

Case Study

The 10th Annual Meeting of the International Society for Stem Cell Research (ISSCR)

The 10th Annual Meeting of the International Society for Stem Cell Research (ISSCR) was held from 13 (Wed.) to 16 (Sat.) June 2012, at PACIFICO Yokohama with a total of 3,589 attendees. Following the meeting, we spoke with Dr. Shinya Yamanaka, Director of Center for iPS Cell Research and Application at Kyoto University, who chaired the ISSCR local committee.

1. Please tell us about the significance and outcomes of the first ISSCR annual meeting in Asia.

I feel that the holding of this memorable 10th Annual Meeting in Asia, and moreover in Japan, was very significant. Many of the world's leading stem cell researchers came to Japan thus facilitating exchanges with their Japanese counterparts. I expect that, through such stimulating opportunities, joint research between Japanese and overseas researchers will come about and stem cell research in Japan will further develop in the future.



2. On the final day of the annual meeting, you assumed office as the new President of ISSCR. Please tell us what impressed you most during the meeting.

More than anything else, I was most impressed by the ceremony and reception to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the annual meeting, when we were honored by the presence of their Imperial Majesties, the Emperor and the Empress. Two thousand of the attendees of the Yokohama meeting joined in the celebrations at the ceremony. At the reception afterwards, researchers from overseas had the opportunity to chat with their Majesties, making it a most memorable occasion. Such an opportunity was possible only because the meeting was held in Yokohama.



3. What was the response of the guests about having the reception at an art museum?

Holding the President's Reception at the Yokohama Museum of Art created an atmosphere different to that of academic meetings. The wider space facilitated deeper exchanges and was very popular. The food tasted even more delicious when being surrounded by art objects.



4. What were your impressions of the supports offered by the City of Yokohama and the YCVB?

The City of Yokohama and the YCVB's support system was wonderful. From the preparation stages, support included areas such as grants for the event, selection of and arrangements for venues for the reception and so on, as well as PR activities. Thanks to everyone's efforts, more than 3,500 researchers attended the Meeting, making it a grand success. I wish to express my sincere gratitude for everyone's cooperation.



5. Many of the Meeting's participants from overseas may have visited Yokohama for the first time. What were their impressions about the city?

The limousine bus service from the airport to Yokohama makes access convenient and I believe attendees enjoyed historical tourist sites such as Yokohama's Chinatown and Kamakura, as well as hot spring facilities.