



# Victorian News

The Australian Society for Microbiology VIC Branch Newsletter

March 2020, Vol 528

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**Submission Deadline: 5th of the Month**

**Find us on:**

**Website <http://victoria.theasm.org.au/>**

**Facebook [The Australian Society for Microbiology \(ASM\) - Victorian Branch](#)**

**Twitter [@ASM\\_VicBranch](#)**



# Contact Details

## **Victorian Branch ASM:**

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Victorian Branch  
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Email: [catherine.satzke@mcri.edu.au](mailto:catherine.satzke@mcri.edu.au) or  
[asmvicbranch@gmail.com](mailto:asmvicbranch@gmail.com)

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Weblink: [www.theasm.org.au](http://www.theasm.org.au)  
ABN 24 065 463 274

## **Victorian Branch Committee:**

Chair: Catherine Satzke  
Email: [catherine.satzke@mcri.edu.au](mailto:catherine.satzke@mcri.edu.au)

Secretary: Sarah Baines  
Email: [bainess@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:bainess@unimelb.edu.au)

Immediate Past Chair: Karena Waller  
Email: [klwaller@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:klwaller@unimelb.edu.au)

VSP Coordinator: Lauren Zavan  
Email: [l.zavan@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:l.zavan@latrobe.edu.au)

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Email: [valcanis@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:valcanis@unimelb.edu.au)

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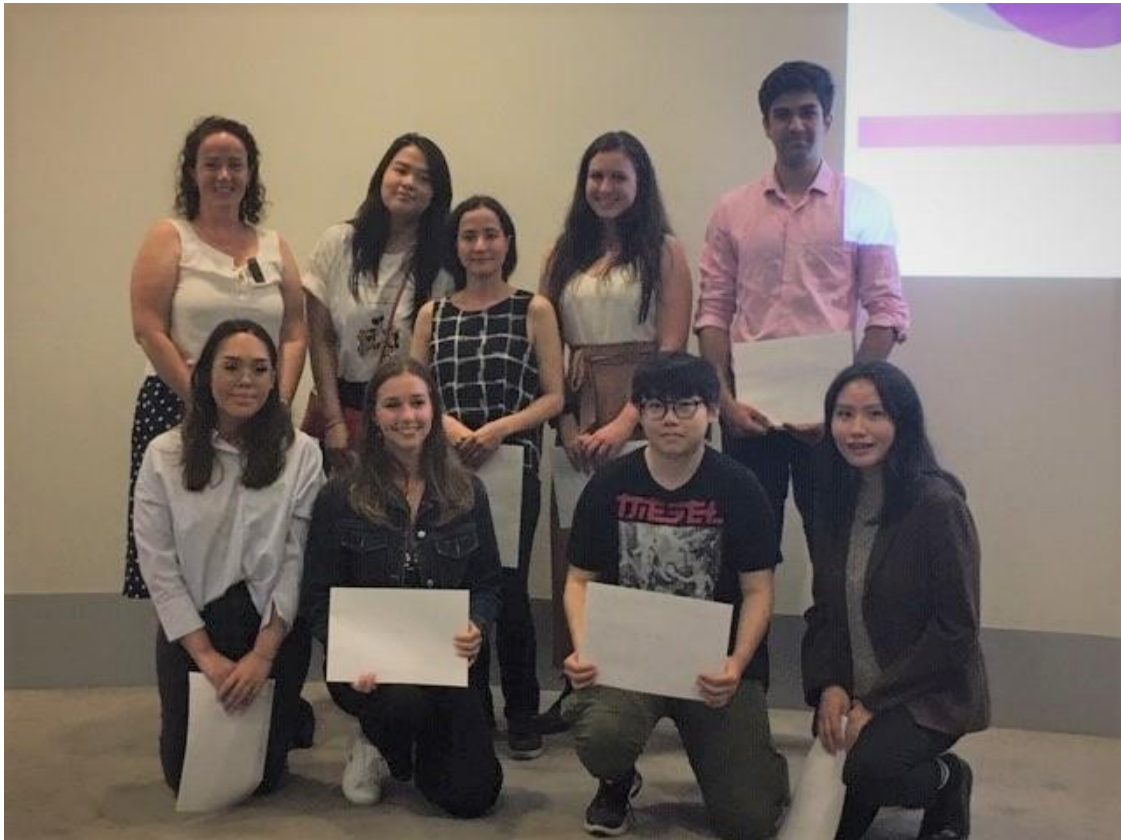
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All notices should be emailed to: [lo.miles@alfred.org.au](mailto:lo.miles@alfred.org.au)

# 2020 ASM Nancy Millis Student Awards - Event Report



*Assoc. Prof. Karena Waller (back left) accompanied by many of the undergraduate academic prize winners.*

The annual ASM Nancy Millis Student Awards were held at RMIT University (city campus) on Tuesday 25 February 2020. The evening was chaired by Assoc. Prof. Karena Waller (University of Melbourne). The evening commenced with light refreshments before the presentation of thirteen undergraduate prizes for top achieving microbiology students studying at various Victorian universities, including Monash University, RMIT University, La Trobe University (Bundoora and Bendigo campuses) and the University of Melbourne. Each of the undergraduate prizes consisted of a certificate, a cheque and a year's student membership to the ASM.

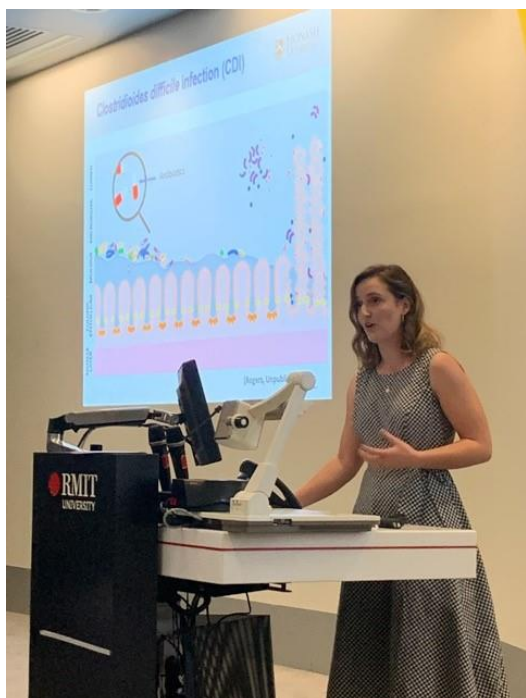
The evening continued with presentations from the recipients of this year's ASM VIC Branch Summer Student Research Awards. Jay Law (La Trobe University), Adeleine Chew (University of Melbourne) and Irena Jovanovska (Swinburne University of Technology) each delivered short presentations summarising their research experience project and findings.

Two presentations from research students competing in the categories of ASM VIC Branch Award (for Honours and Masters by Coursework students) then followed. Adrianna Turner (Doherty Institute/University of Melbourne) presented “*Defining the Prevalence and Molecular Mechanisms of Daptomycin Resistance in Enterococcus faecium*” and Ashleigh Rogers (Monash University) presented “*Host recovery following Clostridioides difficile infection*”. Following deliberations by the judges, the ASM VIC Branch Award was awarded to Ashleigh Rogers (Monash University; pictured below). As the winner of this prize, Ashleigh will receive a prize consisting of registration at the Annual Meeting in Melbourne (July 2020).

Six speakers, Marina Zupan (Doherty Institute/University of Melbourne), Zahra Islam (Monash University), Jiyao Gan (Hudson Institute/University of Melbourne), Marion Bichet (Monash University), Laura Ellett (Doherty Institute/University of Melbourne) and Aurelie Tsee (La Trobe University) competed for the prestigious ASM Nancy Millis Student Award, and a prize consisting of registration (and an oral presentation) at the ASM Annual Meeting in Melbourne (July 2020). The winner of this prize was Marion Bichet (pictured below), who presented “*Phage adsorption and inactivation by the Eukaryotic cell could have repercussions for the efficacy of phage therapy.*”

The evening concluded with drinks and a delicious supper prepared by Pearson and Murphy Catering (RMIT University, city campus). Overall, it was a fabulous night for Microbiology! Over 100 people enjoyed the evening’s activities.

Congratulations to all students who competed for prizes on the night – their research presentations were outstanding!



Ashleigh Rogers (Monash University),  
ASM VIC Branch Travel Award  
recipient



Left to right: Marion Bichet  
(Monash University), ASM Nancy  
Millis Student Award recipient, and  
Karena Waller

Contributed by: Karena Waller

# Microbiologist of the Month

## Cathy Hannant

I am a Medical Hospital Scientist at a major Metropolitan Hospital in Melbourne. My journey began as a student loving biology at school and progressing into a Bachelor degree in Science at the University of Queensland with a major in Microbiology.

I had an interest in industrial Microbiology at University, but my interest quickly changed with my first job at the Respiratory Investigation Unit at Prince Charles Hospital, participating in Cystic Fibrosis microbiology. Over the years I have moved from NT, ACT, and then country Victoria and now Melbourne, probably being employed in 15 different institutions, mostly public but some in the private sector. I worked in a variety of departments, mostly microbiology, occasionally biochemistry, haematology, blood banking, core laboratory and a very short stint at a STD clinic lab. The longest stint was 22 years in the one institution (which included a merger). So my interests have varied and were heavily governed by the diagnostic microbiology of my current institution.



Meanwhile our profession was continually changing and much of my energy was expended adapting to the changing workforce, the knowledge required not just to be a “jack of all trades” but an experienced scientist. I have been heard to say “How many ways are there to do a tube coagulase?” I ended up fascinated by why this is so.

I loved mechanisation, and followed by computerisation, and being a creative soul, I enjoyed my 10 years being involved in LIS scripting. I love problem solving and have a drive to improve myself and what is happening around me. I enjoyed being an auditor.

I have experienced many frustrations and rewards, in my career. My position in the profession today probably reflects some of my life choices and priorities, and I am contented. I also started my career at a time when Diagnostic Laboratories were expanding, and this is reflected by the number of people of my age group in this profession.

My current passion is to share some of my experience and hand over something to the next generation. Over my career, professional reading, has always been the hardest and often most isolated tasks I needed to perform. With the modern IT tools that we have today, there is no need for some of these tasks to be so onerous on the individual. Currently I am organising a Journal club at my institution to encourage and help my work colleges to have fun, set up a regular routine of reading and share the workload involved.

My message to future Medical diagnostic scientists is: not to be complacent, keep yourself up to date, make the jobs you do distinctly yours, and undertake it with expertise, create a demand that cannot be replaced by automation, or expertise from above or below. Survival of our profession depends on adaption, innovation, and scientific leadership in staying ahead of change.

Do you know of someone you would like to nominate for microbiologist of the month?  
Please email Louise Miles ([Lo.miles@alfred.org.au](mailto:Lo.miles@alfred.org.au)) for more details.



## Vet Micro Symposium

Join us for an evening of presentations by members of the microbiology community covering a variety of infectious disease topics in animals.

Venue: RL Reid Building  
Room RLR 101  
La Trobe University  
Bundoora

Date: Tuesday 24th March 2020  
6.30pm food & refreshments  
7.00pm presentations commence

### Current Presentations:

- "Global eradication of bovine rinderpest virus and its relationship to measles and canine distemper viruses" by Colin Wilks (UoM)
- "Epidemiology and pathogenesis of *Serratia marcescens* in the Lord Howe Island Stick Insect (*Dryococelus australis*)" by Nick Doidge (Melb Zoo)
- More exciting speakers to be confirmed

Cost: This is a free event for ASM members (student or full members), or

- \$40 non-ASM member
- \$15 student non-ASM member

**For catering purposes, please RSVP for this event by 5pm Friday 20th March 2020 via:**

<https://www.trybooking.com/BJALW>

For further details, please contact **Jacqueline Heath** ([jhea@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:jhea@unimelb.edu.au)), **Mary Valcanis** ([valcanis@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:valcanis@unimelb.edu.au)) or **Steve Petrovski** ([steve.petrovksi@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:steve.petrovksi@latrobe.edu.au)).



# ASM SIG Bacteriophage Group

## Monash–UCSD Bacteriophage Symposium

We would like to invite you to attend the Monash–UCSD Bacteriophage Symposium that will be held in Melbourne, at the Monash Conference Centre, on Monday 30th, March.

**Registration is free but required:** <https://forms.gle/pfHbMFpD8knvV1iv8>

**When:** Monday 30th of March  
from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm  
followed by a poster and networking session till 6:30pm.

**Where:** Monash Conference Centre  
Level 7, 30 Collins St, Melbourne

**Key dates:** Registrations close 18th March (5pm).  
Abstracts close 24th February (5pm).

The Symposium will have a strong focus on phage therapy and its clinical translation, but will also have a talks on bacterial pathogenesis, fundamental phage biology and antibiotic resistance.

The Symposium will be free of charge, but registrations will be required for venue and catering purposes. Finally there will be a small number of 12min talks and posters that will be selected from abstract submissions.

We'd encourage you all to consider attending and to please share the event with any students, colleagues or other interested parties. We look forward to hosting you in Melbourne.

# NEWS FROM THE HOSPITALS & ASM VIC Branch AGM

## SAVE THE DATE

Come along and listen to interesting microbial discoveries from the hospitals! Speakers will each deliver a 12-minute presentation and receive 3-minutes of questions from the audience. A prize for the best presentation by a Medical Scientist (up to Grade 1 Year 4 or equivalent) will be awarded.

**Venue:** Ella Latham Auditorium, The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne

**Date:** Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2020,  
Refreshments from 6:00pm, AGM & presentations commence at 6:30pm

**Chair:** A/Prof. Andrew Daley (Head of Microbiology Department RCH)

**Cost:** This is a free event for ASM members (student or full members), or \$40 for non-ASM member & \$15 for student non-ASM member

**Registration:** <https://www.trybooking.com/BJAPJ>

**For catering purposes, please register for this event by 5pm Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> May, 2020.**

**Want to be a presenter?  
Complete an application form and return to the event organisers!**

**Application forms, instructions and further event details can be obtained from:**  
Seema Kanade ([seema.kanade@dorevitch.com.au](mailto:seema.kanade@dorevitch.com.au)), Sarah Baines ([bainess@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:bainess@unimelb.edu.au)),  
Louise Miles ([Lo.Miles@alfred.org.au](mailto:Lo.Miles@alfred.org.au)), Jake Lacey ([jake.lacey@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:jake.lacey@unimelb.edu.au))



# asm2020 VICTORIA



July 5-8

Melbourne  
Convention  
& Exhibition  
Centre

[www.theasm.org.au](http://www.theasm.org.au)

The Australian Society  
for Microbiology



bringing Microbiologists together



Visit Victoria #130894

Join us in Melbourne for good food, great coffee and amazing science!



#110626



#148026

Confirmed speakers:

Laureate Professor Peter Doherty

Professor Elizabeth Grohmann

Professor Denise Monack

Professor Jill Banfield

Professor Graham Hatfull

Professor David Murdoch

Professor Ferric Fang

Professor Anne Helso

Professor Sue Thomas

<https://www.asmmeeting.theasm.org.au/>

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The Australian Society  
for **Microbiology**



bringing Microbiologists together

Join us in Melbourne for good food, great coffee  
and the opportunity to hear from some of the  
leading scientific minds in microbiology!

Confirmed speakers:

Rubbo Oration



Prof Jill Banfield  
University of California, Berkeley

Public Lecturer



Laureate Prof Peter Doherty  
Doherty Institute

Plenary Speaker



Prof Ferric Fang  
University of Washington

Plenary Speaker



Prof Ellizabeth Grohmann  
University Medical Center Freiburg

Plenary Speaker



Prof Graham Hatfull  
University of Pittsburgh

Australian Funding Workshop



Prof Anne Helro  
CEO, NHMAC

Plenary Speaker



Prof Denise Monack  
Stanford University

Plenary Speaker



Prof David Murdoch  
University of Otago

Bazeley Oration



Prof Shiranee Srikanthan  
Imperial College London

Australian Funding Workshop



Prof Sue Thomas  
CEO, AAC

Plenary Speaker



Dr Swan Whittier  
Columbia University

# CliniCon

The Australian Society  
for Microbiology   
bringing Microbiologists together

## **ASM CliniCon Meeting**

### **ABSTRACTS AND REGISTRATIONS**

### **NOW OPEN**

Please join us for a diverse program specifically tailored towards diagnostic scientists, technicians, trade and anyone interested in diagnostic microbiology.

#### **When:**

- ◆ 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of July 2020

#### **Where:**

- ◆ Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> July – Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC)
- ◆ Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> – Monash University (Clayton)
- ◆

For more information on registration and the program check out the web page

<https://www.asmmeeting.theasm.org.au/clinicon2020>

**Enquiries to Belinda McEwan**

**[belinda.mcewan@ths.tas.gov.au](mailto:belinda.mcewan@ths.tas.gov.au)**

<https://www.asmmeeting.theasm.org.au/clinicon2020>



# Visiting Speakers Program

Do you know of an outstanding speaker coming to Australia?

If so, consider them for the Visiting Speakers Program (VSP).

This program is now coordinated by the ASM Executive standing committee and the National Office in consultation with State branches.

For more information, please contact Lauren Zavan  
([l.zavan@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:l.zavan@latrobe.edu.au)),

who is the VSP Coordinator for the ASM VIC Branch.

## Attention Microbiologists!

### Are you organising a microbiology-focussed event?

The main objective of the Australian Society for Microbiology is to advance the science of microbiology in Australia. The ASM Victorian Branch is keen to support local initiatives, with the potential to advertise or co-organise events. If you are organising a microbiology-focussed event or have an idea for a type of event that would appeal to the broader microbiology, please contact us to discuss the ASM Vic Branch may be able to assist.

Please contact Catherine Satzke ([catherine.satzke@mcri.edu.au](mailto:catherine.satzke@mcri.edu.au)) for more information

# ASM Member Awards

## Apply Now

The ASM offers a variety of awards to its members. Take full advantage of your membership by applying now for one of the awards listed below with deadlines approaching. For more details and additional awards please refer to the National webpage <https://www.theasm.org.au/member-rewards>

The deadlines for all award applications are now **March 31<sup>st</sup>** of each year.

### Teaching and Learning

- ASM David White Excellence in Teaching Award
- ASM Teachers' Travel Award
- ASM USA Teachers' Travel Award

### Diagnostic and Clinical Microbiology

- ASM Lyn Gilbert Award
- ASM Clinical Microbiology Travel Award

### Research

- ASM Frank Fenner Award
- ASM Jim Pittard Early Career Award

### Post-graduate and Student Awards

- Millis-Colwell Postgraduate Research Travel Award
- NZMS Postgraduate Research Travel Award
- ASM Nancy Millis Student Travel Awards

### Contribution and Service

- ASM Distinguished Service Award
- ASM Honorary Life Membership Award



# ASM History SIG

## ASM Memorabilia

If any ASM members have significant ASM memorabilia that they would like to donate to the ASM archives or would like to suggest topics suitable for possible symposia at future ASM Annual Scientific Meetings, please send details of the memorabilia or suggested symposia topics to:

History SIG convener  
c/o Australian Society for Microbiology Office  
9/397 Smith Street  
Fitzroy VIC 3068

## How to join the Australian Society for Microbiology at a reduced rate!

Did you know that non-members can join the Australian Society for Microbiology at a reduced rate? Well, you can!

As a non-member, by paying the fee to attend an event hosted by ASM VIC Branch, you can use this amount to put towards an annual membership of the Australian Society for Microbiology.

To do so, please follow these instructions:

1. Register to attend the event hosted by ASM VIC Branch via the advertised trybooking link, and pay the attendance fee.
2. Attend the event, and then within 2 weeks after the event, go to the ASM membership area at <https://www.theasm.org.au/membership>
3. Choose the appropriate membership for you and then click on: [Click here to join or update your details](#)
4. Click 'Begin here' and create a Currinda membership profile for yourself. Then, pay the membership full fee.
5. Following payment, download the paid receipt (showing your payment) and email it along with your postal address to:  
Christine Seers, Treasurer VIC Branch [caseers@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:caseers@unimelb.edu.au)
6. A cheque refunding the event fee will be posted to you.

**Please note:** you must complete the above process within 2 weeks following an event to take advantage of this offer. After this time, the event fee cannot be used to pay membership fees.

# Call for ASM VICTORIAN BRANCH COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2020

The ASM Victorian Branch is calling for nominations or re-nominations to the committee. The commitment includes attending a regular meeting once a month and assisting with the organisation of Branch activities. We are committed to representing the diversity of our membership.

If you are interested in joining the committee, please send a completed nomination form (below) to Mary Valcanis (Victorian Branch Deputy Chair) [valcanis@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:valcanis@unimelb.edu.au) or [asmvicbranch@gmail.com](mailto:asmvicbranch@gmail.com)

Following the recruitment process, the new committee will be formally announced at the Annual General Meeting to be held at News from the Hospitals in May 2020.

## I wish to nominate for the ASM Victorian Branch Committee

NAME	
CONTACT DETAILS	
SIGNATURE	
Describe ( <b>max 150 words</b> ) your career history (work/study), why you are interested in joining the committee, and what skills or qualities you will bring to the role	

### Proposed by

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ (MASM or FASM)

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

### Seconded by

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ (MASM or FASM)

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

Please scan and email to: Mary Valcanis (Deputy Chair) at [valcanis@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:valcanis@unimelb.edu.au)

**Applications close 5pm Friday 20th March 2020**



# Microbiology News and Views

- Cough that spreads tuberculosis has pain-linked trigger
  - <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/03/200306183349.htm>
- Chest CT findings in coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pneumonia
  - <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/03/200303175318.htm>
- A common gut microbe secretes a carcinogen
  - <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/02/200227114540.htm>
- Clostridioides difficile infection flourishes with a high-protein, high-fat diet
  - <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/02/200211134427.htm>
- Microbiologists took 12 years to grow a microbe tied to complex life's origins
  - <https://www.sciencenews.org/article/microbiologists-grow-microbe-tied-complex-life-origins>
- Injecting a TB vaccine into the blood, not the skin, boosts its effectiveness
  - <https://www.sciencenews.org/article/tb-vaccine-injection-blood-skin-effectiveness>
- Fecal transplants might help make koalas less picky eaters
  - <https://www.sciencenews.org/article/fecal-transplants-might-help-make-koalas-less-picky-eaters>
- A global survey finds that the Arctic Ocean is a hot spot for viruses
  - <https://www.sciencenews.org/article/global-survey-arctic-ocean-viruses>
- Repurposed drugs may help scientists fight the new coronavirus
  - <https://www.sciencenews.org/article/coronavirus-covid19-repurposed-treatments-drugs>
- Blue-Green Algae Produce Methane
  - <https://www.the-scientist.com/news-opinion/blue-green-algae-produce-methane-66971>

# **Advertise in the ASM VIC Branch Newsletter!**

Would you like to advertise your event, job vacancy or other news item in our newsletter?

Advertising rates are:

Not-for-profit adverts: free of charge

For-profit adverts: \$50 per advert

If so, please contact Catherine Satzke  
([catherine.satzke@mcri.edu.au](mailto:catherine.satzke@mcri.edu.au))

# ASM VIC CALENDAR 2020

When planning meetings, please book dates with Catherine Satzke  
(Email: [catherine.satzke@mcri.edu.au](mailto:catherine.satzke@mcri.edu.au))

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Vet Micro Event	24 March, 2020 (La Trobe University)
ASM SIG Bacteriophage- Bacteriophage Symposium	30 March (Monash Conference Centre, Melbourne)
Careers Night	April, 2020 (Venue TBA)
Southern News from the Hospitals (plus AGM)	21 May, 2020 (Royal Children's Hospital)
ASM Annual Scientific Meeting 2020	5-8 July, 2020 (Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre)
ASM CliniCon Meeting	8-9 July, 2020 (8 July - Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre 9 July - Monash University, Clayton)
'Microbes on the Move' NZMS- ASM Joint Conference	23-26 November Rotorua New Zealand

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for Microbiology



bringing Microbiologists together

CliniCon

The Australian Society  
for Microbiology



bringing Microbiologists together

**8th & 9th July 2020**

**Submission Deadline for March  
ASM Victorian News:  
April 5th 2020**

Email submissions to: [lo.miles@alfred.org.au](mailto:lo.miles@alfred.org.au)