



TELEGRAFT RECAP

It's already gone! Here are some other great activities from the Annual Meeting that didn't make it into the Telegraft Live.

- Deputy Mayor of London for Business, **Rajesh Agrawal**, gave the opening remarks at the President's Welcome. His passion for innovation and business combined with his love of London as a center of commerce came through as he described his history as a businessman followed by the funding opportunities and other initiatives available in London.



- John Rasko**, **Katy Rezvani** and **Mark Lowdell** welcomed us to the Annual Meeting. Don't miss the *Interviews with the Co-Chairs* by **Russell Cruz** in the April issue of the Telegraft.
- During *Hot Topic 5 Novel Gene Editing Techniques*, ISCT President-Elect Professor **John Rasko** provided a few introductory comments reminding the audience that lentivirus-mediated gene transfer was not the only means by which gene therapy can be achieved. Dr **Madhusudan V. Peshwa**, PhD, from MaxCyte Inc bravely kicked off the first session of the last day after a wild boat ride on the Thames River the night before as part of the Gala celebration! He enthusiastically described the Maxcyte electroporation technology which is achieving clinically significant efficiencies in diverse cells and tissues. In addition he provided insights into the novel approaches by which this non-viral mediated gene transfer can be combined with gene editing approaches in diseases like thalassaemia. Dr **Cliona Rooney**, PhD, from the Center for Cell and Gene Therapy/Baylor College of Medicine then explained her lab's use of CRISPR/Cas 9 for genetic modification of lymphocytes and means by which its improved efficiency has been achieved. This technology was used to modify CAR T cells to prevent fratricide of non-gene modified lymphocytes in culture as well as expanding the potential applications of universal EBV-transformed B-lymphoblastoid cells lines for use in co-stimulation of antigen presenting cells.



- “As part of the continuing Signature Series events, the new ISCT GI Working Group presented a highly successful pre-conference workshop on advances in regenerative medicine approaches for liver, pancreas, and intestinal disorders. Chaired by **Rachaele Ciccocioppo** and **Giuseppe Orlando**, the workshop featured world leaders in these fields and highlighted the very exciting and rapidly moving progress in these areas,” said **Dan Weiss**, Chief Scientific Officer, and also noted that plans are in place to continue the momentum generated by the Signature Series.
- Cytotherapy has a new Commissioning Editor, Nan Zhang, who is looking for quality review articles for Cytotherapy. If you have an idea for an article, you can reach Nan Zhang at nan.zhang2@nih.gov or John Barrett at barrettj@nhlbi.nih.gov.
- The Communications Strategy Committee held a Focus Group to determine how best for ISCT to communicate with its members – watch the Telegraft for new initiatives.
- The 2017 Global Regulatory Perspectives Workshop once again brought together regulators and product developers from around the world to discuss current regulatory issues. Opening with a *Regulatory Round-up* by **Scott Burger**, the following sessions tackled the regulatory challenges of gene editing technology, RCR testing, developing gene-modified cell products for multinational markets, and clinical trials in developing regulatory regions. A four-part case study wove together topics from all the sessions and provoked lively discussions. **Dominic Wall**, Co-Chair of the GRP, had multiple take-home messages from the preconference:
 - We received valuable and subtle advice on the risks and benefits of gene modified cells- such as what justifications could be considered for removing RCL testing from FDA and PEI, the relative risk of electroporation vs viral vectors, and the stages of permissible vector quality during trial development.
 - We heard about intriguing regional trial options, such as European agency support for local trials for international products that might not be marketed locally, as well as off-study options for trials in Taiwan where “essential fees” might be permissible.
 - We learnt that hospital-based exemptions in Europe might accept materials originating outside of Europe, but also appreciated the diversity of how Article 28 rules are applied across Europe.



CHEERS!

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