

DBT/ Regional Centre for Biotechnology

RCB holds International Conference on Calcium Signaling

By Sunderarajan Padmanabhan

New Delhi, February 18: Regional Centre for Biotechnology held a two-day international conference to discuss latest scientific and technical advancements in the field of Calcium signaling, and its role in physiology and disease from January 31 to February 1. Calcium signaling plays an integral role in human physiology. Deranged Calcium homeostasis leads to a wide array of diseases ranging from cancers, cardiovascular disorders, sensory dysfunctions, neurodegenerative syndromes and immune disorders. The conference had sessions covering cellular Calcium homeostasis, organellar Calcium dynamics as well as Calcium microdomains and their role in physiology and disease.

Another major objective of this meeting was to spur stimulating discussions with leaders in the field of Calcium signaling and drive new directions for related basic and medical research in India. Despite the growing Calcium signaling community and interest in India, the presence of Indian researchers at international meetings and especially the participation of PhD students and postdocs have been below par. Moreover, there is a severe dearth of international collaborations in this rapidly evolving and challenging field.

The conference provided an invaluable opportunity for Indian students, postdocs and young faculty members to interact with, and gain knowledge from, international experts in this field. It attracted participants at all levels (PIs, postdocs and graduate students) from research groups located all over the country including Hyderabad, Chennai, Bangalore, Noida, Pune, Bhubaneswar, and New Delhi. It provided a unique opportunity for these Indian researchers to interact in a relatively informal setting with the leaders of the Calcium signaling field.

In this conference, there was special attention to young researchers and female scientists. A distinguishable feature of the conference was that several women speakers presented their work. Further, 6 short oral talks were selected from the pool of abstracts received for poster presentation and these participants gave exciting talks about their research. In total 13 international and 8 national speakers gave talks at the conference. Further, 27 participants presented posters. To encourage young students, three best poster awards were also presented. This would help in future career building of these young investigators at the PI level or at the PhD/postdoc levels. This meeting was highly appreciated by both the participants and the speakers.



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