HUPO 16th World Congress 2017, Dublin Conference Centre, Dublin.

Firstly I would like to thank the BSPR for awarding me the MJ Dunn Fellowship. The conference, held in the resplendent Conference Centre Dublin, was excellently run with a wide range of interesting and motivating speakers and presentations. The organisers had ensured there was plenty of time for early career researchers to network and discuss ideas with peers and experienced researchers in the field and there was a wide range of mass spectrometry, software, reagents and service vendors present. I was fortunate to be able to present some of my work with John Timms (University College London) in longitudinal and network models for ovarian cancer which was an excellent opportunity to discuss this and possible developments with an interested and knowledgeable audience. With the wide range of parallel sessions run, I was also able to attend talks on my current field (histone and non-histone methylation with Pete DiMaggio, Imperial College London) as well as related sessions on protein quantitation, bioinformatics and cellular biology.

A key message I will be taking home from the conference is the importance of understanding the N-terminal state of the protein. When performing shotgun proteomics and identification by database searching, knowledge of the proteins N-termini can be lost. As Cheolju Lee (Korea Institute of Science and Technology) and Chris Overall (University of British Columbia) both emphasised, pro, pre-pro and other cleavage states can have large and opposing impacts on not just protein activation and localisation, but their function as well. I will be looking to include an N-terminal tag in my future LC-MS/MS proteomic studies. Secondly, Atul Butte (Institute for Computational Health Sciences), in the closing plenary lecture, made a very clear and strong case for public databases of genomic and proteomic data. I defiantly felt impelled to “get my geek on” with some coding and start using these databases far more. Maybe I could hit upon a cure or biomarker for a disease on a lazy Sunday from the comfort of my own couch with a cup of tea…!

Once again, thank you to the British (and Irish) Society for Proteomic Research and HUPO for organising the event and to the BSPR for their generous award which allowed me to attend.