



London International Youth Science Forum

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Putting into words the most amazing two weeks of my life is a challenge I did not forecast to be this difficult. The London International Youth Science Forum (LIYSF) is a unique experience that combines the greatness of science with the beauty of humanity.

During the two weeks of the forum, we got the opportunity to do a range of activities. In the academical aspect we can start with the variety of lectures, both principal and specialist ones that we chose beforehand. The lectures covered a spectrum of topics and were taught by experts of their respective fields.


Some of the topics were new to me or out of my usual interest, and yet engaging such as learning of Fusion Energy, Structural Engineering, Liquid Crystals, Chemical Engineering, the James Webb Space Telescope and using AI for medical image analysis.

However, I was fortunate that most of the lectures this year were related in one way or another to my degree, Genetics and Cell Biology. I had the opportunity to attend the most fascinating and eye-opening lectures, such as: A life in science and vesicle transport from 2013 Nobel Prize winner in Medicine Prof. James Rothman, Making Medicine using Nanotechnology from Prof. Ijeoma Uchegbu, Precision Health from Prof. Richard O'Kennedy, Public Health and Urban Environments from Prof. Tollulah Oni, Gene Editing and Gene Therapy from Prof. Emma Morris, Medicine for Neurodegeneration from Prof. Marcus Rattray and CRISPR Genome Editing from Dr. Helen O'Neill.

Additionally, in the academical aspect, there were a variety of visits to cutting-edge centres and universities across London and England. In my case I had the opportunity to visit King's College London Centre for Stem Cells and Regenerative Medicine, University of Sussex, and University of Oxford NIHR Biomedical Research Centre.

One of the aspects that I really loved about the visits was that we had the opportunity to get hands-on experience. At the King's College London Centre for Stem Cells and Regenerative Medicine we were not only taught about new treatments and technologies regarding Stem Cells, but we were shown the laboratories and got the opportunity to do the experiment to isolate the DNA from a strawberry. And in the University of Sussex, we got the opportunity to do an aldol condensation synthesis of a curcumin analogue.

The aura and energy of those centres were inspiring. Personally, I enjoyed most the visit to the King's College London Centre for Stem Cells and Regenerative Medicine and the University of Oxford NIHR Biomedical Research Centre. Both focused on finding better and more accurate cures



to certain diseases. In the first one they are focused on how to develop new treatments using Stem Cells, especially to treat liver diseases, while in the second one the focus was more on the new types of vaccines to treat malaria at different phases.

Nevertheless, LIYSF is not a strictly academic forum only. It has a diverse set of activities that helps you create and strengthen the bonds with other students. From going to the Science Bazaar to hear the insight of other participants' research to more fun activities such as the International Cabaret and the Traditions of Home.

In my case, I had the opportunity to go on additional optional trips that allowed me not only to get to know London and England better, but also to create invaluable memories with other members of the forum.

For two weeks, I shared many memories, trips, laughs, and jokes with people from all over the globe, making bonds and friendships that will last beyond the event. At LIYSF one realises that science and knowledge knows no border or nationality. I am optimistic that every field of science will be filled with a new generation of not only intelligent but caring and goodhearted people.

Looking back, I find it curious how many things I learnt. When I boarded my plane to London, I thought I would only gain academic knowledge. But I was wrong, there was invaluable wisdom and messages that some of our lecturers or demonstrators in our visits taught us that will forever live in my mind.

Just to put some examples of phrases they said at some point: Science is about persistence and consistency not perfectionism. The days of a single scientist working in a project are long gone and now those who succeed are those who work with a worldwide network and through cooperation. It is not about people living longer but people living better.

And the last example I want to mention is a phrase that we were told from the first day and we were given a bottle of water with these two words printed "Change Makers". LIYSF is an event where you realise that there is hope and the future can change for the best and be bright.

LIYSF was personally a motivational booster that I did not realise how much I needed until now that I got it. The enthusiasm and passion for science just increased after this event. And the memories I made across these two weeks will forever live in my heart and for that I am grateful.

I want to thank DCU for giving me the opportunity, the honour, and the pleasure to participate in such a high standard and quality event, representing our university at the London International Youth Science Forum 2022.