

MEETING REPORT

Minutes of the 5th Meeting of the International Network for Young Researchers in Male Fertility

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The International Network for Young Researchers in Male Fertility (INRMYF; <http://www.youngresearcher.eu>) is committed to establish global networks among young (early stage) scientists in testicular research and to promote collaboration and exchange of methodologies and expertise. We provide a more informal way of communication than many other congresses and meetings and promote online discussions on the homepage and during our annual meetings.

Our network evolved at the European Testis Workshop (ETW) in 2006 in Germany^{1,2} and is continually expanding both in number of members and number of member countries. Participation in our network is open and free for all 'young' scientists according to their scientific experience in the field of reproductive medicine/biology. Therefore, we welcome all students—PhD students, post-docs, etc., to join our network. The registration is an easy procedure on our homepage <http://www.youngresearcher.eu>. Currently, we have almost 300 members from 37 different countries. Our first meeting was held in Naantali, Finland in 2008 adjacent to the Fifteenth ETW, followed by Münster, Germany in 2009, Elba, Italy in 2010, and Edinburgh, United Kingdom in 2011. Our Fifth meeting was held on 19–20 April this year at Djurönäset in the beautiful archipelago at the outskirts of Stockholm, Sweden. This meeting was held adjacent to the Seventeenth ETW which occurs every other year.

Our Fifth Meeting was mainly organized by Dr Aida Wahlgren and Dr Jan-Bernd Stukenborg. The audience comprised 50 participants from 12 European and Asian countries. The program covered a wide range of interests relevant to young researchers in male fertility, from basic to clinical, and to translational science. Similar to former meetings adjacent to the ETW, we organized four invited talks by well-known experts in the field. In addition, all participants had the opportunity to discuss the topics in two open panels. We were pleased about these excellent talks and a very active audience, which brought us particularly fruitful discussions and ultimately a successful meeting for all of us.

THE FIRST SESSION: GERM CELLS

Our first session focused on germ cells, particularly on the process of germ cell differentiation from both basic science and clinical perspectives. Presentations in this session were given by Dr Thierry Voet (University of Leuven, Belgium) and Dr Rod Mitchell (University of Edinburgh, UK). Dr Thierry Voet explained the basics of meiosis, with a focus on the molecular events occurring at the chromosome level

(including meiotic checkpoints) during spermatogenesis. Dr Rod Mitchell talked about childhood cancer and the possible negative effects of anti-cancer treatments in germ cell differentiation (and thus in adulthood male fertility), as well as on the advances of systems/treatments for fertility preservation. These talks were followed by an open discussion with the audience and speakers.

THE SECOND SESSION: SOMATIC CELLS

The second session dealt with somatic cells; Dr Bernard Jégou (University of Rennes, France) and Dr Katja Teerds (Wageningen University, The Netherlands) discussed the importance of Sertoli and Leydig cells, respectively. Dr Bernard Jégou presented the peculiarities of Sertoli cells from a historical perspective to latest research findings. Dr Katja Teerds explained the differentiation of Leydig stem cells, the role of luteinizing hormone receptors, and the possible effects of different hormones in Leydig cell development, focusing particularly on hypothyroidism. An active dialogue with the participation of Dr Teerds and Dr Jégou rounded up this session, where the importance of somatic cells in male germ cell development was discussed.

Our Fifth INRMYF in Sweden was hugely successful both with regard to the number of delegates attending as well as their participation, resulting in highly fruitful discussions. The atmosphere was open and informal, which helped junior scientists to feel comfortable to ask and participate in the discussion of both basic topics and more advanced technology. Planning is already underway for our next meeting which will be held in Barcelona, Spain in May 2013. We look forward to seeing you all there!

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- 1 Gromoll J, Michel C, Kostova E, Tüttelmann F, Wistuba J *et al.* Minutes of the 14th European Workshop on Molecular and Cellular Endocrinology of the Testis. *Mol Cell Endocrinol* 2006; **257–258**: 1–5.
- 2 Tüttelmann F, de Gendt K, Amaral A, Giachini CC, Welsh M *et al.* The future of testis research is turning 6! Six years of international network for young researchers in male fertility. *Int J Androl* 2012; **35**: 211–3.

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