

The 5th International Aspergillus Meeting (alias Asperfest5) was held April 4-5, 2008 in Edinburgh, Scotland. The meeting was attended by 120 participants representing 18 countries.

Summary of community discussion: The community discussion included an update on the status of Gavin Sherlock and Jennifer Wortman's RO1 proposal to build AspGD (Aspergillus Genome Database modeled on SGD and CGD). The first submission scored well, but didn't make the payline. A revised version was submitted including 55 support letters from the community assembled by Michelle Momany on behalf of the AGRPC. The submission was still pending.

The community discussion portion of the meeting focused on a proposal by Jay Dunlap, P.I. of the *N. crassa* PO1 program project grant, to include *A. nidulans* knock-outs in the renewal application. Jay had previously discussed this idea with Michelle Momany and Steve Osmani. The proposal would exploit the system developed for *N. crassa* during the initial PO1 proposal to make deletion cassettes for *A. nidulans*. Steve presented the proposal to the *Aspergillus* community at the Asperfest5 meeting and a discussion followed. Points raised in the discussion included:

- This is a great opportunity that would help both groups.
- By combining these two powerful model organisms the *Neurospora* and *Aspergillus* communities will better understand the biology of filamentous fungi.
- Construction of an *A. nidulans* deletion collection has been a priority for our research community for several years as reflected in the minutes of our annual meetings.
- Strains constructed by community members with these deletion cassettes should be made widely available via deposit at the Fungal Genetics Stock Center. In this regard Steve Harris mentioned that the microplate format used to distribute *N. crassa* deletions is very useful and should be adopted for *A. nidulans*.
- Many questions were raised about possible other later applications of this idea including GFP fusion and inducible promoter constructs.

The idea was received with great enthusiasm with discussion centering on the tremendous potential of such a collection and the synergy of working with the *Neurospora* group. After discussion, the 120 *Aspergillus* researchers attending the meeting voted unanimously to support the inclusion of *A. nidulans* knock-out cassettes in the PO1 renewal.

Kevin McCluskey of the FGSC invited all researchers to deposit already existing knock out strains with the FGSC for distribution. The FGSC continues to be a fantastic resource to allow sharing of research materials.

Poster Prizes: The Novozymes student poster prizes were awarded to Gethin Allen (University of Sheffield, UK) and Ozgur Bayram (Georg-August-University, Goettingen, Germany) Poster judges were Jennifer Wortman, Jan Lehmbeck and Carsten Olsen.

Elections: Terms ended for AGRPC members Gerhard Braus and Gary Payne. Both agreed to stand for re-election and both were elected to another 3-year term. After

Asperfest, the 2008 AGRPC met and elected Michelle Momany Chair and Gary Payne Program Chair for Asperfest6.

Thanks: The AGRPC is grateful to meeting organizer, Gerhard Braus for his efforts in making Asperfest 5 a success. We also thank Kevin McCluskey and the FGSC for great support of the meeting and for hosting our website and supporting fungal biology in general. We also thank our sponsors Novozymes and Kikkoman. They made the meeting much more enjoyable.