Name: Eva Shteinman
Position & Affiliation: PhD candidate, Melanoma Institute Australia, The University of Sydney
Full Reference: Shteinman ER, Bai X, Mao Y, Cornejo-Paramo P, Adegoke NA, Maher NG, Quek C, Waddell N, Hayward NK, Pearson JV, Thompson JF, Saw RPM, Spillane AJ, Palendira M, da Silva IP, Scolyer RA, Long GV, Wilmott JS, Vergara IA. *Single-cell, high-throughput spatial profiling of in-transit and lymph node metastases reveals distinct immune populations and spatial regions linked to recurrence and immunotherapy response*
Conference/Meeting Name: Society for Melanoma Research (SMR) Congress 2025
Location Amsterdam, Netherlands
Dates: October 25th-28th 2025
Presentation Type: Poster



Photo 1: me in front of my poster; Photo 2: beautiful canals of Amsterdam.

I was extremely fortunate to receive the Sydney Cancer Partners conference travel award to support my attending the Society of Melanoma Research Congress 2025 in Amsterdam, Netherlands. As the name suggests, this is a conference specific for melanoma- my field of expertise. There were around 300 people in attendance, ranging from biologists, immunologists, molecular biologists, as well as clinicians with dermatology, oncology and radiology specialties.

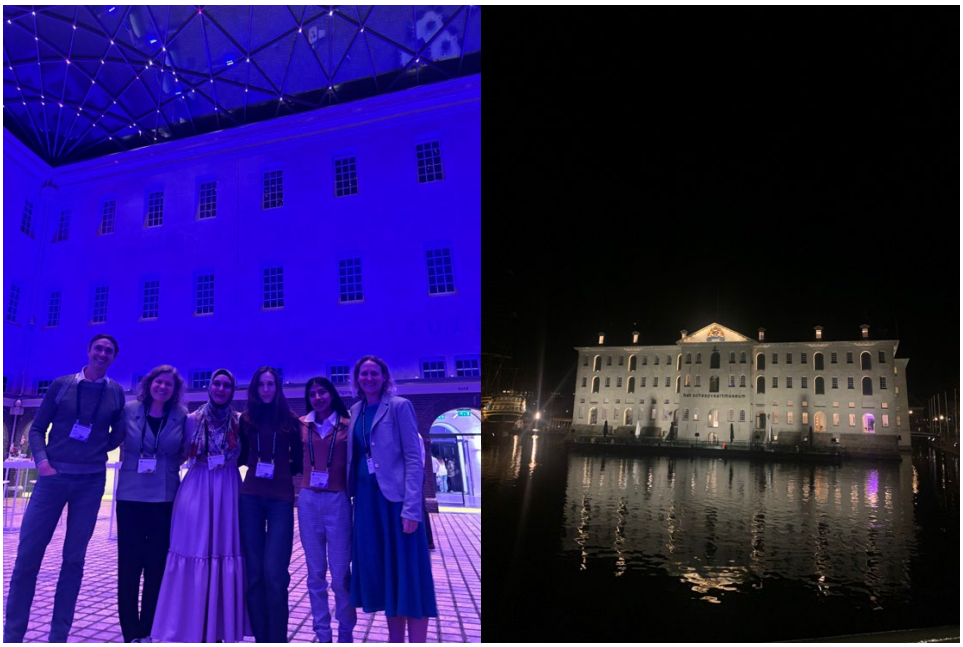
The first evening of the conference we heard a number of keynote speakers deliver exciting presentations, including a representative from Australia, Professor Ann Cust, from our institute of research the Melanoma Institute Australia (MIA). Professor Cust presented a detailed roadmap for a skin cancer screening program, which is being developed in Australia, and was also awarded with the prestigious Estela Medrano Award. It was wonderful to see how Australian research is, in many ways, at the forefront of melanoma research worldwide, and how researchers from around the world are interested in the work being produced by our institute.

Over the following days we heard a large number of talks across a wide range of specialties. Since my own specific area of expertise within melanoma research is spatial biology and imaging, I made sure to be in attendance for all of the talks relating to this topic. I learned that research groups around the world are pursuing more and more cutting-edge imaging technologies for their experiments, with numbers of imaging markers (100+!) that would have been considered

inconceivable only a few years ago. The scale of the data being produced in this area is unprecedented in its scale and level of detail. There were ample discussions relating to the analysis of single-cell imaging data, including technical difficulties and how to overcome them, which I was fortunate to be able to discuss in detail with a range of scientists during my poster session.

Another major theme of the presentations was the use of AI in melanoma diagnosis and therapy response prediction. This is a rapidly developing area, and it was interesting to hear the range of perspectives being put forth from scholars of different specialties. There was consensus in the need to use AI with great caution.

The final night was a highlight of the trip. The national maritime museum was hired for a dinner and awards ceremony, and we all took a canal boat to arrive at the museum. Live music, a three-course meal, walking through the museum itself– it was a really special night.



Colleagues and I from Melanoma Institute Australia (MIA) at the SMR awards ceremony dinner, held at the national maritime museum in Amsterdam.

During my poster session in particular I had great conversations with people who are interested in my work, or who are pursuing similar lines of work already. I was also able to meet people whose names I had seen on publications highly relevant to my work, or people I had emailed with, but never met in person. Already, a collaboration is in the works based on one of the conversations I had with some researchers from the United States.

We are all motivated in finding better ways to translate our research findings into improved care for patients with melanoma, and the more we are able to get together in person to discuss melanoma, to share our findings, to look for new ways to collaborate- the better. This was an incredibly valuable experience for me, I've learned a lot and forged new professional connections. Once again, I'd like to express my gratitude to Sydney Cancer Partners for making this possible.