



Association of Scientists of Indian Origin *Newsletter*

Issue: March, 2021

INSIDE THE ISSUE.....

<u>President's Message</u>	<u>2-3</u>
<u>ASIO Officers</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>ASIO Virtual Annual Reception</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Virtual Coffee With Mentor</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>ASIO Endorsed Session</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>ASIO Webinars</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>ASIO Member Accomplishment</u>	<u>9-11</u>
<u>Winner's Words</u>	<u>12-14</u>
<u>Interview with Dr. P. Nagarkatti</u>	<u>15-16</u>
<u>Call for Volunteers</u>	<u>17</u>
<u>ASIO Nomination Comm</u>	<u>18</u>
<u>Call for Donation/Sponsorship</u>	<u>19</u>
<u>ASIO Sponsors</u>	<u>20-21</u>



Editors

Tarana Arman (Chair)

Rashmi Pathak

Saurabh Vispute

Volunteers

Sharavan Ramachandran

Shagun Krishna



President's Message

Vijay P. Kale, MVSc, PhD, DABT, ERT
Amgen Inc., South San Francisco, CA

March 2021 Newsletter

Dear ASIO Family,

Hoping and praying that you and your family are in the best of your health! Since vaccines are on the way, let's hope that we put an end to this pandemic in the very near future.

This will be my last President's message in the newsletter. I want to take this moment to THANK YOU for providing me an opportunity to lead and serve ASIO.

Despite COVID challenges, ASIO Executive Committee (EC) and Volunteers worked tirelessly to bring value to ASIO members. My sincere gratitude to my EC colleagues and numerous volunteers who contributed to various activities and new initiatives of ASIO.

Here are some of the highlights of ASIO events/initiatives in the year 2020-2021.

- **ASIO Award Nomination Committee:** A new committee has been constituted to encourage and support nomination of ASIO members for SOT national awards. I encourage you all to nominate your friend or colleague for SOT national awards. ASIO Nomination Committee will be happy to facilitate the process. We want to ensure that deserving ASIO members get due recognition at the national level at SOT for their contribution to science and mentoring the budding toxicologists. More details can be found on [Page 18](#)
- **ASIO-SOT Best Paper Award:** We have instituted this new award to recognize research publications of our members. More details about the award can be found at <https://www.toxicology.org/groups/sig/asio/Awards.asp>
- **Webinar:** This year we conducted two webinars: (1) The Visa Marathon: How to Navigate Your Way through the Changing Landscape of Visa Opportunities in the USA by Murthy Law Firm; (2) Health Effects of Tear Gas Agents by Dr. Satya Achanta. Both the webinars can be accessed on ASIO website at https://www.toxicology.org/groups/sig/asio/past_events.asp.
- **Virtual Coffee with Mentor:** This was our first year of virtual Coffee with Mentor and I am glad to share with you that it was a very successful initiative. This is one of the examples that shows resilience of our ASIO members. I am very proud of Mentors, Mentees and Volunteers who made this event a success. More than 10 mentors stepped up at our request to help mentees.

Continued on page 3.. 2



President's Message

Vijay P. Kale, MVSc, PhD, DABT, ERT
Amgen Inc., South San Francisco, CA

March 2021 Newsletter

Continued from page 2..

This shows commitment of senior members of ASIO to extend helping hand to budding toxicologists. I am incredibly grateful to all the mentors! Please see [page 6](#) for details.

- **60% reduction in SOT meeting registration fees:** SOT Council has graciously accepted the request of Special Interest Group-Collaboration Group (of which ASIO is a member) to reduce SOT annual meeting registration fees by 60% for members from developing countries. I hope those who are eligible were able to take benefit of this reduced fees.

I know that (sadly) we won't see each other this year as well at the SOT meeting. However, we have planned a virtual meeting. Please mark your calendars to attend this reception. The details of the annual reception can be found on [page 5](#) and some additional details will be communicated later.

US Date and Time: March 23, 2021; 7:30-9:30 pm ET/4:30-6:30 pm PDT.

India Date and Time: March 24, 2021; 5:00-7:00 am IST.

Please note the date and time in different time zones. This was the best time slot we could reserve given the designated timeslots for SIG receptions and our membership in different time zones. Although I understand that this time slot may be inconvenient for some of you, I sincerely hope you will be able to join the reception. My apologies in advance for any inconveniences.

Meanwhile, please join me in congratulating and welcoming new Executive Committee members for 2021-2022: Ashwini Phadnis-Moghe (Vice President-Elect), Gurjot Kaur (Councilor), Pankajini Mallick (Secretary-Treasurer), Sharavan Ramachandran (Postdoc Representative), Itishree Kaushik (Student Representative).

United We Stand!

With warm regards,

Vijay P. Kale

ASIO-SOT President

2020-2021 ASIO Officers

March 2021 Newsletter

President

Vijay P. Kale, MVSc,
PhD, DABT, ERT
Amgen Inc.



Sr. Councilor

Vivek Lawana, PhD
American Preclinical
Services, LLC



Vice President

Jaya Chilakapati, PhD,
DABT
Boehringer-Ingelheim
Animal Health



Jr. Councilor

Adhithiya Charli, PhD
Charles River Laboratories



Vice President-Elect

Saurabh G. Vispute,
PhD, DABT
Pfizer Inc.



Postdoc Representative

Rashmi Pathak, PhD
Louisiana State University



Past President

Sharmilee Sawant,
PhD, DABT, RAC
BD



Student Representative

Tarana Arman
Washington State University



Treasurer/Secretary

Vishakha S. Bhave, PhD
Exxat





ASIO Virtual Reception and Annual Business Meeting

Annual Meeting & ToxExpo
VIRTUAL • MARCH 12-26, 2021

March 2021 Newsletter

We cordially invite you to
**ASIO-SIG Virtual Reception &
Annual Business Meeting**

Date and Time

USA - March 23rd 2021 (Tuesday) 7:30-9:30 pm ET / 4:30-6:30 pm PDT

India - March 24th 2021 (Wednesday) 5:00-7:00 am IST

How to Attend

Only those registered for the SOT 2021 Virtual Annual Meeting & ToxExpo will have access to your event.

Access will be provided via the virtual meeting platform:

1. Select the event via the Program navigation item: select the event; the link will appear in the event description on the day of the event
2. Select the event in the SOT Hub: on the day of your event.

Prepare ahead of time

Update the latest version of the Zoom App (if you already have Zoom installed): Please be sure to have the latest version of Zoom downloaded, as well as restart your computer at least 24 hours in advance to be sure any system updates have been made. For more details, reference the [Zoom Support Website](#).

Join us to enjoy a fun-filled experience of

- ❖ **Networking** with fellow members and friends
- ❖ Congratulating the **award recipients**
- ❖ Welcoming new **committee members** and
- ❖ Participate in a **trivia game** and WIN exciting prizes!!!
- ❖ **Breakout rooms** to e-meet ASIO Executive Committee members



Re-inventing ASIO's 'Coffee With Mentor' Mentoring Efforts

March 2021 Newsletter

"Coffee With Mentor" is one of the successful initiatives of ASIO to help the young minds and motivated mentees in the ASIO family. In 2020 ASIO rapidly re-invented the Annual Meeting Coffee With Mentor event into a virtual event occurring periodically. The success of the virtual flexible format was possible due to the active participation of mentees and excellent mentors who have been very generous with their time. We had 20 mentees from US, India and Ethiopia who benefitted from these events. There were a total of 8 events by 7 mentors over weekends of January and February, 2021.

We are grateful for following MENTORS who devoted their time for this mentoring endeavor.

Dr. Udayan Apte
Dr. Ashwini Phadnis-Moghe
Dr. Sudin Bhattacharya
Dr. Mallikarjuna Basavarajappa
Dr. Smita Salian-Mehta
Dr. Adhithiya Charli
Dr. Vijay P. Kale

"Nice
experience
with ASIO"

"Good
initiative by
ASIO team"

Some testimonies from the MENTEES

"Thanks for organizing these wonderful
events! Highly appreciate it!"

The program continues into 2021 and interested MENTORS and MENTEES can reach out to **Adhithiya Charli** (adithiyacharli@gmail.com).



ASIO Endorsed Session and Other Sessions of Interest

Annual Meeting & ToxExpo
VIRTUAL • MARCH 12-26, 2021

March 2021 Newsletter

Tuesday, March 23, 2:45 PM to 4:05 PM

IS Informational Session: Safety Assessment of Devices Used in Assisted Reproduction Technology: Mouse Embryo Assay

Chair(s): Niranjan Goud, Greenwood Toxicology Associates LLC; and Benjamin Fisher, US FDA/CDRH.

Primary Endorser: Medical Device and Combination Product Specialty Section

Other Endorser(s): Association of Scientists of Indian Origin Special Interest Group

Date	Title	Speaker
Friday, March 12	Less Is More: Sustainable Product Development Requires More Toxicological Considerations	Mansi Krishan
	Integration of New Testing Methods and Strategies in Pharmaceutical Product Development toward Green Toxicology: Where Are We Today?	Brinda Mahadevan
Monday, March 15	Consumer Exposure to Fragrance Ingredients and Implementation of In Vitro Risk Evaluations	Nikaeta Sadekar
	Environmental Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic.	Babasaheb Sonawane
Thursday, March 18	The Need for Protocol Harmonization in the Advancement of Zebrafish as a Model for Toxicological Screening: Global Perspectives and Recent Advancements	Mamta Behl
Friday, March 26	Nonhuman Primate Models of Immunosenescence in Preclinical Biotherapeutic Testing	Padma Kumar Narayanan

2020- 2021 ASIO Webinars

March 2021 Newsletter

ASIO proudly hosted 2 webinars that were huge success and received cross SIG/CG endorsement and participation.

Title: The visa marathon: How to navigate your way through the changing landscape of visa opportunities in the USA

Speaker: a) Khorzad Mehta, Attorney, Murthy Law Firm
b) Anna Stepanova, Asst. Managing Attorney & Member, Murthy Law Firm

Date: September 24, 2020

Endorsed by Toxicologists of African Origin (TAO), Korean Toxicologists Association in America (KTAA), Hispanic Organization of Toxicologists (HOT), and American Association of Chinese in Toxicology (AACT) Special Interest Groups.

Title: Health Effects of Tear Gas Agents

Speaker: Satya Achanta, DVM, PhD, DABT
Asst. Professor in Anesthesiology,
Duke University School of Medicine

Date: February 25, 2021

Co-sponsored by CTPVSS



The recording of both webinars is available for Free to access at https://www.toxicology.org/groups/sig/asio/past_events.asp

Have an idea for a future webinar?

Please reach out to the [ASIO Executive Committee](#)

ASIO congratulates

March 2021 Newsletter

ASIO member	Achievements
Rashmi Pathak, PhD Affiliation: Louisiana State University	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adjunct Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, Southern University and A&M College, Baton Rouge; Jan 2021• Third place winner for Platform Presentation (Postdoc category), South Central Chapter of the Society of Toxicology (SCC-SOT) Annual Meeting; Nov 2020• Judged Graduate posters presented in SCC-SOT Annual Meeting; Nov 2020• Mentor at Freedom Employability Academy (https://feaindia.org) – Successfully completed all the mentoring sessions for another batch of students (>15 students); October 2020-Present
Avinash Kumar, PhD Affiliation: Louisiana State University	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Job Change: Postdoctoral Researcher, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge; Jan 2021• Re-elected as the Postdoctoral Representative in Allegheny-Erie Chapter of the Society of Toxicology (AESOT)• Judge for the PPG Industries Inc Graduate Student Award, AESOT Annual Meeting; Oct 2020• Judge for the Undergraduate Poster Award in South Central Chapter of the Society of Toxicology (SCC-SOT) Annual Meeting; Nov 2020
Durgesh Kumar Dwivedi, PhD Affiliation: Regional Ayurveda Research Institute, Gwalior	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• First prize in the poster presentation in a SOT, USA funded 'International Workshop on Human Health Risk Assessment' through virtual mode organized by Chitkara University, Himachal Pradesh, India; Sept 2020.▪ Co-authorship in a paper in 'Canadian Journal of Physiology and Pharmacology' 2020 Oct 23. doi: 10.1139/cjpp-2020-0173
Tarana Arman, MS Affiliation: Washington State University	<p>Publications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sub-chronic microcystin-LR renal toxicity in rats fed a high fat/high cholesterol diet. T Arman, KD Lynch, M Goedken, JD Clarke-Chemosphere, 2020 DOI: 10.1016/j.chemosphere.2020.128773.• Hepatic organic anion transporting polypeptides mediate disposition of milk thistle flavonolignans and pharmacokinetic silymarin drug interactions. Phytotherapy Research 2021. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1002/ptr.7049.• Night shift schedule causes circadian dysregulation of DNA repair genes and elevated DNA damage in humans. Journal of Pineal Research. DOI: 10.1111/jpi.12726

ASIO congratulates

March 2021 Newsletter

ASIO member	Achievements
<p>Nitin Verma, MPharm, PhD Affiliation: Chitkara University, Himachal Pradesh</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOT Grant for International Workshop on Human Health Risk Assessment. • Organized virtual International Workshop on Human Health Risk Assessment on 17-18 September 2020. • Publication: Nitin Verma (2020) Risk assessment studies of the impact of occupational exposure of pharmaceutical workers on the development of antimicrobial drug resistance, Journal of Occupational and Environmental Hygiene, 17:10, 437-446, DOI: 10.1080/15459624.2020.1798013. • Presented virtual poster entitled “Importance of in-silico Chemistry for Safety Assessment of Nutraceuticals” in 9th Annual Meeting of American Society of Cellular and Computational Toxicology (ASCCT) 2020, October 20-23, 2020. • Joined ASCCT Lunchtime Mentoring and Networking event during ASCCT 2020 on Oct. 21st. During this 1 hour mentoring activity, mentors and mentees have an opportunity to informally discuss career paths and to grow their professional network. • Authored a Book entitled " Improving Risk Assessment through Procedural Changes" August 2020, ISBN 978-620-2-66796-8, Published by Lambert Academic Publishing House. In view of the scientific advances taking place globally in the area of risk assessment, in India the science of risk assessment is not that developed and practice.
<p>Gagandeep Kaur, PhD Affiliation: University of Rochester Medical Center</p>	<p>Publications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kaur G and Batra S (2020). “Regulation of DNA methylation signatures on NF-κB and STAT3 pathway genes and TET activity in cigarette smoke extract–challenged cells/COPD exacerbation model in vitro.” Cell Biology and Toxicology, 36(5):459-480. • Kaur G, Lungarella G, Rahman I. SARSCoV-2 COVID-19 susceptibility and lung inflammatory storm by smoking and vaping. J Inflamm (Lond). 2020; 17:21. • Kaur G, Singh K, Maremanda KP, Li D, Chand HS, Rahman I (2020) Differential plasma exosomal long non-coding RNAs expression profiles and their emerging role in E-cigarette users, cigarette, waterpipe, and dual smokers. PLoS ONE 15(12): e0243065. <p>Other opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest Speaker for SOT-IRSS Webinar entitled " COVID-19: Impact of Inhalation Based Exposures on Respiratory System." held on August 5, 2020. • Guest Lecturer (New York University) • Best poster award at CRoFT virtual Meeting 2020. • Best platform presentation at NPAW Postdoc Showcase at Univ. of Rochester.

ASIO congratulates

March 2021 Newsletter

ASIO member	Achievements
<p>Sharavan Ramachandran, PhD Affiliation: Texas Tech University Health Sciences Centre, Abilene, Texas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recipient of TEPSS Graduate Student STP Award, 2020.• Recipient of Seahorse travelship award Travel Award, 2020.• Recipient of Sheldon D. Murphy Award, 2020.• Recipient of Drug Discovery Toxicology Specialty Section Emil A Pfitzer Student Award, 2020.• Recipient of American Association of Indian Scientists in Cancer Research Young Investigator Award, 2020.• Recipient of SOT Graduate Student Travel Support Award to attend SOT Annual Meeting, Orlando, 2020.• Recipient of Cayman Thesis Printing Scholarship Award, 2020. <p>Publications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ramachandran, S., & Srivastava, S. K. (2020). Repurposing Pimavanserin, an Anti-Parkinson Drug for Pancreatic Cancer Therapy. <i>Molecular Therapy-Oncolytics</i>, 19, 19-32
<p>Preeti Singh Chauhan, PhD Affiliation: Michigan State University</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Earned R skill for data science CSTAT (center for statistical training and counselling) certificate.• Attended virtual pathology for nonpathologist course from May 18-June 4

“Be the change you wish to see in the world” -
Mahatma Gandhi

“Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world” - *Albert Einstein*



Winner's Words

March 2021 Newsletter

What does this award mean to you?

I'm very grateful and honored to receive this competitive award. Receiving this award was a big confidence booster for me and has helped me to find a renewed energy and passion for the work that I do; especially during these challenging times. Though only my name appears on this award, this would not have been possible without wise counseling and advice from my mentors and the constant support of my family.

What according to you makes an award-winning abstract?

When I write an abstract I was trained to follow the below points which have worked well for me

- 1. Be clear and concise – clearly describe important findings and state the conclusion concisely.*
- 2. Consider your audience.*
- 3. Hypothesis, study design, and practical application – show the importance of your work, briefly discuss the methodology used and describe how your work would address the current challenges in the field.*
- 4. Evidence – be concrete and show evidence to support your hypothesis. Briefly discuss the results, followed by concrete conclusion based on the results.*



Dr. Milan Prajapati
Brown University

Dr. Dharm Singh
Postdoctoral Fellow
Best Abstract Award

How has this award and attendance to the ASIO meeting help in your project and/or career development? Please state 3 points on what networking opportunities you are looking with ASIO.

As a long-time member of the ASIO special interest group, I can certainly say that the group has provided me with unique opportunities and a platform for networking and professional development. Networking events such as the annual reception, career talk, and coffee hours have helped me exchange scientific ideas and achieve productive interactions with other researchers, which lead to constructive feedback on my projects. I met experts in my field of study at these events who not only provided constructive feedbacks but also served as an advisory committee for my grant applications. Such would not have been possible without the efforts of the leadership of ASIO.

As an early career scientist, I believe the conferences such as SOT are undoubtedly the best way to stay up-to-date with current practices and cutting-edge science in the field.



Winner's Words

March 2021 Newsletter

What were your first thoughts after having received the news that you are the winner of this award?

I am thrilled to have won the prestigious 2020 Young Investigator Award. I would like to thank the judges and ASIO for bestowing me with this recognition.

Can you please tell us about your work in brief? How do you appraise the future of your research field?

I am currently employed as a Senior Scientist within Safety Assessment at Genentech Inc., South San Francisco, CA. As part of this role I serve as a Project Toxicologist, Cross-functional Sub-team Leader, toxicology Therapy Area Leader, and people manager.

- As part of my project toxicologist role, I serve as a functional representative on drug development teams. I am responsible for designing safety assessment strategies, executing toxicology studies, authoring INDs, CTAs, and NDAs, and representing company on health authority interactions. My expertise spans small and large molecule discovery and development in the oncology, immuno-oncology, immunology, neuroscience, and infectious disease (viral and bacterial) therapy areas.*
- As a cross-functional sub-team leader, I lead drug development strategies for cross-functional teams (pharmacology/research, drug metabolism and pharmacokinetics, biomarkers, clinical pharmacology, bioanalytical sciences, toxicology, pathology, non-clinical operations, and project management) and represent as the sub-team leader on the core team.*



Dr. Mayur Mitra
Genentech

ASIO Young Investigator Award

Any advice for your young colleagues?

My advice to our young colleagues is to stay focused and resilient, put your best foot forward in whatever you do, have patience, and don't forget to have fun!



Winner's Words

March 2021 Newsletter

What were your first thoughts after having received the news that you are the winner of this award?

I was thrilled and honored that fellow ASIO members have chosen me for this award. I was grateful to my mentors, peers, and wife for playing a significant role in my accomplishments.

Can you please tell us about your work in brief? How do you appraise the future of your research field?

I am currently working in Animal Health division at Boehringer Ingelheim. As a Project Toxicologist, my role is to develop a nonclinical toxicology program, monitor studies/interpret data, address the safety of impurities/degradants/metabolites/formulation, author regulatory submission documents, and interact with regulatory authorities to support global registrations for small molecule and biologic therapeutics. In this role, I work with diverse cross functional teams to achieve the drug development objectives. I am leading the Occupational Toxicology function for establishing worker safety and cleaning validation limits. In addition, I provide toxicology expertise for due diligence of in-licensing products.

It is an exciting period for the field of drug development and associated research. There is a tremendous growth in the area of taking advantage of one's own immune system in curing the disease. Regenerative medicine using stem cells is another exciting area. Growth of the new avenues of medicine leads to custom toxicology approach rather than check box approach. While the modalities like monoclonal antibodies and cell and gene therapies are in use for a while in the human medicine, these are new and evolving in animal health drug development where I am currently working.



Dr. Satheesh Anand
Boehringer Ingelheim
ASIO Senior Toxicologist
Award

Any advice for your young colleagues?

It is easy to get lost in the day to day activities, so it is important to have a goal and a plan to achieve it. The key to achieving the goal, however, is to make necessary changes to the plan if there is no progress. Keep in mind "you cannot control the wind, but you can adjust your sails", and baby steps are ok, but baby needs to grow. You are the best salesperson for yourself - make sure to give your best every day and do not hesitate to ask for what you deserve. Seeking mentors and expanding network are the most valuable career management tools so use it. Be humble, positive, mindful and empathetic.



Interview with Dr. Prakash Nagarkatti

An effort to archive ASIO's history

Compiled by Rashmi Pathak

March 2021 Newsletter

History of an organization is a great source of inspiration for the current and future leaders. In an attempt to compile history and anecdotes from early years of ASIO, we contacted Dr. Prakash Nagarkatti who has been one of the members of the Founding Executive Committee of ASIO. Dr. Nagarkatti is a Distinguished Professor and Vice President for Research at University of South Carolina, Columbia and has shared his memories from early years of ASIO.

What motivated you to start ASIO? What was the differentiating factor that worked in your favor while setting up ASIO as a special interest group within SOT?

Prior to the formation of SOT Special Interest groups (SIGs), several SOT members of Indian origin used to meet at each meeting to network. They were also members of the National ASIOA (Association of Scientists of Indian Origin in America) which was started in 1981 and used to meet regularly at Experimental Biology (FASEB) national meetings. I had become a lifetime member of the national ASIOA because I enjoyed networking. Thus, the Indian Toxicologists who met at SOT initially operated as a branch of ASIOA. Some members like Drs. Mehandale, Soni, Gopal Krishna, and Chellu Chetty were very active in organizing the annual meetings where we would go out for dinner and network. However, at that time there was no formal recognition of our association by SOT.

At one of the SOT meetings, I floated the idea of forming SIG with Dr. Marion Ehrich who was the then President of SOT. I had known Dr. Ehrich from my Virginia Tech days. I was able to share my vision with her stating that such a SIG would allow minority communities to network just like we did at ASIOA. I told her that to meet formally and host a reception like the Specialty Sections (SS), we would need funds from SOT and asked her if she could help us establish an entity similar to SS, so that we can network, provide awards, invite speakers, establish endowment funds, and the like.

She liked my idea and took up this proposal with SOT Council. The Council approved and asked that we prepare the bylaws that I helped draft. This is how ASIO was formed followed by several other SIGs. Initially we called it 'ASIOA SIG'. We wanted to keep the same name because this SIG resulted from the efforts of a significant number of ASIOA national members who were still key participants in this new SIG. Sometime thereafter, the name changed to ASIO to make it into a distinct entity.

In summary, the motivation was that we were a large group and we wanted to not just meet once a year and have a reception and dinner at an Indian restaurant but add value by helping students provide assistantship/ awards, help bring students/ scientists from India visit USA to attend SOT meetings, establish endowments, hold elections, and the like.



Interview with Dr. Prakash Nagarkatti

An effort to archive ASIO's history

Compiled by Rashmi Pathak

March 2021 Newsletter

What were the challenges you faced and what kept you going?

The initial challenge was to convey to all Indian American toxicologists that we had a SOT-approved SIG to which they should contribute by becoming a member and tell them about the benefits of this membership. We had a wonderful team of close friends who were all dedicated to bring this to fruition. Next, we were not sure if we could sustain our SIG financially and establish endowment funds to support awards. Fortunately, many including Drs. Dharam Singh, Hari Mehendale, and Laxman Desai, who saw the birth of this well-organized SIG volunteered to establish endowment funds.

What was your vision when you established the organization? How do you feel now? Is it a feeling of accomplishment?

We wanted ASIO to be like the Specialty Section where people with interest in a specific discipline under the umbrella of Toxicology get together, network, sponsor workshops, symposia, webinars, give out awards to students and post-docs, establish endowments. Looking back, when we started this initiative, I never thought we would be this successful and SOT would be so supportive in forming these SIGs. Also, thanks to the generous donations from several senior Indian American toxicologists like Drs. Singh, Mehendale, Desai, we were able to establish endowment funds thereby bringing in financial stability and recognition to ASIO. The fact that ASIO keeps growing with leadership from the younger generation is heartwarming.

Can you please share with us your anecdotes/stories from the earlier time of genesis of ASIO?

Several of us used to correspond before we arrived for the SOT meeting to see which would be the best Indian restaurant that was nearby and select a day and a time to meet and have fun. After the meeting, we would go to the restaurant to have dinner, to network and to have a wonderful time. I remember, sometimes we would partake in singing songs and entertain!

Would you like to share any anecdotes or memorable incidences with fellow ASIO members?

I remember, Dr. Dharam Singh used to be very entertaining and generous. He would tell lots of stories about his lab and trainees that he had mentored. Also, he was very generous and would offer to pay for the dinner for all graduate students. We also used to joke about the fact that if not for Dr. Hari Mehendale, forming ASIO would not have been possible—just acknowledging with respect how he had trained so many graduate students and post-docs in his career, who are now members of ASIO. I also remember when Dr. Mehendale retired we gave him a wonderful retirement party which was attended by all his trainees—pretty much the entire ASIO!

What would be your advice for current leaders and Indian origin toxicologists?

We need to make sure that we take care of graduate students and early career toxicologists and scientists because they are the future toxicologists and leaders who will play key role in academia, industry or in policy making with significant societal impact. To that end, we need to have mentoring programs and support system for them so that we can help them advance their career opportunities.

Join ASIO and Volunteer

March 2021 Newsletter



Over last three decades ASIO has evolved into a leading Special Interest Group of the SOT, connecting toxicologists of Indian origin across the world. As an ASIO member you get to involve and participate in ASIO activities throughout the year and get to network with fellow Indian origin toxicologists around the globe. Please encourage your friends and colleagues to join ASIO and be a part of the growing ASIO community. To become an ASIO member today and enjoy numerous member benefits log on:

www.toxicology.org/groups/sig/asio/membership.asp

Get involved with ASIO activities...

- Would you like to develop your leadership and communication skills?
- Would you like to network effectively and showcase your creativity?
- ... and much more.

If yes, ASIO is an ideal platform for you!!! Here in ASIO, we have multitude of volunteering opportunities for students, postdocs and professionals to contribute as a volunteer. To explore the possibility of serving on an ASIO committee, please visit

<https://www.toxicology.org/groups/sig/asio/committees.asp>

The success of ASIO depends on your innovative ideas, enthusiasm and positive attitude. If you interested in volunteering and contributing towards the ASIO team or if you have any suggestions, please reach out [ASIO Executive Committee](#).

ASIO Award Nomination Committee

March 2021 Newsletter

This year the ASIO Executive Committee has started many new initiatives. One of them is the formation of **ASIO Award Nomination Committee**. There are many ASIO members who deserve due recognition for their significant contribution to the field of toxicology as a researcher as well as a mentor for the next generation of toxicologists. However, the number of ASIO members receiving the SOT awards over the years has been sporadic. The ASIO Executive Committee is happy to announce the formation of a new committee called **ASIO Award Nomination Committee**. The goal of the committee is to encourage the deserving candidates from ASIO membership to submit their nominations for various National SOT awards. This committee will act as a catalyst for ASIO members' award applications, except student and postdoc awards. The committee will help the potential candidates to choose most appropriate SOT awards and facilitate completion of the application requirements to meet the SOT award deadlines. ASIO EC is making all the efforts to form a robust committee. **We are looking for volunteers on this committee.** *If you are interested to volunteer please contact Jaya Chilakapati at Jaya.Chilakapati@boehringer-ingelheim.com.*

ASIO EC is making all the efforts to form a robust committee. But to make this effort more fruitful, we are asking for your help. We also want to hunt for deserving candidates, who are ASIO members, for various SOT awards. If you know such ASIO members who truly deserve recognition for their work, please send their names, email and suggested SOT award for which they can be nominated to Jaya Chilakapati at (Jaya.Chilakapati@boehringer-ingelheim.com). The list of SOT awards can be found here - <https://www.toxicology.org/awards/sot/awards.aspx>. We should mention here that the nominees also need to be willing to apply for the award and they must actively participate in the application process. As mentioned above, ASIO will encourage them to apply and act as a catalyst to facilitate their application and cannot nominate on their behalf. If there is a large pool of applicants, the committee will have to select few of them to nominate depending on the availability of volunteers we have on this Nomination Committee. However, remainder will be considered for nomination in the subsequent years.

CONSIDER TO DONATE TODAY !

March 2021 Newsletter

Sponsorship Level	Contribution	Benefits
Individuals	≥ \$25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Acknowledgement in ASIO Newsletters (for 1 year). ✓ Acknowledgement during ASIO Annual Business Meeting and Reception at SOT. ✓ Acknowledgement on ASIO website (for 1 year).
Corporate Sponsorship		
Bronze	\$ 100-999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Acknowledgement in ASIO Newsletters (for 1 year). ✓ Acknowledgement during ASIO Annual Business Meeting and Reception at SOT. ✓ Acknowledgement on ASIO website (for 1 year).
Silver	\$1000-1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ All of the above ✓ Poster (SOT's poster standard) at the ASIO Annual Business Meeting and Reception
Gold	\$2000-4999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ All of the above ✓ Plus, platform presentation for 3-5 minutes at ASIO Annual Business Meeting and Reception
Platinum	≥ \$5000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ All of the above ✓ Plus, company introduction (up to 1 page) in one of the ASIO Newsletter

Payment Information

SOT's Nonprofit Organization Federal EIN # is 52-6057050

ASIO operates in compliance with Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and all donations to ASIO are tax deductible.

Sponsorship payments can be made via checks or credit card. All payments should be sent to SOT Liaison, Rosalie Duvic at SOT.

Checks: Please send your checks payable to: **'Society of Toxicology with ASIO in the notes field.** All checks need to be mailed directly to: Society of Toxicology, 11190 Sunrise Valley Drive, Suite 300, Reston, VA 20191.

Credit Card: If you wish to pay by credit card, you may contact Rosalie Duvic at SOT by email at rosalie@toxicology.org or by phone at 703.438.3115.

If your organization matches your donations, it is a great way to multiply the impact of your donations by donating through your organization. Once you send your donation, please email [ASIO President](#) so that your contribution can be appropriately acknowledged.

Thanks to Our Platinum Sponsor 2020-21

March 2021 Newsletter

Dr. Laxman Desai and Toxikon



Toxikon is a global preclinical Contract Research Organization (CRO) that conducts safety studies for the medical device, pharmaceutical, and biotechnology industries, as well as academic research centers, to deliver exceptional product development services from concept to final product.

Toxikon began in the 1980's in the heart of the Northeast's life science sector, the scientific hub of greater Cambridge and Boston, Massachusetts.

Originally founded as Cambridge Diagnostics in 1977 by Dr. Laxman Desai, president and chief executive officer. Before establishing Toxikon, Dr. Desai managed oncology drug research programs at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston. It was through his expertise and experiences there that Dr. Desai saw the opportunity for a high-quality GLP toxicology testing laboratory to serve the needs of life science companies in New England and beyond.

Since 1995, Toxikon has operated a 125,000 ft² campus in Bedford, MA, featuring state-of-the-art analytical chemistry laboratories, large animal model facilities, and a comprehensive suite of bioanalytical support services. The company has founded many laboratory locations throughout its history, including Toxikon Europe.

With over 40 years of broad and deep experience in navigating the dynamic regulatory landscape, Toxikon has the expertise and technical skill to supply the life science industry with the results needed to gain product approvals through careful safety and efficacy study conduct.

Toxikon is accredited to ISO/IEC 17025, an extensive set of standards confirming our competency as a testing organization. Laboratory systems and operations are governed by a rigorous quality management system, ensuring reliable data for which our customers trust and rely upon.

Additionally, Toxikon is registered with the United States Food and Drug Administration and the Japan Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare for drug and medical testing with demonstrated success working through these and other worldwide regulatory agencies to complete submissions and provide international regulatory support to our customers.

Toxikon is a trusted partner for life science companies, providing qualified, 3rd-party confidence that medical products will perform as expected with minimal risk of adverse effects. Toxikon offers a multidisciplinary approach in developing customized risk assessments and testing methodologies.

A very Special Thank you to our Sponsors and Donors

Thank you so much for your generous contribution!
ENDOWMENT SPONSORS



Dr. Dharm Singh Dr. Harihara Mehendale Dr. Laxman Desai

ASIO is deeply grateful to our generous donors!