

The 10th Annual Meeting of the International Society for Stem Cell Research (ISSCR 2012)



Event name: **The 10th Annual Meeting of the International Society for Stem Cell Research (ISSCR 2012)**
Organization: **International Society for Stem Cell Research (ISSCR)**
Co-hosted by: **Japanese Science and Technology Agency (JST)**
Center for iPS Cell Research and Application (CiRA), Kyoto University

Date: **13-16 June, 2012**

Location: **PACIFICO Yokohama, Yokohama Museum of Art, Miraikan (Tokyo)**

ISSCR 10th Annual Meeting Recap available on:

<http://www.isscr.org/home/annual-meeting/about/past-future-meetings/2012-meeting>

Yokohama rose to the occasion when ISSCR selected the city to be its First Port of Call in Asia

The International Society for Stem Cell Research (ISSCR) is an independent, nonprofit organization formed in 2002 to foster the exchange of information on stem cell research. With more than 3,500 members worldwide, ISSCR has become the global voice of the stem cell research community.

Its Annual Meeting which offers delegates opportunities to learn of groundbreaking research from all areas of stem cell science provides an excellent forum for stem cell researchers and scientists to present and discuss their latest research with participants from academic, industry and government settings from around the world.

The 10th Annual Meeting of the ISSCR was **the first time the annual world congress had ever taken place in Asia**. Since Japan opened its doors to the world, Yokohama has been the nation's key entry point for international trade and communications, bringing global perspectives and new ideas. Yokohama, being Japan's First Port of Call was selected as "the ideal starting point" for ISSCR to hold their first meeting in Asia and expand their influence as well as membership in the region.

First Time in Asia, First and Lasting Experience in Yokohama

The outcome of the Meeting was a proud achievement for Dr. Shinya Yamanaka, who was the Chair of the Japan Local Host Committee. Dr. Yamanaka, widely recognized in the international stem cell research field, and who has most recently was the joint winner of the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, attributed the success of the congress, among others, to the professional service and support by the city of Yokohama and the Yokohama Convention & Visitors Bureau (YCVB). YCVB is largely recognised as any international meeting planner's first port of call with its one-stop shop professional support. Dr. Yamanaka commented, "**The City of Yokohama and the YCVB's support system was wonderful. From the preparation stages, support included areas such as grants for the event, selection of and arrangements for venues for the reception and so on, as well as PR activities. Thanks to everyone's efforts, more than 3,500 researchers attended the Meeting, making it a grand success. I wish to express my sincere gratitude for everyone's cooperation.**"



Dr. Shinya Yamanaka

The conference attracted attendance of over 3,500 researchers, doctors, and students from 56 countries, making it the **second largest in ISSCR history**. 1,365 Japanese participants convened in Yokohama, the **highest ever Japanese delegation** in the conference's history. Four out of the top five delegations were sent from Asian countries including Japan, Korean, China, and Taiwan.

During the four-day conference, seven plenary sessions, 20 concurrent tracks spread over four separate sessions, and a record-making 1,400 posters were presented. More than 25 oral presentations were given from researchers based in Japan. Travel Grants given to 285 students, which supported many young researchers to attend the Meeting.

Several networking sessions were organized including the President's Reception at the iconic Yokohama Museum of Art.

Dr. Shinya Yamanaka assumed the presidency of ISSCR on the final day of the Annual Meeting. He gave an opening address at the final plenary session, and the Meeting was closed with the fifth annual Anne MaLaren Memorial Lecture, given by Dr. Fiona Watt. Dr. John Gurdon, who was the co-winner of the Nobel Award was also a speaker at the Meeting.

To commemorate ISSCR's first in Asia, and on the occasion of its 10th anniversary, the Japanese Host Committee did not spare any efforts to make the Yokohama congress unforgettable - their Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Japan graced the commemoration ceremony. The ceremony was also attended by the Mayor of Yokohama, the Governor of Kanagawa Prefecture, and the Senior Vice President of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology who all expressed their support for stem cell research.

Mr. Jim Donovan, the Meeting Service Director of ISSCR, commented: "The attendees were extremely impressed with the beauty and charm of Yokohama and truly enjoyed their stay. An exceptionally high number of attendees ranked the location as excellent in our post-meeting evaluation survey."



Poster Sessions



Yokohama Museum of Art



10th Anniversary Commemorative Ceremony



Collaboration with local high school



Meet the Expert Lunch



Welcome board on-site

Leaving a legacy in Yokohama and Japan

The hosting of ISSCR 2012 offered high school students in Yokohama City a very exciting opportunity to collaborate with the local and foreign stem cell researchers. Six months before ISSCR took place, a special collaboration course started at the Science Frontier High School in Yokohama. The local high school students attended three lectures from young researchers including Dr. Kazutoshi Takahashi, a leading researcher and an assistant to Dr. Yamanaka at CiRA, Kyoto University. As post-conference events, a science cafe, poster presentations by the high school students, and a review by the ISSCR speakers including Sir Ian Wilmut and Dr. Yamanaka were held.

The ISSCR Conference provided a total of 14,000 room nights during the 4-day event, and it brought an economic impact of 1.7 billion JPY (17 million USD) to Yokohama City and Kanagawa Prefecture.

Research on iPS cells and regenerative medicine is very active in Yokohama, making the city a natural choice to hold such meetings. Yokohama hosted the Annual Congress of the Japanese Society for Regenerative Medicine in 2007 and 2012, and will be hosting it again 2013. The Yokohama City University School of Medicine Department of Regenerative Medicine collaborates with RIKEN in Kobe and the National Institute for Materials Science (NIMS) to actively research regenerative medicine related to internal organs. In January 2013, the same School of Medicine succeeded in producing a cancer stem cell from human iPS cell. After Dr. Yamanaka won the Nobel Prize, the Japanese government decided to concentrate on supporting iPS cell research, and for the fiscal year 2013-14, an unprecedented 90 billion JPY (96 million USD) will be budgeted by the National government for this purpose.