Meeting Report

FOR 2060 Meeting "Hot Topics in Signal Transduction & cGMP Research"

From October 8 - 10th, 2018 the DFG research unit "cGMP Signalling in Cell Growth and Survival" (FOR 2060) held an international conference in Tübingen, Germany with the theme "Hot Topics in Signal Transduction & cGMP Research."

Established in early 2013, the DFG-funded FOR 2060 research consortium consists of eight projects that are situated in four locations throughout Germany (www.cyclic-gmp.de). The connecting goal of the research groups is to elucidate cGMP signalling in different systems and to reflect this the meeting was structured into five sessions: "Cardiovascular Functions", "Emerging Fields", "Visualization, Dynamics & More", "Neuronal & Sensory Communication", and "Circulation & Respiration". The research projects also aim to identify novel therapeutic applications of cGMP-modulating drugs. The group provides training to develop young researchers into excellent scientists to ensure the greatest chance of success for their scientific careers. For example, the conference was organized by PhD students of the FOR 2060 allowing them to improve their communication skills and to network with leading scientists in both academia and industry.

The meeting took place in the Alte Aula in Tübingen’s Old City on the first two days and in Tübingen’s castle in the Ernst von Sieglin room on the final day. We are proud to report an attendance of about 80 highly distinguished researchers from across Europe, the USA and Australia. Participants presented data from recently published papers as well as unpublished data in talks and poster presentations. The pharmaceutical companies Bayer and Ironwood Pharmaceuticals held talks about current research on their cGMP-modulating molecules. The research spanned an interesting breadth of topics related to cGMP, such as cardiovascular, neurosensory systems, cell survival, cell motility, new clinical insights on the influence of cGMP-modulating drugs and other themes. Junior researchers presented their original data in short talks and poster presentations. Lively discussion took place during the poster sessions and new ideas to further test current hypotheses emerged. The meeting also featured a “Women Researchers in Science” session with leading female researchers to help support young female researchers in future career advancement. Our cultural highlights included a tour of Tübingen’s old city, an ancient cultures museum tour, and “Stocherkahnfahren” on the Neckar River. The evening dinner was held at Liquid Bar in Tübingen with a wonderful atmosphere and great food and drink to allow participants to get to know one another in an informal atmosphere.

The conference closed with the award ceremony for the junior researchers. The award for the best short talk was given to Melissa Schepers (Maastricht, the Netherlands), and the two poster awards went to Soumyaparna Das (Tübingen, Germany) and Staffan Hildebrand (Bonn, Germany). The awards were made possible by support from Cisbio and Greiner Bio-One. We thank all participants, organizers and the DFG for ensuring the success of this meeting and we look forward to the next one. Further information about this conference and the FOR 2060 can be found at www.cyclic-gmp.de.

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Participants of the FOR 2060 Meeting "Hot Topics in Signal Transduction & cGMP Research" in front of the Alte Aula in Tübingen’s Old Town. Photo: Markus Wolters

Poster prize winners S. Hildebrand (2nd from left) and S. Das (3rd from left) and best short talk awardee M. Schepers (4th from left). The prizes were awarded by the selection committee: Hannes Schmidt (1st from left), Jens Schlossmann (2nd from right) and Franz Hofmann (1st from right). Photo: Markus Wolters