

KEIICHI AKAHOSHI

International Research Travel Award Application

A description of our research project:

To improve the prognosis of cholangiocarcinoma, we investigated biomarkers that can contribute to select the patients who can take benefit from adjuvant chemotherapy after surgical resection. Cholangiocarcinoma patients who underwent surgical resection were enrolled. Twenty-six patients who received gemcitabine adjuvant chemotherapy, 36 who received S-1 adjuvant chemotherapy and 36 who didn't receive any adjuvant chemotherapy were immunohistochemically analyzed. We focused on tumoral expression of orotate phosphoribosyltransferase (OPRT). As a result, S-1 adjuvant chemotherapy for cholangiocarcinoma patients was effective to improve disease free survival rates only in the patients who exhibited high tumoral OPRT expression. OPRT is expected to contribute to the optimization and personalization of adjuvant chemotherapy for cholangiocarcinoma.

An overview of us:

We are the surgical department of Tokyo Medical and Dental University. Twenty academic surgeons including Professor Minoru Tanabe belong to this department. All of us are engaged in both clinical medicine and research. I am an assistant professor of this department, and now mainly engaged in clinical research and education of medical students.

A statement of need:

Japan is far from the US, and I don't take any financial support from our institution. The financial burden of international travel to the 2017 ASC is very heavy. If I can take this award, it will be greatly helpful for me to attend the meeting. My accepted abstract isn't related to any work performed in the US.

Sincerely,

Keiichi Akahoshi, MD

Hepato-biliary pancreatic surgery, Tokyo Medical and Dental Univ.

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DAVID BERGER-RICHARDSON

Dear reviewing committee,

I am Canadian and am completing a graduate degree during residency at University of Toronto. My thesis is on mechanisms of tumor seeding. The aspect of this project that will be presented at ASC is a survey exploring beliefs and practices among Canadian surgeons with respect to prevention of wound recurrence.

I have been involved in all aspects of this survey: I designed, pilot-tested and distributed it. I received the responses and analysed them. This has been done under supervision of a team of surgical oncologists who are on my thesis committee.

My career goal is to be a surgeon-scientist with a focus on gastrointestinal oncology. I am passionate about research and have actively sought opportunities to disseminate my findings by publishing and presenting at national scientific meetings. In the past 2 years, I have presented at meetings in Montreal, Quebec City and Toronto. I also presented in Jacksonville (ASC 2016 for which I did not receive a Research Travel Award) and benefited from the international exposure. I am fortunate to have these opportunities to present my work, network and attend meetings, however, I have incurred significant financial burden in doing so.

It will be a privilege to attend this prestigious meeting again this year after an enriching experience in 2016. Your generosity is greatly appreciated to allow me to achieve this goal.

Warm regards,

David Berger-Richardson

General Surgery PGY-3, University of Toronto, Canada

Telephone: 647-898-7263

E-mail: davidbergerrichardson@gmail.com

SUSANNA W.L. DE GEUS

Susanna W.L. de Geus
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December 5, 2016

International Research Travel Award Committee
Academic Surgical Congress (ASC)
11300 West Olympic Blvs., Suite 600
Los Angeles, CA 90064

Dear members of the International Research Travel Award Committee,

By means of this letter I would like to thank the committee for consideration of my application for the ASC International Research Travel Award to attend the upcoming ASC Annual Meeting to share our work entitled, "The prognostic Impact of HLA Class I (A, B, C), HLA-E and HLA-G expression in Pancreatic Cancer".

Since my second year of medical school at the University of Leiden (NL), I have been privileged to investigate human leukocyte antigen (HLA) expression in pancreatic adenocarcinoma under supervision of dr. Peter J.K. Kuppen. During this project, I was responsible for the collection of surgical specimen, immunohistochemistry, and statistical analysis. This work did not receive any funding; however, I was allowed to perform research in the university laboratory and the Dutch Cancer Institute kindly provided anti-HLA antibodies.

As a medical student, currently in my last year of clinical, it is difficult to obtain funding for conference expenses through a research grant. I am thankful, then, for the opportunity to apply for the ASC International Research Travel Award to attend the forthcoming ASC Annual Meeting. My attendance at this conference will give me the opportunity to gain novel insight into my research interests and meet with leaders in the field. This is especially consequential given my intention to apply for surgical residency in the United States after graduation. Furthermore, I have had the pleasure of being part of Dr. Jennifer F. Tseng's Boston-based research group in 2014-2015, and it would be wonderful to be reunited with my former team during the impending ASC Annual Meeting.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am looking forward to attending the ACS Annual Meeting, and I kindly request that the committee looks favorable on my application.

Yours sincerely,



Susanna W.L. de Geus

JOSE DOS SANTOS SOUZA

This is an evaluation of surgical capacity in municipal hospitals in the interior of Amazonas. The 62 municipalities of Amazonas were stratified by population quartile and a random sample of 20 hospitals were selected for application of a mixed-methods assessment tool. To date, results demonstrate infrastructure and workforce challenges. Only 28.6% of hospitals visited report an anesthesiologist ≥ 1 day per week and only half report internet access. Qualitative interviews have elucidated challenges faced and how they are overcome. “We only have an on call doctor 15 days [a month] [...] when the doctor is here, he has to do everything: orthopedics, gynecology, obstetrics, surgery and more. Here the nurses and nurse-technicians do the work of doctors as well [...]”

Amazonas is a unique state in Brazil; the majority of the municipalities outside of the capital are accessible solely by boat or small plane and simply visiting these remote hospitals is a logistical achievement. This project is a self-funded PhD thesis and is part of a collaboration between the Universidade do Estado do Amazonas (UEA), the Universidade de São Paulo, and the Harvard Program in Global Surgery and Social Change. Financial support to attend ACS2017 will make it possible for me to present my work, interact with other academic surgeons and share the realities of practicing in an austere environment. This experience will foster the development of research capacity at UEA while bringing in a fresh voice and perspective to ASC.

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NORALIE GEESSINK

Application International Research Travel Award

Short description project

The EASY-GO project is a collaboration between the departments of Geriatrics and Surgery from the Radboud university medical center, the Netherlands. The Easycare in Geriatric Onco-surgery (EASY-GO) intervention is developed to optimize the shared decision-making process among older patients with colorectal or pancreatic cancer. The intervention comprised a training for surgeons, residents and nurse specialists in shared decision-making (SDM) and frailty. Afterwards, consecutive patients aged ≥ 65 years with newly diagnosed colorectal or pancreatic cancer were screened on frailty and SDM was applied. Training-on-the-job was given to stimulate adherence to the intervention. To evaluate the EASY-GO intervention, patient-reported experience measures (patient-reported level of SDM, patient satisfaction, patient involvement in decision-making and patient's decisional regret) were used.

Overview authors / research team

N.H. Geessink, MD	Junior researcher / PhD-candidate
Y. Schoon, MD PhD (project leader)	Geriatrician Head of Emergency department
M.G.M. Olde Rikkert, MD PhD	Geriatrician Head of department of Geriatrics
H. Van Goor, MD PhD	Surgeon Professor of Surgical Education

Statement necessity award

The EASY-GO project, accomplished by Noralie, was funded by the Dutch Cancer Society for only two years (May 2014 – May 2016). Since there is no funding left and the department of Geriatrics already compensated for 6 more months to continue this PhD-project, the department is not able to pay for an international congress visit. The EASY-GO intervention is of main importance concerning an interesting and popular topic. Because of the aging population and increasing multimorbidity and frailty, the surgical evaluation of the growing group of older cancer patients becomes more complex. Therefore, multidisciplinary collaboration is increasingly important, both in education settings and in clinical care. In addition, SDM and goal-oriented communication are widely recommended to involve patients in decision-making and deliver patient-preferred care. Attending the ASC would be helpful for us since input for the discussion section is very welcome. Additionally, attending the ASC would be of added value for Noralie's personal development.

Contact information

Name applicant:	Noralie Geessink
Institution:	Radboud university medical center
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Phone number:	0031243668296

GEORGE JM HOURSTON

19th November 2016

RE: Application for the 2017 ASC International Research Travel Award

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are writing to apply for the 2017 ASC International Research Travel Award, having had an abstract accepted at the 12th Annual Academic Surgical Congress.

Our study reviews the impact of acellular dermal matrices (ADMs) on the types of reconstructive breast surgery procedures performed at our UK-based unit. ADMs are decellularized soft-tissue grafts with a wide range of uses across many plastic surgery subspecialties. They have only been adopted in the UK over the last few years, with no other centre yet to describe the influence they have had on their practice.

The project was carried out by medical students (Hadyn KN Kankam and George JM Hourston), a breast reconstruction specialist nurse and a group of consultant breast and plastic surgeons led by Professor Charles M Malata. The medical students, both members of the University of Cambridge, undertook the design, data collection and analysis as well as the reporting of the findings.

Funding for travel to such conferences is sparse from the university or hospital department. It would be a tremendous opportunity to attend the 12th Annual Academic Surgical Congress for the presentation of our work and as such this award would be invaluable.

Thank you for considering our application.

Yours faithfully,

Hadyn KN Kankam & George JM Hourston

Contact Details:

Hadyn KN Kankam
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E-mail: hk371@cam.ac.uk

George JM Hourston
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HADYN KN KANKAM

19th November 2016

RE: Application for the 2017 ASC International Research Travel Award

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Hadyn KN Kankam & George JM Hourston

Contact Details:

Hadyn KN Kankam
Telephone: +44 7539 351830
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George JM Hourston
Telephone: +44 7523 007636
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MUHAMMAD SOHAIB KHAN

APPLICATION LETTER FOR INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH TRAVEL AWARD

Project:

Appendicoliths are present both in asymptomatic population and in patients with appendicitis. This study has identified the differences between them. Appendicoliths greater than 4 mm in diameter, more than 3 in number or located at the base are independently associated with appendicitis. This study improves our understanding of the pathogenesis of appendicitis that will aid in the diagnosis of equivocal cases.

Authors:

I am a 2nd year general surgery resident, aspiring to pursue an academic career. Our team includes residents and faculty members from Surgery and Radiology. We are from Aga Khan University and Hospital, ranked to be the best Medical University of Pakistan and the only JCIA accredited hospital of Pakistan.

Statement of Necessity:

For the upcoming ASC 2017, I have two abstracts accepted for Quick shot presentation as first author and presenter. This will be my first opportunity to present at an international conference. However, I face severe financial constraints as the overall cost of attending ASC, which includes registration and travel from Karachi, Pakistan, far exceeds my capacity. While my institution is very supportive, resources are limited. This presentation will allow me to share our findings, learn from others' experiences and further my career as an academic surgeon. The travel grant will also allow me to continue pursuing research that has international applicability and produce cost-effective management strategies for under-resourced environments.

Muhammad Sohaib Khan, MD
Resident
Department of Surgery, Aga Khan University
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MICHAEL LAFFIN



Dr. Michael Laffin
University of Alberta
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ASC International Research Travel Award

To the ASC International Research Travel Award selection committee,

Thank you very much for considering my application for this award. I look forward to attending the conference, and this award would ease the financial burden that attendance would place on me.

I will be presenting the research project entitled "The inflammatory environment of the gut in the surgical Crohn's patient." The abstract addresses differing expression of cytokines in colonic tissues in respect to their pathologic role in post-operative recurrence and assesses whether specific cytokine profiles can be used to predict recurrence. The research team is comprised of myself, a PhD candidate and General Surgery resident, three clinician Drs. Richard Fedorak, Bryan Dicken and Troy Perry, and a basic science researcher, Dr. Karen Madsen.

This award would provide a significant amount of financial relief. In pursuing my PhD, I have taken time away from my General Surgery residency, and as such do not receive a complete salary from clinical work. I am also expected to cover expenses related to my postgraduate medical education tuition. Unfortunately, my travel cannot be supported by my principle investigator or institution. Funding for international conference travel has been placed under scrutiny in Alberta given a recent decline in oil and gas prices, the negative impact on health care funding and the economy in general. This has led to difficulty in receiving funds from the General Surgery residency program, compounded by the fact that my graduate studies render me a 'part-time' resident in terms of financial support.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Michael Laffin

YIBO LI

2017 ASC International Research Travel Award

Email: li4@ualberta.ca

Phone: 780-318-0186

We conducted a multicenter prospective cohort study examining the relationship between baseline frailty and risk of readmission or post-discharge death in 308 elderly acute care surgery patients. Using multivariable logistic regression, we showed that at 30 days, frail patients were more than four times as likely to be readmitted or have died compared to non-frail patients. By 6 months, a dose response was observed, with increasing frailty severity accounting for increased risk of readmission. This is one of the first studies to assess the impact of frailty on readmission after discharge in this population. Our findings can assist in developing targeted interventions to prevent readmissions in this vulnerable population.

This project was conducted out of the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada, and involved two tertiary care centres in Alberta, Canada. The principal investigator is a surgeon-scientist at the University of Alberta, and the first author and presenter is a third-year medical student at the same institution. Other authors include a research assistant, a professor of surgery, geriatricians, and an internist.

There is no funding available through the University of Alberta nor its Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry to support the presenter in attending and presenting at this conference. Other potential sources of funding, including the Medical Students' Association, the Students' Union, and the provincial health research organization, have been investigated unsuccessfully. With no sources of income and a rising student debt, the presenter is in financial need to attend this conference.

PAOLA MAGISTRI



UNIMORE
UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI
MODENA E REGGIO EMILIA

**Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary Surgery
and Liver Transplantation Unit,
University of Modena and Reggio Emilia,
Modena, Italy
Chief: Prof. Fabrizio Di Benedetto**

Modena, November 5th 2016

Dear AAS and SUS,

I'm Dr. Paolo Magistri from the Division of Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary surgery and Liver Transplantation of Modena, Italy. Thanks for accepting our work "*Minimally Invasive Surgery For HCC: Comparison Of Laparoscopic And Robotic Approach*" for a Quick Shot presentation at the 12th Annual Academic Surgical Congress.

Briefly, we retrospectively reviewed demographics, clinical and pathological characteristics and short-term outcomes of patients underwent minimally invasive resections for HCC at our Institution between June 2012 and May 2016. Our results show that the robotic approach is a reliable tool for an accurate oncologic surgery, comparable to the laparoscopic approach. Also, robotic surgery allows the surgeon to safely approach liver segments that are hardly resectable in laparoscopy, namely segment I-VII-VIII. We believe that a modern hepatobiliary center should offer both open and minimally invasive approaches to the liver disease, in order to provide the best care for each patient, according to the individual comorbidities, risk factors, and personal quality of life expectations.

This work is the result of our minimally-invasive surgery practice, that started in 2014 and involves mostly young surgeons and residents. As a new Candidate member of the AAS, I would love to attend the meeting this year presenting our work. Unfortunately, there are no funds to support my registration and the long travel to the Congress. This travel award would

be a great opportunity for me to start my novel membership with a personal contribution to the annual Congress.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with questions or concerns.

Yours sincerely,

Paolo Magistri

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Magistri', written in a cursive style.

Dr. Paolo Magistri
Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary Surgery and Liver Transplantation Unit,
University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, Modena, Italy
Via del Pozzo 71
41124, Modena, Italy
Tel. (+39) 349 160 3402
Mail to: paolo.magistri@uniroma1.it

ALSUHAIBANI MARYA

Dears,

I hope this letter meets you well.

Retrospective cohort study including 566 obese patients underwent bariatric surgery at tertiary health care center, Saudi Arabia. Almost all of them underwent gastric sleeve. After 24 months of follow up there was significant reduction in baseline BMI and HbA1C. Baseline HDL, non-HDL cholesterol and Triglyceride also showed significant improvement at 12th months post-operative. Out of 79 hypertensive patients, 57 patients had remission. Among 103 pre-operative diabetic patient 71 had complete remission and 17 had partial remission. The predicted 10-years risk of CVD decreased significantly from 7.4% to 5.5%.

1- Alsuhaibani Marya, Medical Student, Qassim University, Qassim, Saudi Arabia.

2- Alharbi Amjad, Medical Student, Qassim University, Qassim, Saudi Arabia.

3- Alshehri Abdullah, Medical Intern, Umm-alqura University, Makkah, Saudi Arabia.

4- Alghamdi Essam, Medical Intern, Umm-alqura University, Makkah, Saudi Arabia.

5- Aljohani Raneen, Medical Student, Umm-alqura University, Makkah, Saudi Arabia.

6- Elmorsy Soha, Research Consultant, Head of Mass Gathering, Epidemiology and Statistics Department, King Abdullah Medical City, Makkah, Saudi Arabia.

7- Alshehri Jasser, Family Physician and Post Graduate and Scholarship Director, King Abdullah Medical City, Makkah, Saudi Arabia.

8- Almontashery Ali, Consultant General / MIS Bariatric Surgeon, King Abdullah Medical City, Makkah, Saudi Arabia.

The Award will give a hand in building my dream of being a good surgeon and practice surgery in North America. It also plays a role to help undergraduate students to share their work and project. It will also help to disseminate an idea about obesity treatment practice and its outcome in Saudi Arabia as an example of developing countries.

Applicant contact:

Name: Alsuhaibani Marya

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ASAD MOOSA

7th November'16

To,
The International Research Travel Award Committee,
Annual Academic Surgical Congress 2017.

Respected Sir,

I wish that this letter finds you in the best of your health. I would like to introduce myself as **Dr. Asad Moosa**, and I am currently a **General Surgery Resident** at the **Aga Khan University Hospital, Karachi, Pakistan**.

“Can clinical evaluation determine the need for pelvic X-rays in awake & stable blunt trauma patients?” is my research which is accepted for presentation at the **Annual Academic Surgical Congress 2017**. In this we present how significant clinical examination is in proving pelvic fractures in an awake & stable blunt trauma patient & do we really need to have pelvic X-rays on such patients. The need of such a research is very important in a developing country where hospitals have minimal resources and the patients bear all their expenses, as mostly they are not covered by health insurance.

I am the principal investigator of this study which was conducted on the basis of Sensitivity, Specificity, Positive predictive value & Negative predictive value of a clinical examination versus pelvic X-ray, supervised by **Dr. Hasnain Zafar**, Associate Professor and Trauma surgeon, Aga Khan University Hospital.

Attending & presenting at the **ASC 2017** will be an excellent opportunity to learn, familiarizing myself with state of the art technologies and cutting edge research techniques which will prove to be highly fruitful for my career and society.

Sincerely,

Dr. Asad Moosa
Resident, General Surgery,
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Karachi, Pakistan.
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CHRISTOPHE MPIRIMBANYI

December 4th, 2016

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Application for International Research Travel Awards to the 2017 Academic Surgical Congress

I am pleased to submit my application for the International Research Travel Awards for the 2017 Academic Surgical Congress.

My name is Christophe Mpirimbanyi, and I am a final year (PGY4) Chief General Surgery Resident at College of Medicine and Health Sciences, at the University of Rwanda in Kigali. I have performed a study entitled "Emergency General Surgery in Rwandan District Hospitals: Spectrum, Management, and Outcomes of Care", which was accepted to be presented at the 12th Annual Academic Surgical Congress.

This study is a part of an Operational Research Training program organized by Partners In Health, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health of Rwanda and the University of Rwanda. The principal authors are myself and Alexandre Nyirimodoka, and we are both surgical residents from Rwanda. Through the research training program above, I have become very enthusiastic about pursuing a career as a surgeon investigator.

Unfortunately, I do not have a sponsor that can cover all the costs of travel, therefore funding is a big limiting factor for attending this important scientific conference. I am really hopeful to attend as I am very interested in research and have a lot to learn. Rwanda is a developing country but it is dedicated to scientific and health sector related research, and I wish to help myself, my colleagues, and my country grow in this area. It is in this regard that I request for a scholarship to help me attend this conference.

I hope you will give me the opportunity to attend the conference, and thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Christophe Mpirimbanyi, MD

Chief Resident in General Surgery

College of Medicine and Health Sciences, University of Rwanda

Email: mpirimbanyi@gmail.com

Phone:(+250)788670915

ROBERT MUNYANEZA

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH TRAVEL AWARD STATEMENT

I'm writing this statement as an application for the 2017 academic surgical congress international research travel awards.

The abstract "Teaching Surgical Skills In A Resource Limited Setting: Massed vs. Distributed practice, an RCT" was a project done for comparison of massed and distributed practice in teaching surgical skills in our setting, as a new simulation center was implemented at University Teaching Hospital of Kigali (CHUK). We recruited trainees and assigned them in two groups and taught them ultrasound guided core needle biopsy on a breast simulation model, the skill learnt was assessed after one month of training and no statistical difference was detected between the two groups.

The research was done by MUNYANEZA Robert; I am a general surgeon who graduated in august 2016 at University of Rwanda and currently works at University Teaching Hospital of Butare (CHUB). The study was supervised by NTIRENGANYA Faustin who is a plastic surgeon working at CHUK and is the coordinator of the post graduate training of general surgery in Rwanda, and RIVIELO Robert who is a general surgeon and trainer from the Human Resource For Health program.

As a young surgeon, I would like to request for funding in order to attend this important conference, It will give me the opportunity to increase my knowledge and learn more about the latest development in surgery as this conference will be the meeting of surgeons from all over the world.

Thank you for considering this request.

Email: rubereti@gmail.com

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LEONARD NDAYIZEYE

Re: International Research Travel Award, ASC2017

Fast Track Surgery for Abdominal Surgery in Rwanda: A Randomized, Controlled Trial

Description of project:

This study was a randomized control trial of Fast Track surgery in abdominal surgery in Rwanda. The study was done in one national referral hospital. Core elements of FTS include optimal pain control with early initiation of mobilization and feeding and early discharge, compared to conventional surgery where there was no protocol for pain control, mobilisation, post-operative feeding and discharge. It included adults patients underwent elective abdominal surgery in 4 months (October2015 to January 2016). The aim of this study was to evaluate the impact of FTS among patient undergoing abdominal surgery at a Rwandan referral hospital.

Overview of authors and research team:

The author is a young Rwandan surgeon with two co-authors one local surgeon and US faculty working in Rwanda. The authors are also honorary lecturers at university of Rwanda. One of the goals of the project is to provide the standard care of abdominal surgery. The study was done in Rwanda.

Why the award is necessary:

This award will help me in local transport at USA and registration; our country is among LMIC, I can't afford myself all expenses to attend the conference; and my grants will not cover all expenses. This award will help me to attend the meeting without getting a burden of bank loan. It is opportunity to visit some USA-Hospital to share experiences.

Contact information:

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Email: carabin2005@gmail.com

Phone: +250788221404

JOHN RUHUMURIZA

Dear ASC Scholarship Committee,

My name is John Ruhumuriza, and I am a young Rwandan investigator who is very invested in improving health outcomes in my country using research.

My research looks at the cost of performing a laparotomy procedure in a rural district hospital in Rwanda. This information is important, as recent evidence shows that the majority of patients in the world do not have access to surgery. Many countries are considering how to scale-up surgical services in first level hospitals, and we hope this research will be helpful to policy makers and health providers.

This research was done under the Operational Research Training program with Partners In Health Rwanda. Together with my mentors, I developed the research protocol, collected and analyzed data, and am drafting the manuscript over the course of 1 year.

I am applying for the ASC travel scholarship because I am not able to pay for the conference costs. I am from Rwanda, a low-income country. I am a master's student in Global Health Delivery and have obligations at home as I have a family. Given my current salary, it is not possible for me to cover travel, registration, lodging, and other conference expenses. Therefore, this is my limiting factor to present my research during the conference.

I really hope to have the opportunity to present my work. I see this as a great chance to learn new skills and knowledge. This will connect me with other people to work on further projects. The skills I learn will also contribute to my goal of supporting other Rwandans in doing research.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,

John Ruhumuriza
Mentorship Education and Training Coordinator
Partners in Health/ Kirehe District
Rwanda

SUPRIYA SEN

Short description of research project:

Focused parathyroidectomy is treatment of choice in PHPT due to single gland adenoma in patients with concordant imaging. To avoid delays due to lack of anaesthesia time, it was performed under local anaesthesia and outcomes were measured.

Overview of the authors and research team involved in the project:

Christian Medical College Vellore is a large multi- specialty teaching hospital located in Tamil Nadu, India. Its vision is excellence in education, service and research. It is ranked as second medical college in the country.

My department of Endocrine Surgery offers a fellowship course for 3 years. Ours is a high volume centre which performs about 500 thyroidectomies in a year and to which patients is referred from all over the country. It lays emphasis on practical training and research, which is integral part of the fellowship programme.

My research guide, Dr .Deepak Abraham is an AAS member and has encouraged me to apply to this meeting with my research work as mandated by my university. All the other co-authors are from my department of Endocrine Surgery who are also involved in active clinical work except Dr. Reka who is from Biostatistics.

Why this award is necessary for me to attend the ASC:

I am really pleased to have the opportunity to present my research project at ASC 2017 in Quick Shot Session 1. At present, I am in training as a Fellow in Endocrine Surgery at Christian Medical College, Vellore, India, and hence the expenses of the registration, travel and accommodation are quite a significant amount for me. It would be a great financial help if some of the charges could be waived off.

MUHAMMAD TAYYAB SIDDIQUI

At the 12th Annual surgical congress, I shall be presenting our institutions 12 year long experience in the journey of laporoscopic appendectomies. Our project has highlighted improved outcomes with increasing experience in laporoscopic appendectomies being practiced. With the passage of time we showed better results in terms of duration of surgery, rates of conversion to open appendectomy and negative appendectomy rates in addition to all previous known advantages of cosmetics, early recovery, and decrease in hospital stay. However, we noticed a greater number of post-operative complications, but it reflected the fact that more complex cases were now attempted and completed laparoscopically.

Performing surgeries in the limited resources of a developing country exposes one to unique experiences where knowledge and expertise imparted from the advanced surgical centers are modified to be applicable to local population yet stay focused on the principles of care. This is especially true for us at Aga Khan university Hospital which is one of the few academically oriented surgical centers training over 50 budding surgeons. Our mentor, Dr Hasnain Zafar along with our fellow in acute surgical care, Dr Rizwan Sultan guided me to explore this journey as laporoscopic appendectomy has not been adopted as the standard of care worldwide and even more so in developing countries.

Being a part of a congress of such magnitude is not just educative and informative but also inspiring for a young surgeon like me. Being able to listen to the rich experience of world renowned surgeons gives an unparalleled insight into our careers. I am very excited to see the latest in surgical technology and expertise as well as collaborating with international peers and friends to further nurture and improvise my research so that I can deliver the most optimum patient care back at my place where opportunities are limited. In this regard this travel fund will give me a huge impetus and I hope I will prove to be a worthy candidate.



RICHARD T SPENCE

01 December 2016

To whom it may concern,

This letter is in support of an application for the International Travel Award to enable attendance at the 12th Academic Surgical Congress for which I am very pleased to have two abstracts accepted for oral presentations. Coming from South Africa where there are very few quality improvement consortia, we have relied on international comparisons of inter-hospital variation in risk-adjusted outcomes following surgery to identify opportunities for quality improvement and to measure the impact of any corrective strategy implemented. This research has enabled us to benchmark our outcomes against some of the best units in the world.

In these two manuscripts, we have managed to collaborate with two research groups within the United States in order to compare our surgical outcomes against the National Trauma Databank and the ACS NSQIP. We would really like this opportunity to share our experiences with the greater global surgery community and we believe that a landmark meeting such as this would be the ideal place to do so. Unfortunately, as a general surgery resident, I am not eligible for a travel grant through my local university to assist with the travel expenses in order to take up this great opportunity.

Thank you for your consideration in this regard.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'R. Spence', written in a cursive style.

Richard T Spence.
MBChB (Hons) MPH PhD

RIZWAN SULTAN

Dear Sir,

I am currently working as fellow Trauma and General Surgery at Aga Khan University Hospital Karachi, Pakistan. My project is about evolution of laparoscopic appendectomy at a tertiary care hospital in a developing country. This project was planned, designed, analyzed and written by our team consisting of myself, a resident Dr. Siddiqui under supervision of our faculty Dr. Hasnain Zafar. During the tenure of my fellowship, my presentations were funded by the university but my fellowship will end on 31st December 2016, after which I won't be having any funding source for my educational trips. It costs about 2000 US\$ for a visit like this and I will not be able to bear these expenses on my own. But if I get travel fund from ASC, I will be able to attend this conference and can learn a lot from this experience along with getting my abstract presented in ASC 2017.

I really appreciate for considering my application for this grant.

Dr. Rizwan Sultan
Fellow Trauma and GS
Aga Khan University Hospital Karachi, Pakistan

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KANHUA YIN

November 12, 2016

Dear Review Committee,

This is Kanhua Yin, a final-year medical student (8-year MD program) at Fudan University, Shanghai, China. I have worked under the supervision of Dr. Chunsheng Wang, Chair of the Department of Cardiac Surgery, Zhongshan Hospital of Fudan University, for around three years, and mainly focused on the outcomes research in the field of cardiovascular surgery. As a major cardiovascular surgery center in Eastern China, our department performs more than 2000 cardiac surgery procedures per year. My two first-author abstracts were accepted by the 2017 ASC (ASC20171308 & ASC20171322), and I very much hope I can have an opportunity to present them at the conference in Las Vegas next February.

One abstract (ASC20171308) is a report of our surgical management of Sinus of Valsala aneurysms (SVAs) with concomitant aortic insufficiency. With experience of 178 cases and a mean follow-up of 44 months, we demonstrated that surgical management of SVAs concomitant aortic insufficiency with different techniques can achieve excellent short-term outcomes. In addition to valve replacement, valve repair techniques, especially valve sparing procedure in young patients, were also associated with fairly good long-term survival and outcomes.

The other study (ASC20171322) reported our experience of treating one exceedingly rare disease - pulmonary artery sarcoma (PAS). This study with 12 patients in previous 11 years (currently, less than 400 PAS cases have been reported, only four of which contained more than 10 patients) showed that PAS has a very poor prognosis. Surgical treatment with pulmonary endarterectomy combined with pneumonectomy offers a chance for long-term survival. Pathological type of myofibroblastic differentiation and postoperative adjuvant treatments may be associated with better survival outcomes. We believe that this study can contribute significantly to the understanding of this rare malignant tumor.

Because I am currently a medical student but not an employee, I cannot get any financial support from the Zhongshan Hospital even though Dr. Wang have tried to communicate with the hospital administration. Moreover, my medical school doesn't have such funding to support medical students to present at international conferences, making it quite difficult for me to go to the 2017 ASC. Therefore, I strongly hope that I can get this precious International Research Travel Award and therefore have a chance to share above two studies to many US and international experts.

You may reach me via email (yinkanhua@gmail.com) or cell phone (+86-13818588239) at any time.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Warmest regards,
Kanhua