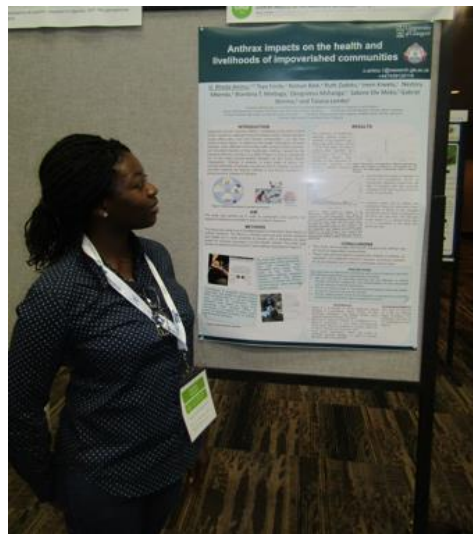


Rhoda Olubunmi Aminu, University of Glasgow

The 5th International One Health Congress in Saskatoon, Canada, 22nd – 25th June 2018.

The 2018 MRSB award enabled me to attend the 5th International One Health Congress held at the TCU Place, Saskatoon's Arts & Convention Centre, Saskatoon, Canada from 22nd to 25th June 2018. The congress was organised by The One Health Platform, University of Saskatchewan, and the Southern African Centre for Infectious Disease Surveillance (SACIDS). The congress focused on current advances in One Health and its ancillary fields and featured topic in emerging diseases surveillance and control, antimicrobial resistance and One Health policies. It was attended by over 800 participants from across the world. The focus of this congress was a good fit for me and my research interest.



I participated in this congress by presenting a poster on the impact of endemic anthrax on the health and livelihoods of impoverished communities. It was an opportunity to share novel and important findings in order to draw attention to the need for improved prioritization, surveillance and control of anthrax as an example of a neglected disease that threatens the health and livelihoods of the world's poor and affects the health and welfare of animals. The results of impact studies of neglected diseases (which are understudied), when disseminated through presentations at conferences for example, may spur research interest in the study area, and may produce new ideas and collaborations, that could lead to new research to address these diseases. These may focus on the development of new and practical diagnostic and surveillance tools, vaccination and treatment strategies. My presentation not only showed the impact of anthrax but also demonstrated that affected communities can contribute to surveillance to advance the control of the disease. I obtained useful feedback on my work and was able to answer questions and address certain misconceptions about my research area, using evidence from my study.

In addition to presenting my work to an international audience, I benefited from engaging with scientific experts in the One Health field and developing useful contacts for my career advancement. I have also gained some insights for the next stages of my research. Attending this congress enabled me to build on my confidence as a researcher, and my presentation, communication and networking skills.



Because no dedicated funding is available through my studentship for conference attendance – an important part of my development as an early career researcher –, I applied for the MRSB award to fund some of the cost associated with attending this congress. I was confident of the Royal Society of Biology's support for my application because my research and current position aligns with their core values of promoting professional development of early career researchers, supporting research that promotes the health and welfare of people and animals, and that influences policies in the long run. Thanks to this award by the Royal Society of Biology, which gave me the opportunity to attend my first international conference of this magnitude.