

APH Mental Health Junior Travel Award

Behavior Genetics Association annual meeting
26-29th of June, 2024, London

Behavior genetics research is evolving rapidly and the community is relatively small, so staying updated with the latest techniques, and staying in touch with fellow colleagues is especially important in this field. I recently got the opportunity to attend the Annual Behavior Genetics Association meeting, which was held in the stunning, and unexpectedly hot, London. The conference offered a variety of sessions spread over 4 days including sessions on specialty topics, methods, and public science.

In a field that has predominantly been focused on basic science, the focus on public science, which is a new topic of interest for this conference, was especially enlightening and gave me new insights to apply to my own research. I too was very happy to present a poster on a public science related topic, which sparked many valuable conversations with colleagues. I emphasized the importance of including your study participants in designing your research, which is especially true for research on mental health. Connecting with fellow genetics researchers this way allowed me to form new connections and opened the way to potential future collaborations.

All in all, the conference was a great success and benefited my trajectory in multiple ways. First, by providing me with the chance to learn about the latest developments in the field, second, by offering me the opportunity to present, a skill that is crucial and requires practice to master, and third, by allowing me to connect to senior and junior researchers in the field, and hence fostering connections that will undoubtedly lead to invaluable contributions to behavior genetics research in the future.

I am incredibly thankful to APH for this invaluable opportunity.

Melanie de Wit
Department of Clinical, Neuro-, and
Developmental Psychology, Vrije Universiteit
Amsterdam

