EUROMIT 2017: International Meeting on Mitochondrial Pathology  
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Rebecca Brennan,  
PhD Student, Institute of Genetic Medicine

EUROMIT is Europe’s largest international meeting on mitochondrial pathology research, and takes place once every three years, making it the ‘must attend’ event for mitochondrial researchers from around the world. This year was the 10th meeting, and it was held in the beautiful, historic Gürzenich building in Cologne, Germany.

The five day conference hosted talks from globally renowned experts in the mitochondrial field. Generally, each day consisted of three sessions, where each session consisted of three, 30 minute talks from senior, expert researchers, and were then followed by two, 15 minute talks from young or early-stage researchers. Each session focused on a specific area of mitochondrial research, ranging from genetics and cell biology, to disease diagnosis, to mitochondrial communication and DNA replication, to therapeutic treatments. Poster sessions were held for three hours after lunch each day and on the final day, a patient session was held, where researchers could listen to talks from people with mitochondrial diseases.

Additionally, a Young Scientists Meeting was held for a day before the main conference. This event was for PhD students and post-doctoral staff only. Again, several 15 minute talks were held in the morning by committee-selected speakers on a variety of different mitochondrial research topics. After lunch we were split into groups of ten people where we were asked to present the poster we were going to be presenting at the main conference in five minutes, followed by a group discussion. In the evening a social event was held near the Max-Planck Institute where young scientists were able to network. Other social activities were also held on the first and final days of the main conference, one of which was held at Cologne’s beautiful Botanical Gardens.

I am now in the final few months of my PhD, and my research has been trying to understand the inter-genomic communication between mitochondrial and nuclear DNA. Attending EUROMIT was incredibly interesting, and extremely beneficial to my work. Not only did I get a chance to showcase and discuss all the work I have conducted in the past three years with global specialists, but I was able to learn from their work, which both broadened my knowledge and gave me ideas as to how to improve my own work - which will help me write a better PhD thesis. From presenting a poster, attending the Young Scientists meeting and other social events, I have also had a chance to make connections with other researchers which will hopefully help me in my longer-term plans if I continue a career in research.

Overall, the conference has given me more confidence in my own work, and has inspired me to continue working in the mitochondrial-related field now that I have observed the variety of topics it covers in medical research, and how it translates to understanding so many metabolic diseases.