Conference Article

Report on the 24th meeting of the ECCR 8th-9th October 2021

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The 24th meeting of the European Council for Cardiovascular Research (ECCR) was virtual and held online on October 8th and 9th, 2021. Over 130 participants including trainees, early career researchers (ECR) and established investigators from eleven European countries (Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, U.K.), and participants also from Canada, Chile, Saudi Arabia, and the U.S.A. connected to enjoy two days of outstanding research. The meeting was opened by its president, Professor Marisol Fernandez-Alfonso from the Complutense University in Madrid and covered several topics of cardiovascular research: from vascular and metabolic aspects to novel immunological mechanisms of cardiovascular disease.

Two sessions were organised and moderated by the ECR in line with the educational goal of ECCR in fostering a strong and large Early Career Researcher Network. This effort is not only focussed on research, but also on soft skills development, management, and organisation. Topics covered were “How to avoid the impostor syndrome in Science”, “How to write a grant application”, and “How to start a successful early career in research”, generating great interest.

The meeting also included two joint sessions: “Cardiovascular health in women”, together with the Women In Hypertension Research Group of the International Society of Hypertension (ISH), and “Hot topics: Covid-19 and cardiovascular disease”, together with the German Centre for Cardiovascular Research (DZHK). The session “Business meets Academia” was aimed at increasing applied research and supporting connections to companies and industry. There was a lively and active participation in all sessions through the chat.

In addition to internationally renowned keynote speakers, the meeting offered all young researchers the opportunity of presenting themselves and their research to an international audience by giving either an oral (15 min) or a poster (8 min) presentation. Overall, 21 oral communications and 24 poster presentations were delivered by trainees and young investigators. Best oral presentations were awarded to Silke Griepke Dam Nielsen (PhD, Denmark), Eline Berends (PhD, The Netherlands), Bakhta FedLaoui (PhD, France), and Dr Karla Bianca Neves (Post Doc, UK). Best poster presentations were awarded to Carme Ballester-Servera (PhD, Spain), Lucía Serrano (PhD, Spain), Constanza Ballesteros-Martinez (PhD, Spain), and Dr Lorenzo Carnevale (Post Doc, Italy). In addition, the best image in the “Art in Science Competition” was awarded to Daniel González Moreno (PhD, Spain) and appears in the front page of this volume.

The meeting included a social event consisting in an online quiz organised by Augusto Montezano, which was fun and community building.

The President closed the meeting thanking the outstanding speakers and moderators, the Organising Committee and ECCR Executive Committee, the sponsors (German Centre for Cardiovascular Research (DZHK), Attoquant Diagnostics, and Clinical Science), the IT team in Glasgow University and, especially, to Margaret Kinninmont, once again, for her essential assistance and support.

Overall, the 24th meeting was a great success, and we look forward to meeting you next year, hopefully face to face, in the 25th meeting in October 2022.