

I would like to express my utmost gratitude to the committee of the British Society of Proteome Research for awarding me with a student travel grant to attend the 71st American Society for Mass Spectrometry Conference 2023 in Houston, Texas. Attendance at this conference was especially significant to me as this was my first conference since beginning my PhD in September 2022, and what a way to begin! I was honoured to be provided with the opportunity to present my research in the form of a poster presentation at the conference, with Top-down proteomics being the main research focus of my presentation. Being able to discuss my work with other researchers and experts in the field was such an invaluable experience, providing me with feedback and further inspiration that I will carry forward throughout my PhD. A diverse and interesting range of topics were covered in the poster sessions and oral presentations over the five days that the conference took place. Sessions that were of particular interest included 'Top-down Protein Analysis', particularly the talk by Adrian Guthals discussing parameter-free deconvolution and 'Instrumentation: detection of high-mass analytes' where Martin Jarrold discussed the side-by-side comparison of Orbitrap Direct Mass Technology and Charge Detection Mass Spectrometry. The sessions on 'ambient ionisation and applications' and 'microbes and the microbiome' also had some fascinating talks. Watching such confident and passionate speakers was hugely exciting and motivating, further solidifying my interest in the field. It's astonishing to see the vast number of developments and advancements in the technologies and their outstanding applications, such as the new Orbitrap Astral Mass Spectrometer unveiled by ThermoFisher at the beginning of the conference. Not only did the conference provide the opportunity to hear about current research in the field but also provided insight into the many career paths available for researchers, showed effective ways to improve accessibility for mass spectrometrists and celebrated the diversity seen in our community. Breakfast seminars and hospitality suites enabled casual discussion on projects and interests, leading to the formation of new friendships and potential collaborations.

The conference brought together people from all over the world with common interests and goals, making me feel proud to be part of this community. It was a perfect combination of learning and networking. I would like to give thanks again to BSPR for helping make this experience achievable, it was an excellent opportunity for my personal development as an independent researcher in the mass spectrometry community. Now I look forward to the BSPR-EuPA 2023 Conference in Newcastle!