



ISEH 2023 Annual Scientific Meeting – Highlights from the New Investigators Committee



- October 26, 2023



The 52nd ISEH Annual Scientific Meeting took place at the New York Marriott at the Brooklyn Bridge from 17-20 August 2023. Our Annual Scientific Meeting brought together more than 540 scientists and ISEH members from 25 different countries from around the world. This meeting in New York City was planned for 2020, but it had to be postponed due to the COVID-19 emergency. After three years, we finally got to roll our suitcases down the streets of NYC, which is a fantastic playground for networking. We were extremely happy and grateful to bring the community together again!

The Science

The meeting included many events that were targeted to a broad audience of scientists at various stages of their careers (from trainees to PIs). We had 31 invited speakers, 26 short talk presenters, 15 featured

poster presentations and 217 poster presentations. The scientific sessions covered a wide range of topics from the molecular mechanisms of developmental and adult hematopoiesis, the role of the microenvironment and inflammation on hematopoietic stem cells, the biology behind myeloid and erythroid cell formation and function, and how all this information can be deregulated in hematopoietic malignancies. Here are some highlights from the ISEH New Investigators Committee.

The Paul S. Frenette Lecture regrouped 4 speakers to discuss a hot topic in the field of hematopoiesis and hematopoietic malignancies: the microenvironment. Daniel Lucas, a former postdoc of Paul S. Frenette who is now Assistant Professor at Cincinnati Children's Hospital, presented his work on the spatial organization of the bone marrow and highlighted his enormous toolbox to study hematopoiesis in the bone marrow niche. We also heard great presentations from 3 ISEH trainees (Gulce Perrin, Daozheng Yang and Shun Uemura) who presented us new biological insights into how specific cell types (adult and embryonic macrophages) and molecules (P-selectin and LATS1/2 inhibitor) can modulate hematopoietic stem cell function. We were also treated to fantastic talks from the 2023 ISEH awardees for the Donald Metcalfe Award (Peggy Goodell, Baylor College of Medicine, USA), the Janet Rowley Award (Nina Cabezas-Wallscheid, Max Planck Institute, Germany) and the McCulloch and Till Award (Daniel Starczynowski, Cincinnati Children's Hospital, USA). Each presented a summary of their past and current research projects. These were extremely inspiring talks because they showed us a global picture of each scientist and their research, but also how they got to where they are now. In addition to the scientific sessions, we also had workshops and career development sessions dedicated to learning about different career paths and novel technologies, organized by ISEH members.

New Investigator Pre-meeting Workshop

This workshop is simply a must for all trainees. It takes place the day before we kick-off the official meeting. It is an opportunity to present your scientific work to a panel of experts in the field, and to receive constructive feedback that will help you progress at early stages of your career. This year, it was organized by Adam C. Wilkinson (University of Oxford, UK), Louise Purton (University of Melbourne, Australia) and Marella de Bruijn (University of Oxford, UK). The ISEH New Investigators Committee also invited two speakers (Jennifer Trowbridge, The Jackson Laboratory, USA, and Peter Van Galen, Harvard Stem Cell Institute, USA) to give us their insights on efficient networking, and how important it is for your scientific career. Having a strong network will help you immensely when searching for a new career opportunity, so it was great to have their take on how networking became a vital part of their scientific journey. The "take-home" message was that you should attend all the social events at a scientific meeting because a lot of collaborations and opportunities arise from having a casual conversation outside the scientific sessions.

Best Oral Presentations

1st Place, Marlies Vanden Bempt

2nd Place, Apoorva Thatavarty

Best Poster Presentations

1st Place, Grace Meaker

2nd Place, Ilana Karp

3rd Place, Arushana Maknojia

New Investigator Award Session

This session is very popular because it regroups the best-scoring abstract submitted by PhD/MD and post-doctoral trainees. We were lucky to be joined by Katrin Ottersbach (University of Edinburgh, UK) as the NIC Invited Speaker. She presented us an overview of her work on developmental hematopoiesis and infant leukemogenesis. The goal of this session is to highlight talented trainees that are part of the ISEH community, and how their research is having a significant impact in the field of hematopoiesis. This year, we invited Fonteini Fotopoulou (DKFZ, HI-STEM, Germany), Daniel Tavakol (Columbia University, USA) and Alec Geßner (Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany) in the PhD/MD category. For the postdoctoral fellows, we invited Samuel Taylor (Albert Einstein College of Medicine, USA), Chloé Baron (Boston Children's Hospital, USA) and Elanor Wainwright (Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, Australia). All speakers gave outstanding presentations, and per usual, they had to answer many questions from the audience. Their presentations were judged and scored by 3 members of the NIC (Alba Rodriguez-Meira, Masayuki Yamashita and Linde A. Miles) and 3 PIs (Jennifer Trowbridge, Christopher Sturgeon and Charles de Boeck). The first prize winners were Fonteini Fotopoulou (student prize) and Samuel Taylor (postdoc prize).

New Investigator Technology Session

The technology session highlights the expertise of students and postdocs that develop and utilize new experimental tools in their work. This year, the focus of the session was on the latest advances in clonal lineage tracing methods and multi-omics. Dr Li Li (Postdoc, Boston Children's Hospital, USA) introduced an improved Cas9 barcoding mouse line called DARLIN and described the Camellia-seq method for joint profiling of lineage, gene expression, chromatin accessibility and DNA methylation. Alec Geßner (PhD student, Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany) described a lentiviral barcoding technology called Clontracer to track patient-derived B-ALL cells in vitro. Finally, Alberto Bueno-Costa (PhD student, Josep Carreras Leukaemia Research Institute, Spain) introduced Smart-RRBS for simultaneous single-cell DNA methylation and transcriptomic analysis on patient-derived MDS cells. They took part in a lively discussion with the audience, answering questions and providing tips and tricks from their personal experience for designing and executing successful experiments using these methods.

Meet the Expert Mixer

One of our favorite networking event is the Meet the Expert Mixer. This session is all about networking in a relaxed atmosphere. We are always very fortunate to receive outstanding scientists to discuss with trainees about their science, and also to answer questions regarding the progression of their scientific

career. It is also a great opportunity for trainees to connect with each other and to meet new people. This year, we were joined by Katrin Ottersbach (University of Edinburgh, UK), Nina Cabezas-Wallscheid (Max Planck Institute, Germany), Daniel Starczynowski (Cincinnati Children's Hospital, USA), Ulrich Steidl (Albert Einstein College of Medicine, USA), Daphna Nachmani (The Alexander Silberman Institute of Life Science, Israel), Carolina Florian (Institut d'Investigació Biomèdica de Bellvitge, Spain), Adam C. Wilkinson (University of Oxford, UK), César Nombela-Arrieta (University Hospital Zürich, Switzerland), Stephanie Xie (University of Toronto, Canada) and Michael Kharas (Sloan Kettering Institute, USA). This event is coming back in 2024, so make sure to get your ticket when you register for the 2024 ISEH Annual Scientific Meeting.

New Investigator Career Session

The career session is a great opportunity for trainees to interact with panelists in various career paths and learn more about how they navigated transitioning from their training to academic and non-academic positions. The goal of this session is to provide trainees the ability to meet former trainees/faculty in the hematology field and learn about the diverse career trajectories possible both in and out of academic. This year the NIC invited three exceptional panelists - Dr. Brittany Woods (Manager, Competitive Intelligence at Prevail Therapeutics), Dr. Tanya Bondar (Deputy Editor at Blood Cancer Discovery), and Dr. Hamza Celik (Associate Director, Discovery Biology at Incyte) – all of whom have prior or current experience in the hematology field. The panelists each gave a quick introduction to their career paths followed by a Q&A session with attendees moderated by two NIC members (Alba Rodriguez-Meira and Linde A. Miles). The trainees in attendance asked outstanding questions with many questions focused on how to approach conversations with a PI about transitioning out of the lab and what additional resources may be available to learn about non-academic career paths. The panelists provided thoughtful insights and suggestions based on their experiences and extensive knowledge of their fields. Overall, it was a highly engaging session and great learning opportunity for trainees.

A Cruise on the Hudson River

The closure of ISEH 2023 was nothing short of exciting as attendees embarked on a river cruise through the Hudson. The party started with astonishing views of the skyscrapers in New York City and a first round of drinks by the water. Shortly after, we approached the Statue of Liberty for a close view of this NYC landmark, as we were served dinner. The skilled barmen made sure to let us try their ample cocktail menu, and when the music started, trainees and PIs conquered the dance floor to show off their dancing skills. The impressive talent of some of the attendees grabbed the attention of the captain, who also joined us for a few dances as we were approaching the Manhattan docks. It was a memorable way to wrap up an exceptional conference and a truly remarkable event!

We have now left The Big Apple, but we will see you at the 2024 ISEH Annual Scientific Meeting in The Windy City: Chicago, USA!

Blog post contributed by the ISEH New Investigators Committee

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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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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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