside our social bubbles.
4. *New Investigator Career Panel*: The virtual format allowed us to hear from a range of scientists about careers outside of academia from around the globe. These included scientists working at biotech companies (Jessica Morison from CRISPR Therapeutics, Ilya Shestopalov from Bluebird Bio, Amanda Fentiman from STEMCELL Technologies) and in philanthropy (Sofie Singbrant Söderberg from Novo Nordisk Foundation), and from editors of major journals (Sheila Chari from Cell Stem Cell, Daniel Klimmeck from EMBO, Teo Pulvirenti from JEM). It was very helpful for trainees to see what career paths are available outside of academia, and how both sides can interact with one another. A common theme in all areas was the importance of making the most of

your network and asking for advice. New doors will most likely be opened by people from your network, so it is important to keep in touch with past colleagues and mentors, and your friends within the ISEH community!

5. *New Investigator Tech Session*: This year's New Investigator Tech Session was focused on Multomics and featured presentations and Q&A with Ryan Corces (Gladstone Institute), Balyn Zaro (UCSF), and Alba Rodriguez-Meira (University of Oxford), leading experts in ATAC-seq, proteomics, and TARGET-seq, respectively. Besides highlighting the key technical details of these technologies, a takeaway of the session was to make sure that you pick the right technology to answer your scientific question. And in case you missed it, the presentations and Q&A are still available on the ISEH 2020 virtual meeting website!

## **ISEH 2020 Award Sessions**

The anchor of the ISEH meeting, this year's award winners did not disappoint! The meeting opened with the venerable Dr. Harvey Lodish, Professor of Biology at the Whitehead Institute, delivering the keynote address as the Donald Metcalf Award recipient. After a kick-off by ISEH President Emmanuelle Passegue, Dr. Lodish illuminated just a tip of both the past and future of his massive contribution to the field of erythropoiesis and progenitor biology. The next morning of the meeting kicked off with Dr. Jennifer Trowbridge delivering an inspiring talk as the first recipient of the new Janet Rowley award for early career faculty. Dr. Trowbridge delivered a beautiful introduction to the new award, describing Dr. Rowley's seminal discoveries and honors. Her keynote talk certainly did Dr. Rowley justice: Dr. Trowbridge expounded on the inspirational quote from Dr. Rowley, "take risks", and described her path to understanding aging hematopoiesis and malignant transformation. Her perspectives on success as a junior faculty member were invaluable. Finally, rounding out the meeting was Dr. Mark Dawson, winner of the Till & McCullough award. Dr. Dawson gave an outstanding talk on the cancer epigenome. He laid out a beautiful history built on the work of other ISEH members, and educated the audience on the broad perspective on the future of therapeutic discovery.

## **Poster Sessions**

The virtual meeting also included 139 posters and 7 featured poster discussions. In the featured poster discussions, 56 scientists at all career stages (students, postdocs and principal investigators) presented a concise overview of their research in groups of 8 in various themes including HSC biology, hematopoietic malignancies, the hematopoietic niche, mechanisms of development/differentiation and megakaryocyte/erythrocyte biology. These sessions were very interactive and helped to simulate the casual poster session feel. It was also possible to initiate a scientific discussion with all poster presenters through the dedicated "Discussion forum" on the E-poster library platform. All posters are available for viewing on the ISEH E-poster library platform until 17 November 2020.

Meeting attendees were extremely active on social media both during and following the Virtual Meeting. Make sure you follow @ISEHsociety on Twitter to be part of the discussion! We've also put together a small selection of tweets made about the ISEH meeting:

*@ISEHSociety has set a great example of doing socially distanced yet phenomenally interactive conference this year. I enjoyed every bit of it be it lectures, Q&A sessions and social events. Everything was inspiring as an aspiring leukemia researcher! #ISEH2020*

-Rajni Kumari

*Thanks for all the hard work, my people (and I) really enjoyed the meeting. I'm still not quite sure exactly how you managed it for a virtual meeting, but you somehow managed to carry over the spirit of ISEH into this format which made it stand out as special compared to all the other online seminar series/meetings I have seen since lockdown. Maybe the comments about this format helping with international outreach are onto something. Maybe some sessions could be hybrid in the future?*

-Mick Milsom

*...managed to pull off a truly exceptional meeting. I really did not anticipate a virtual meeting to have the quality of connection and interaction that ISEH had, and it was really great. You motivated people to get involved (me) and I really appreciate the opportunity. It was a great experience! Thank you and let me know how I can help in the future!!*

-Kate MacNamara

*Fabulous experience and maybe a turning point for ISEH to embrace its international reach and trainee emphasis in new ways going forward. Best to all.*

-Connie Eaves

*Overall, the meeting was an inspiring showing of science and community and I look forward to many more future ISEH meetings. I hope we can eventually connect about DEI efforts within ISEH for the future to potentially broaden the reach of ISEH as a society. I expect ISEH will continue to develop mechanisms to support scientists from diverse backgrounds in their hematological endeavors and look forward to being a part of this community as it grows.*

-Tina Termini

*Please accept my sincere congratulations on and express my sincerest gratitude for such a fabulous meeting. We can easily imagine that you had lots of difficulties to transfer the meeting toward virtual format. All attendees and I definitely appreciate much for all of your time and effort. It is also true that we are missing scientific interactions and face-to-face chatting among friends. I hope that COVID-19 situation would get resolved shortly and we would enjoy ISEH in New York 'in person' in 2021. Congrats again, and you should now be starting to celebrate the successful ISEH meeting!*





We would also like to extend a huge THANK YOU to everyone who participated in making this meeting such a success. From organizing committees to speakers and presenters, all the way to our attendees, exhibitors and supporters, we could not have done this without you. A reminder that meeting materials will be available to access on the platforms through **17 November 2020**. We hope you take advantage of the opportunity to continue networking with your colleagues, and look forward to seeing you in **New York the 27-29 August 2021!**

*Authored by members of the ISEH New Investigators Committee, Publications Committee, and Executive Committee.*



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- *March 11, 2025*

On behalf of the Awards Committee, ISEH would like to congratulate the recipients of the 2025 ISEH Society Awards which will be presented at the ISEH 54th Annual Scientific Meeting . Donald Metcalf Award Winner - Constanze Bonifer The recipient of the 2025 Donald Metcalf Award is Dr. Constanze ...

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### Message from the President: 2021 Society Updates

- *March 25, 2021*

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- *November 14, 2024*

Each month, Simply Blood spotlights a lab contributing to the fields of hematology, immunology, stem cell research, cell and gene therapies, and more. Get to know groups doing cutting edge research from around the world! This month, we are featuring the Vanuytsel Lab which is based out of the Center for ...

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