Lisa Scott, an Assistant Professor of Psychology at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, used her Mellon Mutual Mentoring Micro-Grant to learn about specific lab techniques and equipment essential to her research, as well as to establish a promising connection with a leading scholar in her field.

A researcher of infant perception, Scott tracks brain changes as well as the movements of babies’ eyes while showing them photographs of different kinds of monkey faces to learn more about babies’ ability to individuate and categorize faces at various stages of their development. Since no one in Scott’s department or on campus uses this particular method of eye tracking with infants, she decided to establish a mentoring partnership with Dr. Richard Aslin of the University of Rochester, a prominent researcher in her field.

Dr. Aslin invited Scott to visit his lab, where she gathered information about the latest technologies available for eye tracking, received important grant-writing advice, had dinner with Aslin’s graduate students, and gave a talk, “Perceptual Specialization in Infancy: Building Biases in the Brain.”

“It’s been a really good experience for me on multiple levels. I’m getting to know a leading researcher in my field, and I feel very comfortable calling him or emailing him for advice. I’m connecting to other universities.”