

Why Should You Apply for the A3GP Travelling Fellowship?

A Report by 2000 Recipient Dr Marie Pirotta



I was lucky enough to be the inaugural recipient of the A3GP Travelling Fellowship several years ago, when I visited the University of Queensland and Flinders University. I encourage all members to consider applying, in particular people early in their research careers. Why bother?

Personal Benefits

I did more useful networking during my fellowship than I had done in the six previous years during attendances at many academic GP conferences. The focus in most conferences for networking is your area of research and this is difficult when you are just beginning. The opportunity to compare teaching and curriculum development experiences at both the University of Queensland and Flinders University was wonderful.

Benefits to my Department

Melbourne University was deep into its planning for the remainder of the new curriculum and the place of both clinical skills teaching and of the new semester 12 rotation in general were still evolving. My experiences and observations at both Flinders and Queensland were useful to stimulate ideas and discussions in this planning phase.

While on the travelling scholarship, I made the most of every opportunity to inform other academics of what we do in our department, gave names to researchers for possible collaborations and encouraged people to consider a visit to our department in the future.

Benefits to the Wider Community

I hope that my visit to each department was informative to them of how things run at Melbourne University, both in curriculum and research. The linkages made will run in both directions and opportunities for further exchanges may have been laid.

Advice for Further Applicants for this Travelling Fellowship

- ✚ Do it. It is well worth the experience.
- ✚ Plan where to visit according to your major interests – this may require some research beforehand. Visit the departments' websites.
- ✚ Once you have chosen your preferred universities, liaise closely with them regarding the timing of your visit. There is definitely a trade-off between arriving at a busy teaching time to get a lot of exposure but finding that staff may be too busy to spend much other time with you.
- ✚ To get the most from the visit, ask the university to identify an academic to oversee your visit and help you to locate the people you will benefit most from meeting.

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