

Date October 27, 2011
Regarding First Contact Initiative Grant

European Society of Cardiology
The European Heart House
Councils Relations
2035 Route des Colles, Les Templiers
B.P. 179, 06903 Sophia Antipolis, France

Dear Council member,

I would like to thank the Council for supporting my visit to the lab of prof. Nikolaos G. Frangogiannis at Albert Einstein College of Medicine (Yeshiva University, New York). The FCIG grant allowed me to have extensive discussions *vis a vis* with prof. Frangogiannis and his team.

I attended his meetings with his postdocs and technicians in order to become acquainted to the novel targets that were being investigated. His positive and constructive way of giving feedback to his postdocs impressed me. I talked to the team members one-on-one to learn more about the techniques they used (collagen lattice experiments, flow-cytometry, morphometry, surgery).

During my own studies, we have identified fibronectin-EDA to be crucial for leukocyte and fibroblast function mediating matrix remodeling and cardiac repair after infarction. I gave a presentation about my experimental work and questions/hurdles that I ran into. I focused on the unanswered questions concerning EDA-mediated fibroblast function. We discussed these issues and came up with several experimental designs that we could do, in a collaborative setting, to elucidate the role of fibronectin-EDA in fibroblast transdifferentiation and function.

The visit was a great success in many ways. From a personal perspective, it was great to finally meet the people and scientists that I only knew from the literature. Next, in order to kick-off this collaboration, I will send a student for her research internship to start these experiments in his lab this November. In addition, we invited him to give a keynote lecture during the symposium we organized on innate immunity last September. And finally, I will join his lab as a postdoctoral fellow after I finish my first two years of cardiology residency in 2013.

Once again, the support of the Council is very much appreciated for not only making this visit possible, but also the first step towards a fruitful collaboration between Utrecht and New York.

Kind regards,
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