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Travel report ECI 2015 – Vienna, Austria

The 4th European Congress of Immunology (ECI), organized by the European Federation of Immunological Sciences (EFIS), was held from the 6th to 9th of September 2015 in Vienna. Over 4.000 EFIS members, including members of the Dutch society for immunology (NVVI), attended this conference. Besides the many plenary talks and workshops, most of the research was presented in the form of poster presentations.

The meeting started on Sunday evening with an outstanding performance by an Austrian classical orchestra, followed by a keynote lecture by Dr. Klaus Rajewsky on the role of the B cell receptor in development, memory and malignancies. I was intrigued by this presentation, as I conduct my PhD research in a group focused on antibody immunotherapy, mainly in cancer. On the following days I attended several sessions, among others, on mucosal immunity, anti-viral vaccines, (cancer)immunotherapy, immunity against infections (especially respiratory viral infections), antibody therapeutics and also an eye-opening session on scientific writing by Dr. Karen Chu, the associate editor of the European Journal of Immunology. During the poster walks I had fruitful discussions with others on the above mentioned subjects.

I had the opportunity to present my own data (on the role of human amniotic fluid antibodies in the prevention of respiratory syncytial virus infection in newborns) in the form of a poster presentation during the session "Immunity to Virus Infection". I was really pleased with the amount of interaction, feedback and discussion on my poster.

At the ECI 2015 I was able to gain deeper insight into my own research focus via other highly-skilled scientists in my field, as well as broaden my scope on other subjects (e.g. function of other cells in the immune system). The meeting was very well-organized. I would like to thank the NVVI for their financial support which enabled me to attend this meeting.