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Building the Hematology Community



ISEH 2021 Annual Scientific Meeting - Final Thoughts



- September 24, 2021



Before writing the ISEH 2021 Virtual Scientific Meeting recap, we had a quick read-through of last year's summary. One year ago, we were hoping that our first virtual ISEH meeting would also be our last. We couldn't wait to see each other again in person, and this is still the case. We are now hopeful that the ISEH 2021 Virtual Scientific Meeting will be our last fully virtual meeting. Travel is becoming more realistic with increasing COVID vaccination rates, so we are already looking forward to meeting in-person in Edinburgh in 2022.

One major advancement since last year: we have become experts at meeting virtually. Thanks to the hard work and contributions of many people, we had a fantastic Virtual Meeting for ISEH 2021! The science was ground-breaking, the speakers were excellent, the networking events were fun, and the educational sessions were, well, extremely educational. Here is a recap of what happened at the ISEH 50th Annual Scientific Meeting.

Registration

Firstly, let's start with the registration demographic details of the meeting. There were 543 participants at the ISEH 50th Annual Scientific Meeting. This number includes invited speakers, exhibitors, sponsors and paid attendees. Participants came from all over the world with 32% from Europe/Middle East/Africa, 54% from the Americas and 14% from the Asia/Pacific Rim. A total of 27 countries were represented.

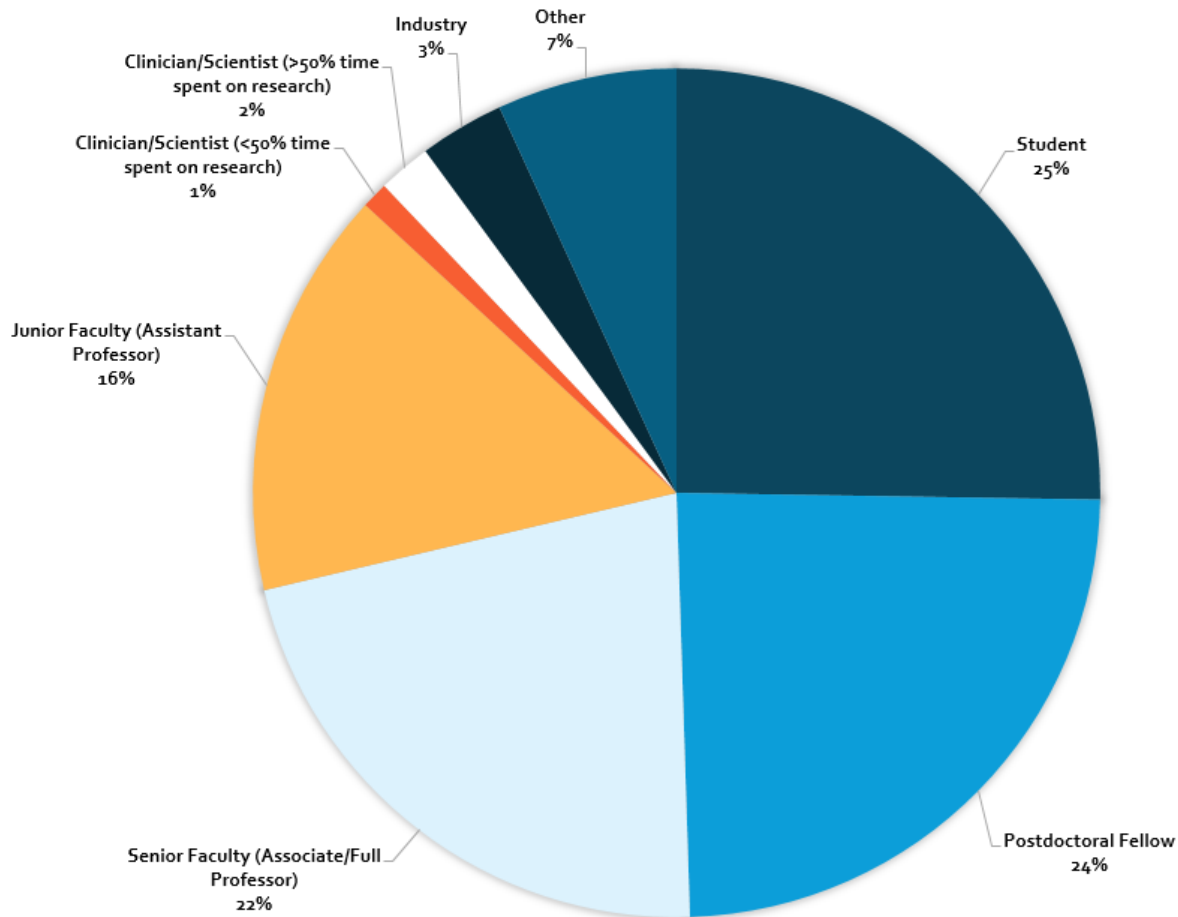
Engagement

Participants were eager to chat and meet (albeit virtually). We increased networking opportunities by extending the duration of Q&A sessions and incorporating additional networking events such as the New Investigator Meet the Expert session. The Q&A and networking sessions were each attended by up to 125 participants. There were also over 315 private messages sent among attendees and 960 public conversations.

Demographics

52% of our attendees identified as female, 43% as male, and 5% preferred not to answer. More than 49% of our attendees were trainees (PhD Students and Postdoctoral Fellows). See a complete breakdown of professional roles represented below:

PROFESSIONAL ROLES



Overall Format

The organizers rose to the challenge of hosting an inclusive meeting that was accessible to attendees across many time zones. The meeting was held over a 4-day period (25-28th August 2021) and comprised two sessions per day with a significant break in between to allow attendees to view e-posters, visit exhibitors, and meet virtually. The morning/early afternoon sessions were more suitable to the Americas and European time zones, while the late afternoon/evening sessions were attended live mostly by the Americas and Asia/Pacific rim time zones. All speakers pre-recorded their talks to avoid technical problems during the live sessions, which were coordinated by our amazing staff at the ISEH Headquarters in Chicago, USA (Allison Isch, Katie Strang, Cara Trauscht, and Lisa Billock). All live sessions (scientific and educational) have been recorded and can be accessed through the virtual platform to view on-demand sessions and e-posters through 30 November, 2021. We still have plenty of time to watch (and re-watch) our favorite sessions!

A total of 56 speakers, 36 featured e-poster discussions, and 129 e-poster presentations were included via the virtual platform. Scientific presentations were thematically grouped, including developmental

hematopoiesis, gene regulation, epigenetics, hematopoietic and heme malignancies, HSC biology, microenvironment, non-neoplastic HSC pathology, progenitor biology and lineage commitment. This year, attendees could interact directly in the featured poster discussions and via the dedicated “Discussion Forum” on the e-poster library platform.

[A Tribute to Paul S. Frenette](#)

The ISEH meeting opened with a one-hour memorial session to honor our colleague Paul S. Frenette, a revered member of ISEH and ISEH Past President. The memorial was led by Ulrich Steidl, Teresa Bowman and Sandra Pinho, who put together a beautiful tribute to share memories and photos of Paul S. Frenette’s scientific journey. Paul was a pioneer in the hematopoietic stem cell niche field and contributed immensely to the fields of vascular biology, sickle-cell disease, cancer and stem cell biology. He was a wonderful human being who spent more than 30 years of his life working as a scientist. He was most importantly a loving husband and dedicated father of two children. Our thoughts go to his family, friends, colleagues and loved ones during this difficult time. We will always remember Paul S. Frenette.

[ISEH 2021 Award Sessions](#)

After a kick-off from our ISEH President Patricia Ernst, we dove straight into the ceremony for the prestigious 2021 Donald Metcalf Award, which was received by Tony Green (University of Cambridge, UK). Tony Green’s research focusses on understanding the biology of normal hematopoiesis and uncovering new mechanisms of human myeloproliferative neoplasms (MPNs). His work identified driver mutations in human patients (JAK2, CALR) that can predict precise clinical phenotypes of human MPNs and also benefit patient monitoring and treatment. An in-depth interview with Tony Green is available for on-demand viewing as part of the Spotlight Series (<http://www.simplyblood.org/2021/07/2021-interview-spotlight-series-part-iv.html>).

On day 2, we were treated with a rich presentation from the 2021 Janet Rowley Award recipient: Elisa Laurenti (University of Cambridge, UK). Since establishing her laboratory in 2014, Elisa Laurenti has focused on identifying and understanding novel paradigms of human hematopoiesis in bone marrow and extra-medullary sites (including spleen and peripheral blood) and across different age groups. She is currently interested in shifts in differentiation output of early fetal HSC populations and how they can change over a lifetime. Elisa’s advice to trainees was to cultivate their network, an invaluable tool for their career progression. Her interview can be watched using the following link (<http://www.simplyblood.org/2021/06/2021-interview-spotlight-series-part-ii.html>)

On day 3, we had the pleasure to receive a lecture from Camilla Forsberg (University of California Santa Cruz, USA) who was awarded the prestigious 2021 McCulloch and Till Award. She established her laboratory in 2007 where she discovered novel hematopoietic cell populations, such as the transient Flt3+

HSC present only in fetuses and neonates, as well as novel mechanisms of HSC and megakaryocyte aging. She has made significant advances in the study of blood development from the early developmental stage until late adulthood. Her main source of inspiration on a day-to-day basis are her trainees! You can watch her interview on-demand using the following link (<http://www.simplyblood.org/2021/07/2021-interview-spotlight-series-part-iii.html>).

On day 4, it was time for the New Investigator Awards Session. This session featured 6 ISEH trainees (3 PhD students and 3 postdoctoral fellows) who received the highest scores for their scientific abstracts. The PhD segment included Bianca Ulloa (Albert Einstein College of Medicine, USA) who was awarded the Dirk van Bekkum Award as well as Emily Mitchell (Wellcome Sanger Institute, UK) and Maria Aivalioti (Albert Einstein College of Medicine, USA) who received the T. Ray Bradley Award and Greg Johnson Award, respectively. The postdoctoral segment included presentations from Nicole Mende (University of Cambridge, UK) who was awarded the Eugene Cronkite Award as well as Laura Garcia Prat (University Health Network, Canada) and Laure Maneix (Baylor College of Medicine, USA) who received the George Brecher Award and Christa-Muller-Sieburg Award, respectively. The New Investigator Awards Session also featured a great presentation from the 2021 New Investigators Invited Speaker: Dan Landau (The New York Genome Center/Weill Cornell Medicine, USA). Dan Landau is a pioneer in the field of cancer genetics and epigenetics and has developed novel tools to study cancer evolution and understand its evolutionary plasticity. You can read his interview which is part of the Spotlight Series using the following link (<http://www.simplyblood.org/2021/06/2021-interview-spotlight-series-part-i.html>).

Extended Q&A Sessions

Each scientific session was followed by an extended Q&A session of approximately 30 minutes, during which attendees could ask questions directly to our speakers, generating robust scientific debates and additional networking opportunities. We expanded the time allotted to these sessions following feedback from prior meetings, and it was well-received. These sessions are also recorded if you wish to hear further discussions with the speakers and attendees.

Social + Networking Sessions

- ***Welcome to the ISEH 50th Annual Scientific Meeting:*** To kick off the meeting with a bang, we had a special edition virtual reception to welcome both our new and returning members. Members of the Junior PI and New Investigator Committees hosted small group chats in rotating Zoom breakout rooms to mingle, share advice, and talk about why we love ISEH!
- ***New Investigator Technology Sessions:*** The New Investigator Technology session featured presentations by Takayuki Morikawa (National Centre for Global Health and Disease, Japan), Nastaran Abbasizadeh (University of California Merced, USA) and Christa Haase (MGH Wellman

Center for Photomedicine, USA). They introduced us to the latest technologies to conduct efficient and stringent in vivo imaging and spatial transcriptomics studies, representing a fast-growing field adopted by the ISEH community. These technologies facilitate extraction and analysis of cells directly from living organisms using state-of-the-art microscopy approaches, allowing us to link cell identity and gene expression profile to the microenvironment across multiple timepoints.

- ***New Investigator Career Session:*** This session was brilliantly suited to the virtual format. We invited scientists and entrepreneurs from around the world to discuss their academic journeys and subsequent transitions to the industry. We could write a guide book with all of their tips and advices for trainees! There were two Career Sessions led by nine incredible panelists: Mona Ashiya (OrbiMed, USA), Elizabeth Beerman (Columbia University Director for Contracts and Compliance, USA), Vicki Moignard (Mogrify Ltd, UK), Doris Shim (Channel Biologics Pty Ltd, USA), Daniel Dever (Graphite Bio, USA), Jean-Francois G elinas (C3i Center, Canada), Jonathan Hoggatt (Moderna, USA), Nick Huntington (oNKO-Innate Pty Ltd, Australia) and Toshinobu Nishimura (Century Therapeutics, USA). On behalf of all ISEH trainees, we want to thank them again for their generous participation and valuable advice!
- ***Junior PI Career Session:*** This year's session marked the first Career Session run by the newly constituted Junior PI Committee, which will be providing year-round career development and networking opportunities for new faculty. We brought in senior faculty and industry hiring experts to address a crucial question on the minds of junior faculty everywhere – how do I recruit and retain talented staff for my laboratory? Over the course of two sessions, attendees were able to learn best practices and helpful tips from five outstanding panelists: John Dick (Princess Margaret Cancer Center, Canada), Shannon McKinney Freeman (St. Jude, USA), Craig Jordan (University of Colorado, USA), Lucia Smit (BrainGain, Belgium) and Malcolm Silander (Precision Biosearch, UK). Key topics for discussion included how to select promising resumes and ask effective questions as an interviewer, how to set and maintain expectations for performance, and how to provide supportive and responsive mentorship. Thanks to all of our panelists and our attendees, who offered interesting questions and sparked informative conversations among the group.
- ***New Investigators Meet the Expert Session:*** The New Investigator Committee hosted its first virtual version of a ISEH meeting favorite, the "Meet the Expert" session. This session provides unique opportunities for hematology trainees to have small group face time with some of our society's experts. Experts for this year's event included Camilla Forsberg, Elisa Laurenti, Dan Landau, Kellie Machlus, Eirini Trompouki, Stavroula Kousteni, Trista North, Alexander Medvinsky, Diane Krause and Tony Kouzarides. Each registered trainee engaged with three experts in Zoom rooms, and the event was a huge hit amongst trainees and experts alike!
- ***ISEH Dance Party:*** One of the highlights of the ISEH meeting is the annual social event and dance party, and unfortunately a feature of the meeting that cannot be imitated by the virtual format. However, ISEH sponsored a virtual dance party on Friday night (US time) to replicate the event as best possible. The party was hosted by ISEH staff, and co-hosts Katherine King and Grant Challen were responsible for supplying some popular dance tracks that appealed to the diverse tastes of our

international hematology community. We checked in with a bunch of ISEH celebrities including Len Zon, Ross Levine and Eric Pietras. Some of the best dance moves were provided by cameo appearances from the children of ISEH celebrities, showing the future of ISEH parties is in good hands. The hour-long party flew by, and hopefully got everyone in a good mood for the myeloid sessions immediately following. While it was not like the real thing, the ISEH virtual dance party was still a lot of fun and primed everyone for a glorious return (fingers crossed) in-person in Edinburgh in 2022!

- **Pub Quiz with Katrin Ottersbach:** The 2022 ISEH Meeting will take place in the beautiful city of Edinburgh, Scotland. Therefore, in honor of a great British tradition (and one of our favorite excuses to go to the pub), Katrin Ottersbach organized a virtual Pub Quiz to put us in the mood for next year's ISEH meeting. We socialized with other ISEH attendees while testing our knowledge on poignant topics including ISEH and Scotland. Needless to say, it was a close contest. This will have to be repeated in a real pub next year!

Social Media

Meeting attendees were active on social media before, during, and after the conference! Make sure to follow @ISEHSociety to stay engaged year-round. We have included a few of our favorite tweets from this year's attendees:

Many attendees were moved by the wonderful tribute to Paul S. Frenette.

Wonderful tribute to start #ISEH2021 on the lasting impact and legacy of Dr. Paul Frenette on our @ISEHSociety community and the hematology field from @SteidlUli, @tvbowman22 and @PinhoSandra.
-Trista North @NorthTrista

A few tears in my eyes watching/listening to the beautiful tribute to Paul Frenette by @SteidlUli @Bowmaniacs_Lab & @PinhoSandra at #ISEH2021 while waiting for the next session to start. for making this accessible with CC @ISEHSociety (other conferences please take notice!).
-Louise Purton @purton_louise

And of course, everyone loved the amazing science.

Great meeting, great speakers most likely the friendliest meeting. It is not just another online meeting it is a family gathering!! Join #iseh #hematology
-Eirini Trompouki @etrompouki

Terrific session on clonal haematopoieses and mutational complexity at #ISEH2021. My mind is absolutely blown by our ability to see genetic changes at the cell population level in blood, and to even begin to

understand the effects. Thanks to all speakers, amazing work.

-Chris Slape @ChrisSlape

The hottest hematopoiesis meeting this summer is #ISEH2021! Join us for some spectacular sessions with a phenomenal community of scientists!

-Vanessa Scanlon @VanessaScanlon

And our virtual social events were great, but we are definitely ready to get together in person!

@ISEHSociety #ISEH2021 virtual dance party made me realize how much I miss the real thing. Hopefully will resume in Edinburgh next year. You are on notice @SteidlUli!!

-Grant Challen @challenlab

Written by the ISEH New Investigators Committee, Junior PI Committee and Publications Committee (Eric Pietras, Grant Challen, Alban Johansson, Mackenzie Bloom, Kathryn Potts and Camille Malouf)



Annual Meeting

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ISEH 2025 Society Award Winners

- [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](#)

Dear Friends and Colleagues, I write this message reflecting upon what was an unprecedented time for hematology and hematology researchers. Looking back on last year, I am truly amazed by how our ...

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Lab Spotlight: Vanuytsel Lab

- *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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