

## ISH Beijing 2018

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**The Women in Hypertension Committee of the International Society of Hypertension (ISH) was founded by ISH Past-President Prof Rhian Touyz in 2016 with the mission to promote women scientists and clinicians so that they can fulfil their career aspirations in the field of hypertension and related cardiovascular diseases. The Committee has since initiated activities, which aim to support young, mid-career and senior female researchers alike.**

At the 27th Scientific Meeting of the International Society of Hypertension in September in Beijing, China, such activities included the introduction of Awards given to Kate Denton, Melbourne, Australia (ISH Award of Excellence for Research in Cardiovascular Health and Disease in Women), Anna Dominiczak, Glasgow, UK (ISH Honour for Senior Women Researchers) and Audrey Adji, Sydney, Australia (ISH Mid-Career Award for Women Researchers).

In addition, the Women in Hypertension Research Committee organised 3 sessions:

- A breakfast workshop entitled “Hypertension and Cardiovascular Disease in Women”
- A session on Hypertension in Pregnancy
- The main session initiated by the Committee was a mentoring session entitled “Maximising Opportunities and Researching Career Goals” chaired by Prof Rhian Touyz and Dr Sofie Brouwers. A session with a similar concept and Prof. Barbara Casadei as speaker (at the time incoming President-Elect of the European Society of Cardiology) had been a huge success at the 26th ISH Scientific Meeting in September 2016 in Seoul, South Korea. Therefore, it was decided to apply the same format again for a session at the ISH Beijing Meeting.

As in Seoul, the session started with presentations by experienced female scientists/clinicians telling the audience about opportunities and (often female specific) challenges they faced in developing their research careers.

The Committee was delighted that Dr Clara Chow, Sydney, Australia, and the new ISH President, Prof Alta Schutte, Potchefstroom, South Africa, agreed to share their personal experiences on their way to where and what they are now. Important aspects addressed by both speakers were experiences with mentors, with raising children and generally work/life/family balance, with important career decisions and with general acceptance as a woman in their working environments.

The honesty and openness of the speakers when addressing not only the successes, but also difficult periods during their careers and – importantly – strategies to overcome these problems, encouraged many young, female attendees of the session to engage into a vivid discussion about challenges that women in research are facing in general and about their own current situations. One of the attendees described the atmosphere of the discussions as “sisterly” – and by that found the perfect word for the spirit of the session.

The Women in Hypertension Research Committee has recognised the need of young women for support and mentoring and will try to address this need by further mentoring sessions at future ISH and ISH-endorsed meetings.

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