

Report of the BTS Annual Congress 2022

From 4th April-6th April 2022, the British Toxicology Society (BTS) held its annual congress at the Hilton hotel in Newcastle Gateshead, overlooking the historic Tyne bridge.

Prof Shirley Price, President of the BTS, inaugurated the conference and welcomed all attendees to join the discussions over the next three days of what proved to be a very engaging conference. Professor John Colbourne of the University of Birmingham, United Kingdom, gave the plenary lecture on new approaches in precision toxicology. Organisers, participants, and volunteers enthusiastically contributed to the Annual General Meeting. Two parallel symposiums followed the same, namely on the developments in regulatory toxicity testing for endocrine activity/disruption and the MRC ITTP biannual symposium. The coffee break was a hotspot for introductions and interactions between academics and industrial partners. Next, Prof Price welcomed us to reflect upon the past 50 years of BTS. Dr Gillian Conway from the University of Swansea delivered the Malcolm Blackwell Award & NEST Lecture on using *in vitro* 3D liver models for the development of hazard assessment protocols following exposure to engineered nanomaterials. We ended the day with a reception and an NEST networking session and a pub quiz with many young participants.

On the second day, two parallel symposiums explored the importance of nonclinical studies in predicting adversity in patients in clinical trials and building confidence in computational models for risk assessment decision making. During the coffee break, participants enthusiastically visited the poster exhibition. Following this was a BTS workshop on exploring opportunities to implement the 3Rs for chemical safety assessment, chaired by Dr Phil Botham from Syngenta. During the coffee break, students, academics, and industrial sponsors engaged with the promise of collaborating in the future. In the afternoon, students delivered brief communications, followed by a question and answering session with the audience. Syngenta's Dr Richard Currie delivered the mid-career prize lecture, "The Accidental Toxicologist". The day ended with two parallel BTS speciality sub-sections discussions on the mechanistic and discovery toxicology and regulatory toxicology risk assessment. Following the networking and drinks, the Congress dinner took place on the river terrace of the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art. The incoming BTS President, Prof Brian Lake, gave a thank you speech following the announcement of the poster and oral presentation prizes. Afterwards, attendees enjoyed a drink on the river terrace overlooking the Tyne as a live band performed.

The last day of the conference, April 6th, saw two symposiums on the health effects of the environmental complex chemical mixture and micro-sampling in toxicology. Dr Ian Musgrave from the University of Adelaide delivered the ASCEPT invitation lecture on herbal risk. Afternoon symposiums focused on risk assessment in the 21st century and on the nonclinical development of adeno-associated virus-based gene therapy products. Professor Lake concluded the conference by thanking the engaged audience for their continued support of BTS.

The BTS travel bursary allowed me to be a part of the excellent community at BTS Annual Congress 2022, which is highly beneficial to my research career. I was able to interact with various academics and industrial partners who work on a similar field to my research and gained useful insights which will shape my research in the future. I am grateful to the British Toxicology Society for providing me with this opportunity.

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