

Synopsis - EURAPS Research Council 27-28th May 2015



The EURAPS Research Council seeks to be the leading forum in Europe for preclinical and translational science that will impact upon future plastic, reconstructive and aesthetic surgical practice. It also gives many future stars of the profession their first opportunity to present, within a friendly, collegial and relaxed meeting.

In addition housing some of the world's most eminent cell scientists, Scotland produced some of the greatest of the early advances in microsurgical development through a combination of microvascular anatomical research, engineering refinement, translational clinical development, and the surgical education of a generation of microsurgical pioneers from around the world. Against that backdrop this EURAPS Research Council focused upon tissue engineering, the natural future of microsurgery and most obvious area into which Plastic Surgery must expand if it is to maintain its pre-eminence in surgery.

The meeting saw scientists, trainees, and academic plastic surgeons from around the world come together in sessions that provided insight, excellence, and some outstanding science. Many papers presented a synopsis of a whole PhD or of a research programme, rather than individual small studies. Critical advances in stem cell biology, and peripheral nerve neurobiology were explained. Clinical papers addressed salient issues in microsurgery, and the means by which plastic surgery can be brought into the 21st century through the better design and execution of large-scale clinical studies to provide a true evidence-base for future practice. Clinical translation was present in every speaker's mind.

The rational characterisation of stem cells, and development of means by which to best extract and culture them for different tissue engineering applications was advanced. Many aspects of stem cell, cancer, and peripheral nerve biology were clarified by work presented. In the competition for the best paper, three outstanding PhD synopses were separated by fractions of a point in scoring - the winner demonstrating the first successful, stable therapeutic biological activation of free flaps by the use of retroviral transfection.

The themes of the meeting were brought together beautifully in a closing invited speaker session in which David Soutar engagingly depicted the development of microsurgery, while Stefan Hofer explained that its future direction requires large-scale, high quality studies, and a focus upon patient experience and potential barriers to referral by other specialties. As world-leaders in their fields, Bruno Peault then gave a beautiful exposition on the pericyte, its behaviour as a mesenchymal stem cell of choice, and the means by which it can best be employed for tissue engineering, while Matt Dalby presented transitionally relevant means by which to control and direct cell behaviour through the micro / nanoscale manipulation of tissue engineering constructs of the future.

The evening reception saw enthusiastic engagement between delegates from all countries, who ranged from medical students to Professors, suitably liberalised by a free bar that provided some of Scotland's finest ales and spirits.

In its 4th meeting, the EURAPS Research Council moved from the shadow of its parent organisation, having been a forum for many papers that didn't quite meet the grade for the EURAPS meeting it is now largely the first-choice meeting to which high-impact preclinical and translational science papers are submitted. As such it is growing into a powerful forum in its own right for the furtherance of high-impact academic Plastic Surgery, and the networking connections necessary for the transition of research students into independent, grant-recruiting, research leaders.

Benoit Hendrickx will welcome those opinion leaders and future academic stars to Brussels

Abstract Deadline: 15th March 2015

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on the 25-26th May 2016 for the 5th Research Council - be ready to submit your best work in early 2016 via <http://research-council.euraps.org>

Yours aye,

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2016 Submissions: <http://research-council.euraps.org/login/>

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