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RE: Feedback on the Advanced School on Axonal Transport and Neurodegenerative Disorders held in Mumbai and Mahabaleshwar, January 13-26, 2013

The Advanced School on Axonal Transport and Neurodegenerative Disorders held in Mumbai and Mahabaleshwar was very productive both in terms of teaching but also in terms of discussions and networking. The program allowed the students to get a good overview on what is going on at the very forefront of the field. The program was well conceived and well balanced concerning teaching, discussions and work from the students. In summary, I consider that this school was a full success. Some more specific points are listed below.

I was present from January 17-26 and was involved in teaching specific aspects of the microtubule cytoskeleton and microtubule associated proteins. Together with the students I also worked on two recently published landmark papers in the field of microtubule plus end-tracking proteins; these papers were subsequently presented and discussed by the students during a dedicated session. Moreover, I was involved in numerous face-to-face discussions with the students during breakfast/lunch/dinner, during the poster sessions or the breaks between lectures concerning the topic of the microtubule cytoskeleton but also regarding job and career opportunities. Overall I judge the interaction with the students as good to very good. Throughout the workshop I experienced them to be very engaged and motivated at all times to broaden their scientific background and interests.

The organization of the school was excellent. All the communication before, during and after the school was done to my full satisfaction. The hospitality was truly exceptional; I definitely will keep this experience for a long time in my memories. The interaction with the students but also with the teachers and native faculty members was very good and at all times very enjoyable. The scientific program was well conceived and flexible enough to accommodate changes depending on the emerging needs and requirements.

As already mentioned above, the school was in my opinion a great success so there is not relay much I can say concerning improvements. Maybe one thing I may suggest is that the students would benefit even more if the speakers could cover a wider array of methodologies and approaches that were used to illuminate the topic. The school as it was held was heavily genetics and cell biology oriented. Covering some additional interdisciplinary approaches related to the same topic could help to widen the horizon of the students even further.

I hope that similar schools will be held in the near future in India as they represent unique opportunities for talented students and faculty members to network, further strengthen the interaction and eventually even foster collaborations with leading scientist abroad.