London meeting to provide unique insight into future of cardiovascular medicine

For cardiovascular scientists around the world London 2012 not only signifies the Olympics but also another major international event – the second Frontiers in Cardiovascular Biology (FCVB) meeting. FCVB 2012 will show case the best and latest science from the cardiovascular arena, giving delegates unique insights into the future of cardiovascular medicine, and journalists great opportunities for covering ground breaking stories "The meeting brings together in one venue possibly the greatest concentration of cardiovascular scientists in the world," says Professor Sian Harding, the FCVB 2012 chairman of the Core Scientific Committee. "Delegates will find themselves right at the cutting edge, with opportunities to learn about innovations before theyve even started along the translational science trajectory. Therell be lots of valuable networking possibilities for people at all stages of their careers."
The conference, organised by the Council on Basic Cardiovascular Science (CBCS) of the European Society of Cardiology (ESC) together with eight ESC Working Groups and six European basic science societies, builds on the success of the first FCVB meeting, held in Berlin in 2010, which attracted over 700 delegates. With abstract submissions up 30% for FCVB 2012, the organisers (are expecting between 800 and 1,000 delegates. "With the venue having capacity for only 1,000 delegates were hoping that we wont be forced to close registration early," cautions Harding, from Imperial College (London, UK). "We deliberately chose the South Kensington Campus of Imperial College in London to give a clear signal that its an academic enterprise, projecting a strong ethos of the working scientist. All delegates should feel really comfortable in this setting," says Harding.

The conference, covering both cardiac and vascular science, has been designed to be cross disciplinary. "Weve highlighted integrative scientific work that should be of interest to both cardiac and vascular researchers. To stimulate scientific progress its vitally important to promote good communications between disciplines and avoid scientists becoming isolated in their specific niches. Its an approach that helps younger researchers to develop sustainable careers," says Professor Axel Pries, chairman of the ESC Council on Basic Cardiovascular Science.

Further synergy, he adds, has been created by the good mix of basic scientists and clinicians attending the meeting, with a strong translational component. "To allow advances to reach the bedside as quickly as possible we need to know from the outset the questions clinicians want answering. Equally clinicians need to understand from scientists the potential for basic science. To achieve the best outcomes we need to foster good two-way communications," says Pries, from the Charité Hospital (Berlin, Germany).

The major themes running throughout the programme include bioimagining, degeneration and regeneration and inflammation.

- Bioimaging: In recognition of Imperial Colleges world class bioimaging facilities, the congress will focus on advances allowing new ways to image cardiac myocytes as well as atherosclerotic plaques, and the movement of blood and formation of clots.
- Regenerative medicine: The programme will explore advances in pluripotent stem cells and highlight progress towards clinical treatments. Sessions will consider the potential for cells taken from the skin, teeth and hair follicles of patients to be transformed into cardiac myocytes, and the new concept of "disease in a dish" that uses stem cells to test new ideas and drugs.
- Inflammation: Two symposia will present new insights in the central role of inflammation in development of atherosclerosis, emphasising the potential for translation into novel therapeutic strategies.

Altogether 25 symposia have been organised at FCVB 2012 across three parallel sessions, with hot topics for reporters including genetics, vascular remodeling in ageing, therapeutic targets in calcium handling, and mitochondria biogenesis. In the symposia, presentations from invited speakers will be mixed with shorter talks relevant to the area, selected from submitted abstracts, ensuring that the latest data is presented in every field. "This format enables the inclusion of both the most recent data and strong involvement from younger investigators wholl find themselves speaking on the same platform as their heroes," says Harding. "Particular emphasis has been placed on participation from young investigators because theyre the people whore continually revitalizing the science base."

There will be a range of internationally acclaimed key note speakers including:

- Professor Salvador Moncada (London, UK) talking about competition in scientific research;
- Professor Deepak Srivastava (San Francisco, USA) giving exciting information on transdifferentiation of somatic cells into cardiomyocytes;
- Professor Peter Davies (Philadelphia, USA), giving an experts view on gene regulation and blood flow;
- Professor Ron Heeren (Amsterdam, NL) showing sophisticated, new molecular imaging techniques of the heart;
- Professor Peter Carmeliet (Leuven, BE) discussing maturation of new blood vessels.

Other highlights of FCVB 2012 include a vibrant exhibition area, featuring the latest microscopic instrumentation, tissue culture and molecular biology equipment, and two satellite translational symposia featuring antiplatelet treatments in acute coronary syndromes and coagulation and anticoagulation. The lively social programme includes an informal party hosted at the students union (Metric Club) giving delegates an opportunity to mingle with colleagues and friends on a "typical London night out".

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