1st EDITION UiTM GLOBAL PENANG Newsletter

GLOBAL INSIGHTS: NAVIGATING UNIVERSALITY WITH UiTM PULAU PINANG

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

UiTM Global @ Office of International Affairs,
Academic Affairs Division,
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Pulau Pinang Branch,
Pulau Pinang,
Malaysia.

Exploring Cutting-Edge Innovations: Highlights from the 22nd SCI/RSC Medicinal Chemistry Symposium

Nursyuhada Azzman

Nursyuhada Azzman was awarded an SCI Travel Bursary to attend the 22nd SCI/RSC Medicinal Chemistry Symposium, held from the 10th to the 13th of September at **Churchill College, Cambridge, United Kingdom**. Upon her arrival at Storey's Way, she was immediately captivated by the college's charming architecture and the collegiate atmosphere.

With a 50-year history of hosting meetings and conferences, Churchill College is renowned for its warm hospitality, ensuring participants have a comfortable and enjoyable experience.

During the symposium, Nursyuhada was introduced to new strategies in medicinal chemistry relevant to her PhD research, specifically in unravelling a novel anticancer compound through scaffold hopping of the quinolone core. The event broadened her horizons, presenting many inspiring drug discovery stories that demonstrated how modern medicinal chemistry sets no limits.

A picture taken at Cambridge Market while waiting for a bus to Stansted on my last day in UK. I went there to get some souvenirs for my friends and family.

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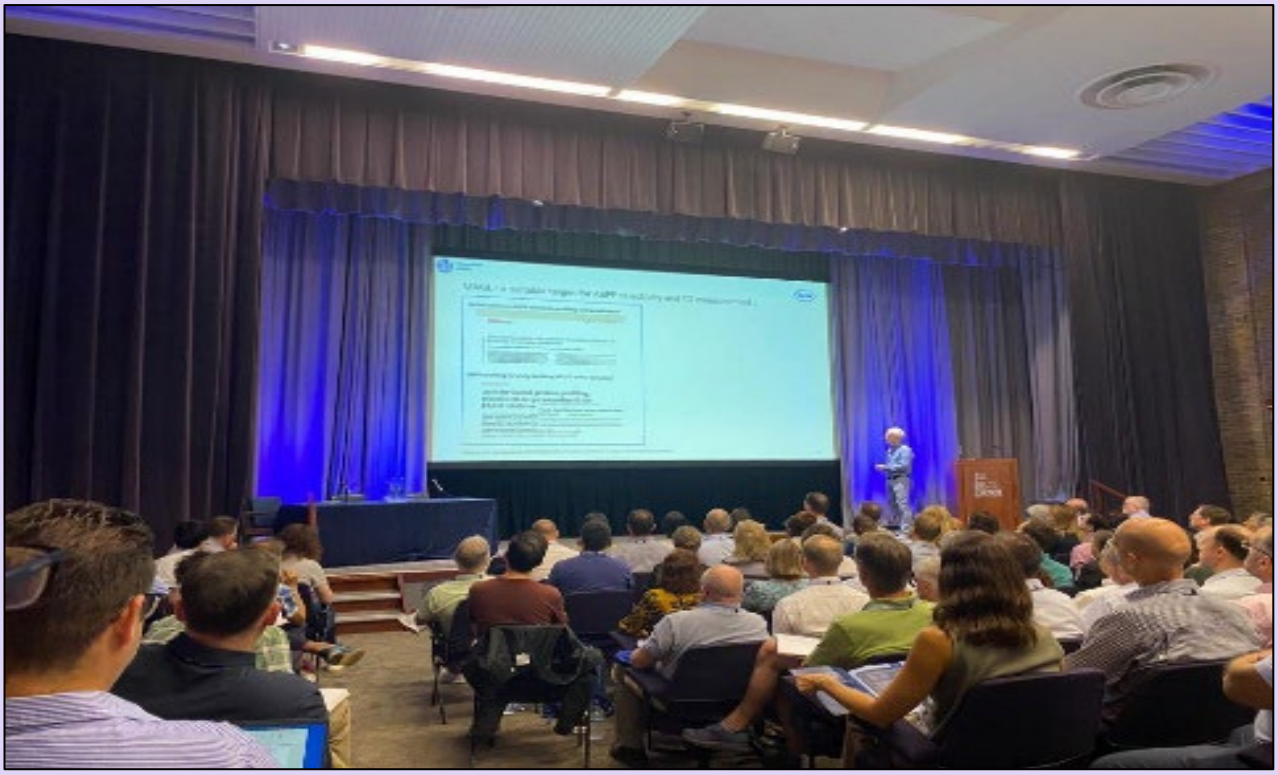

In addition to the captivating scientific presentations, all the speakers were eager to share their knowledge, and the question-and-answer sessions were engaging and insightful. Nursyuhada learned about several novel targets in anticancer research, including hedgehog, the STAT3 pathway, CDK7, KRAS, NMT, CTPS1, BRPF1b, SOS1, SHP2, and arginase inhibitors. Notably, many recent discoveries focused on inhibiting protein-protein interactions in cancer pathways, scaffold hopping, and using artificial intelligence (AI) to develop new anticancer candidates. The development of the first AI-driven candidate drugs was especially fascinating. Through fragment screening, virtual screening, and generative AI design (such as the Gambit generative system), the drug EXS21546 was synthesised. It is currently undergoing phase I clinical trials for kidney and lung cancers, highlighting how rapidly technological advancements are accelerating drug discovery.

The three-day symposium also allowed her networking opportunities with industries and academia. Nursyuhada had the pleasure of meeting inspirational women in science, such as Eda Canales from Gilead and Karin Briner from Novartis. These encounters gave her valuable insights and motivation to excel in her research. One particular talk that resonated with her was Karin Briner's presentation on simplifying modalities for next-generation medicines, emphasising the importance of reducing complexities in drug development. Through the unique networking opportunities and fascinating presentations, this symposium exceeded Nursyuhada's expectations. She expressed her gratitude to the organisers, **UiTM Pulau Pinang Branch**, and the SCI-RSC Travel Grant for supporting her participation.

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