

A week in the city of Hannover: A report on the 2003 EASD Scientists Training Course



Hannover, the EXPO city, was this year's destination for participants of the EASD Scientists Training Course. This lively and modern German city possesses a feeling of slick efficiency and comfortable living. This impression of an organised and cosmopolitan city was immediately evident upon arrival at Hannover airport and became further obvious on the train and tram journeys to the Institute of Clinical Biochemistry. Luckily we were blessed with a week of fresh and sunny weather.

Our hotel was perfectly located, being next to the tram station and only a 5 minute walk from the institute. Each day started with breakfast at the hotel and continued in the labs at the Institute from 8:00 am to around 5:00 or 6:00 pm. This time was fully packed with scientific techniques. Short lectures in the morning and after lunch introduced us to the various methods and provided us with lots of useful background information. On Monday evening a welcome dinner was held at the institute where the participants got to know each other better in a relaxed atmosphere.

Following our introductions on Monday morning, we were quickly divided into groups of four and given our timetables for the week. These smaller sized groups allowed the participants to have a one-to-one interaction with each of the tutors. Myself, Jorgen, Iona and Reziwanggu formed group 3, and our first session was islet-isolation with Sigurd Lenzen. We learned the fine art of isolating mouse islets and the details of insulin perfusion. In the afternoon Anne Jörns introduced us to islet morphology. This involved the preparation, fixation and immunohistochemical staining of pancreatic tissue. On Tuesday we were

shown the intricacies of viral transfections and cell viability assays by Stephan Lortz and Matthias Elsner. The most interesting things we learned on this day were how to produce adeno- and lentiviruses in 293 cells and how to purify these recombinant viruses by CsCl centrifugation. On Wednesday we extracted RNA and performed real-time PCR with the help of Markus Tiedge and Ortwin Naujok. To me real-time PCR was a completely new technique and it left my head filled with potential project ideas. Recombinant protein expression and protein interactions were finely covered on Thursday by Simone Baltrusch. The images generated by fluorescence microscopy will leave a long-lasting impression. As the week gradually unfolded, we became more and more aware of how much organisation had been involved in this course. More than eight broad-ranging techniques were described, demonstrated and practically carried out by each group in four short days. Our hosts were never hurried, always had time for our questions and gave us clear and detailed notes.

Most evenings we enjoyed Hannover and made use of the opportunity to discuss our individual backgrounds and areas of diabetes research. On Thursday, our last evening, a farewell dinner was held at a beautiful restaurant next to Hannover Zoo. Before dinner there was time for photo opportunities with several jokes being made about the animals. In an after dinner speech Professor Lenzen thanked us for our participation, the staff for their hard work and EASD for the funding.

On Friday morning all of the participants were given the opportunity to see further demonstrations, to

ask questions and to get more information about techniques of special interest. I took the opportunity to refresh my knowledge on islet-isolation with Sigurd Lenzen and to ask Markus Tiedge several questions about Real Time PCR. We gradually went our separate ways according to our travel arrangements and left the Institute with grateful admiration for our hosts.

We, the participants of the 2003 EASD Scientists Training Course, would like to thank all of the members of the Institute of Clinical Biochemistry, Hannover for their hard work and their great patience and teaching. We thank all technicians, students and other members of the institute, who were involved in preparing and conducting the EASD Scientists Training Course 2003. In particular, we would like to thank Professor Sigurd Lenzen and Dr. Markus Tiedge for organising this course and EASD for the generous funding.

Dr Brian Green
University of Ulster
Coleraine
Northern Ireland
UK

On the behalf of all the attendees of the 2003 EASD Scientists Training Course:

Abudula Reziwanggu, Aarhus University Hospital, Denmark.
Hendrik Bergert, Universitätsklinikum Carl Gustav Carus TU Dresden, Germany.
Ioana Simona Chisalita, Linköping Universitet, Sweden.
Ru Gao, University of Helsinki, Finland.
Carol Huang, Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto, Canada.
Jorgen Erik Jensen, University of Southern Denmark, Denmark.
Katerina Kankova, Masaryk University Brno, Czech Republic.
Klaus-Peter Knoch, Universitätsklinikum Carl Gustav Carus TU Dresden, Germany.
Babak Movahedi, Brussels Free University, Belgium.
Nicole Neubauer, University of Copenhagen, Denmark.
Stig Rolfsen, Aarhus University Hospital, Denmark.
Barbara Szepietowska, Medical University of Białystok, Poland.
Nikolaus Wick, AKH Vienna & University of Vienna Medical School, Austria.

EASD Scientists Training Course 2004

– Supported by Eli Lilly –

EASD will hold its **Eleventh Scientists Training Course in Vienna, Austria 8–12 November 2004** in co-operation with the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation International (JDRF). By organising the Scientists Training Course, EASD hopes to attract new talent to diabetic research, in addition to fostering diabetes research in new centres throughout the world. In reaching their decision, the members of the Committee will be looking for candidates with some experience in research and who work in an academic environment. A letter of support from the head of the academic department will be considered an essential part of the application.

The EASD Sub-committee responsible for the EASD Scientists Training Course is chaired by Drs. Geremia B. Bolli (Chair) and Claes Hellerström (Co-chair). The Course will be held in English. It is understood that all applicants are able to communicate in this language. All participants will be required to attend the entire Course.

Venue

The eleventh Course will be hosted by the Division of Endocrinology & Metabolism (Head: Professor Werner Waldhäusl), Department of Internal Medicine 3, Medical University, Vienna, Austria.

Organisers

The Course is organised by Associate Professor Michael Roden and colleagues.

Format

A hands-on practical course will be provided for a maximum of 16 participants, who will rotate in groups through the laboratories. Each day will begin with an overview of the day's schedule followed by thematic blocks, which will consist of brief introductory lectures and practical training sessions. A discussion on the day's topics will conclude each day.