

## **FEBS Advanced Course ECM 2018**

Patras University, Greece

27/07/2018 – 2/07/2018

I thank ISMB for awarding me with an international travel grant for attending **FEBS Advanced Course ECM 2018**. It brought together a lot of new findings in the communities which helped me explore new approaches to understand Matrix biology. The talks conducted during the course were very precise and understandable. I got an opportunity to learn about very diverse topics highlighting the importance of matrix remodeling, organization, assembly and role of proteoglycans with various pathologies. This conference was a very good platform to showcase my findings in developing a spatiotemporal tool to control collagen synthesis spatiotemporally. I got a lot of feedback from senior scientists which were very good discussions for my future work. It also gave me a chance to collaborate with research group actively working on diseased models. The friendly environment and open-minded atmosphere invited to ask questions and discuss projects even if the scientific content were not so similar. I also enjoyed talks from long-standing researchers in the extracellular matrix field on topic “*Plasticity of matrix guidance and adhesion regulation in cancer cell invasion in vivo*” by **Prof. P. Friedl** (University of Texas, USA) and “*Extracellular vesicles as functional components of the ECM*” by **Prof. K. Rilla** (Eastern Finland University, Finland). These new findings on unraveling molecular mechanism of collective epithelial tumor migration and the role of the exosomes in transporting cancer markers were very new knowledge for me.

My highlight during the course was the “Speakers Session”. Within this session we, as young scientist, were allowed to ask leading scientist like **Prof. Antony Day** (Manchester University, UK), **Prof. Suneel Apte** (Lerner Research Institute, USA), **Prof. Alexandra Naba** (UCL, USA) how to manage work and social life, what made them overcome hardship and struggle, what encouraged them as a scientist the most. Also, I learn a lot about how to make decisions for a long-term goal. The FEBS unites researchers of inter-related disciplines essential for a comprehensive and encompassing study and understanding of ECM components involved in development, signaling, disease, and regeneration. I am grateful for this really fruitful experience and would encourage other graduate and post-doctoral candidates to attend this conference.

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