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FEBS / 13th iCC Summary

This meeting spanned 5 days with each day consisting of one major themed topic, with a total of 3 sessions in-between meals each day. Poster sessions were held on 3 days. This meeting was greatly insightful to demonstrate current research in the field of sphingolipids and ranged from smaller order biophysical aspects of cellular membranes, up to larger order animal models and clinical studies. At this meeting I presented a 15 minutes talk and poster on my research. I received notable feedback on my work emphasizing where the data could be better supported and expanded on, some of which we are already working on. I was particularly excited to attend this meeting as it is my first meeting presenting this work to a sphingolipid emphasis audience. Importantly, this meeting assisted in connecting me with the greater sphingolipid community. I networked with prominent researchers such as Drs. Fikadu Tafesse (Oregon Health Sciences University, USA) and Melissa Pitman (Universita of Adelaide, AUS), as well as individuals from sphingolipid dedicated industry such as Dr. Webster Santos (S1P Therapeutics, University of Virginia, USA). Connecting with these researchers went deeper than simply meeting them, but I divulging into discussing regarding potential collaborations, new experiments, and the cross-application of my work onto theirs. Furthermore, these connections will be used to find a mentor for post-doctoral training, in which I have identified key institutions and individuals for mentorship. At this meeting I received the prestigious FEBS Transcontinental Youth Travel Award, and a Certificate of Recognition for the questions I posed at this meeting.

An aspect I enjoyed most at this meeting was learning about many current and new ways that lipids can be studied, tracked, and visualized/quantified. This includes lipid caging, photo crosslinking, BRET, membrane smart probes, lipid targeting toxins, MALDI-MS, and so much more! These techniques opened my eyes and mind to the many possibilities that we can manipulate and observe the role of sphingolipid metabolism in *invitro* or *invivo* models. A second aspect I enjoyed about this meeting was the role of sphingolipids in pathology, namely talks focusing on how we can take these principles into the clinic. This was also followed by many discussions within the community at the end of every session about how we can continue to advance the field, what roadblocks are in our way, and what we can do to get around them.