The International Society for Stem Cell Research Announces Details of its Annual Meeting, June 24-27 in Stockholm

CHICAGO — The International Society for Stem Cell Research’s 13th annual meeting will take place June 24-27, 2015 at the Stockholmsmässan Exhibition and Convention Center in Stockholm, Sweden. The meeting will bring together approximately 4,000 stem cell scientists, bioethicists, clinicians and industry professionals from over 50 countries to present and discuss the latest discoveries and technologies within the field.

“The ISSCR is excited to bring its annual meeting to Stockholm, a city that shares our passion and reputation for great scientific research and collaboration,” said ISSCR President Rudolf Jaenisch, M.D., Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research. “We look forward to learning more about the strong work being done in Sweden and across Europe.”

The meeting will open with the Presidential Symposium on June 24 from 1:15-3:15 p.m. local time. The symposium sets the stage for the meeting with world renowned speakers, including Nobel Prize winner Shinya Yamanaka. It is also the platform for the formal recognition of the 2015 recipients of the McEwen Award for Innovation and the ISSCR Public Service Award. Another prestigious award, the ISSCR-BD Biosciences Outstanding Young Investigator Award, will be presented during Plenary VI on June 27 from 9-11:20 a.m. and followed by an award lecture.

“I look forward to the Presidential Symposium setting the tone for the entire program,” Jaenisch said. “A thread throughout will be the use of stem cells to drive our understanding of development and disease, as we explore disease modeling, gene and tissue engineering technologies and other important advances that are bringing stem cells into the clinic.”

Presidential Symposium speakers will include:
Fred H. Gage, Ph.D., Salk Institute for Biological Sciences, U.S.
Jürgen Knoblich, Ph.D., Institute of Molecular Biotechnology, Austria
Shinya Yamanaka, M.D., Ph.D., Center for iPS Cell Research & Application, Japan
Jeannie Lee, M.D., Ph.D., Massachusetts General Hospital, U.S.

The McEwen Award for Innovation award winners (Presidential Symposium):
Irving Weissman, M.D., Stanford School of Medicine, U.S.
Hans Clevers, M.D., Ph.D., Hubrecht Institute, Netherlands

The ISSCR Public Service Award winner (Presidential Symposium):
Alan Trounson, Ph.D., MIMR-PHI Institute of Medical Research, Australia

The ISSCR-BD Biosciences Outstanding Young Investigator Award winner (Plenary VI):
Paul Tesar, Ph.D., Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine, U.S.
“The ISSCR is thrilled to present the prestigious McEwen Award for Innovation to Irving Weissman and Hans Clevers, who have each made enormous contributions to stem cell science,” said Hans Schöler, Ph.D., Max Planck Institute for Molecular Biomedicine, chair of the ISSCR’s McEwen Awards selection committee. “Working in the blood and gut systems, respectively, and extending their findings in different tissues, they have defined the concepts and technologies that underpin many avenues of research. Each has made pioneering conceptual advances in disease modeling and regenerative medicine.”

“We are privileged to present our ISSCR-BD Biosciences Outstanding Young Investigator Award to Paul Tesar,” Jaenisch said. “He has leveraged his understanding of mammalian development to create transformative stem cell-based technologies and to enable access to new areas of biology. His accomplishments advance our understanding of human health and would be impressive at any stage, but they are remarkable for someone so early in his career.”

The 2015 Annual Meeting Program Committee is chaired by Leonard Zon, M.D., Harvard Medical School, Boston Children’s Hospital. Zon and the committee have worked together over the past year to assemble a diverse program and an international contingent of stem cell researchers, clinicians and industry professionals to share the newest research, technologies and clinical advancements.

“When the idea for the International Society for Stem Cell Research was born, nearly 13 years ago, I hoped the stem cell field would have an exponential impact on clinical medicine,” Zon said. “This process has begun, and the field has a bright future as evidenced by this year’s ISSCR meeting program.”

Plenary topics include:
Disease Modeling
Making Tissues and Organs
Immunology and Stem Cells
Pluripotency, Mechanisms of Reprogramming
Regeneration and Engraftment
Therapy with Stem Cells

Concurrent topics include:
Cell Adhesion, Motility and Migration
Control and Induction of Pluripotency
Disease Modeling
Epigenetics
Epithelial and Mesenchymal Stem Cells
Ethics and Public Policy; History of Science; Communication; Education
Germline and RNA Biology
Hematopoiesis
Lineage Relationships and Clonality
Modeling Disease with iPSCs
Neural Degeneration
Neural Stem Cells and Differentiation
Pancreas, Lung, Liver and Intestine
Road to the Clinic
Single Cell Biology
Stem Cell Niche
Stem Cell Regulatory Networks and Models
Stem Cells and Cancer
Stem Cells in Model Organisms
Tissue Engineering, Organ Development and Regeneration
Transdifferentiation and Reprogramming
“The basic biology of stem cells has led to brilliant discoveries and served as a foundation for burgeoning therapies,” Zon said. “Attendees of ISSCR 2015 will see an increasing clinical focus as the meeting moves toward Friday and Saturday, and we learn of cutting edge approaches now entering the clinic.”

Clevers, winner of the McEwen Award for Innovation, will present during the “Disease Modeling” plenary, sharing research published in two recent papers in the scientific journal Cell. The papers describe the development of a culturing system for human liver stem cells, as well as stem cells from pancreatic cancer, discoveries with the potential to revolutionize liver transplantation and aid in the fight against pancreatic cancer, respectively.

The “Therapy with Stem Cells” plenary session includes a talk by Douglas Melton, Ph.D., Harvard University, who led recent work to produce human insulin-producing beta cells in the massive quantities needed for cell transplantation and pharmaceutical purposes. This work represents a leap forward in the quest to find a truly effective treatment for type 1 diabetes. Allan Robbins, Ph.D., ViaCyte, will discuss the development of his company’s stem cell-derived encapsulated cell replacement therapy and the initiation of trials to evaluate safety and efficacy.

Saturday opens with the “Stem Cells and Immunology” plenary. In this session, Carl June, M.D., University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, will present his group’s groundbreaking research, developing ways to enhance the body’s own immune system to recognize and kill cancer cells.

The final plenary of the meeting, “Making Tissues and Organs,” will feature a talk by Masayo Takahashi, M.D., Ph.D., RIKEN Center for Developmental Biology. Takahashi is leading the first-ever clinical trial using induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs). In 2014, she and her team at the RIKEN Center for Developmental Biology transplanted a retinal pigment epithelium (RPE) cell sheet derived from iPSCs into a patient suffering from age-related macular degeneration to assess the safety of the transplantation of iPSC-derived RPE sheets.

Robert Langer, Sc.D., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a leader in the field of biotechnology and one of the most cited engineers in recent history, will deliver the closing keynote address. Langer holds nearly 1,080 patents worldwide which have been sublicensed to over 250 pharmaceutical, chemical, biotechnology and medical device companies.

The ISSCR received over 2,000 abstracts for the 2015 meeting, resulting in the addition of 20 new speaking slots. A total of 100 speakers will be identified from outstanding abstracts and will present their research in the concurrent tracks. Three poster receptions allow further opportunities for researchers to present and discuss their work.

“The posters are always the genesis for some of the meeting’s greatest scientific conversations and collaborations,” Zon said. “Year after year, we hear that networking with peers is one of the most valuable components of the meeting.”
ISSCR Annual Meeting registration dates and costs are as follows:

- Early registration deadline: March 11 ($715 member/$1,015 nonmember)
- Advance registration deadline: May 6 ($840 member/$1,140 nonmember)
- Regular registration deadline: June 27 ($965 member/$1,265 nonmember)

Additional registration information and instructions are available on the meeting website along with the meeting schedule at www.isscr.org/2015. Trainee member and one day-only rates are also available.

This year’s public symposium, “Stem Cells and the Ageing Brain,” will take place June 23, 5-8 p.m. local time in the Aula Medica lecture hall at the medical university Karolinska Institutet. The symposium is open to the public and free of charge.

The ISSCR 2015 Annual Meeting is co-sponsored by the Wallenberg Institute for Regenerative Medicine.

About the International Society for Stem Cell Research (www.isscr.org)
The International Society for Stem Cell Research is an independent, nonprofit membership organization established to promote and foster the exchange and dissemination of information and ideas relating to stem cells, to encourage the general field of research involving stem cells and to promote professional and public education in all areas of stem cell research and application.

Contact:
Michelle Quivey, Senior Communications Manager
International Society for Stem Cell Research
+1-224-592-5012; mquivey@isscr.org

Interviews with Rudolf Jaenisch and Leonard Zon are available upon request
###