

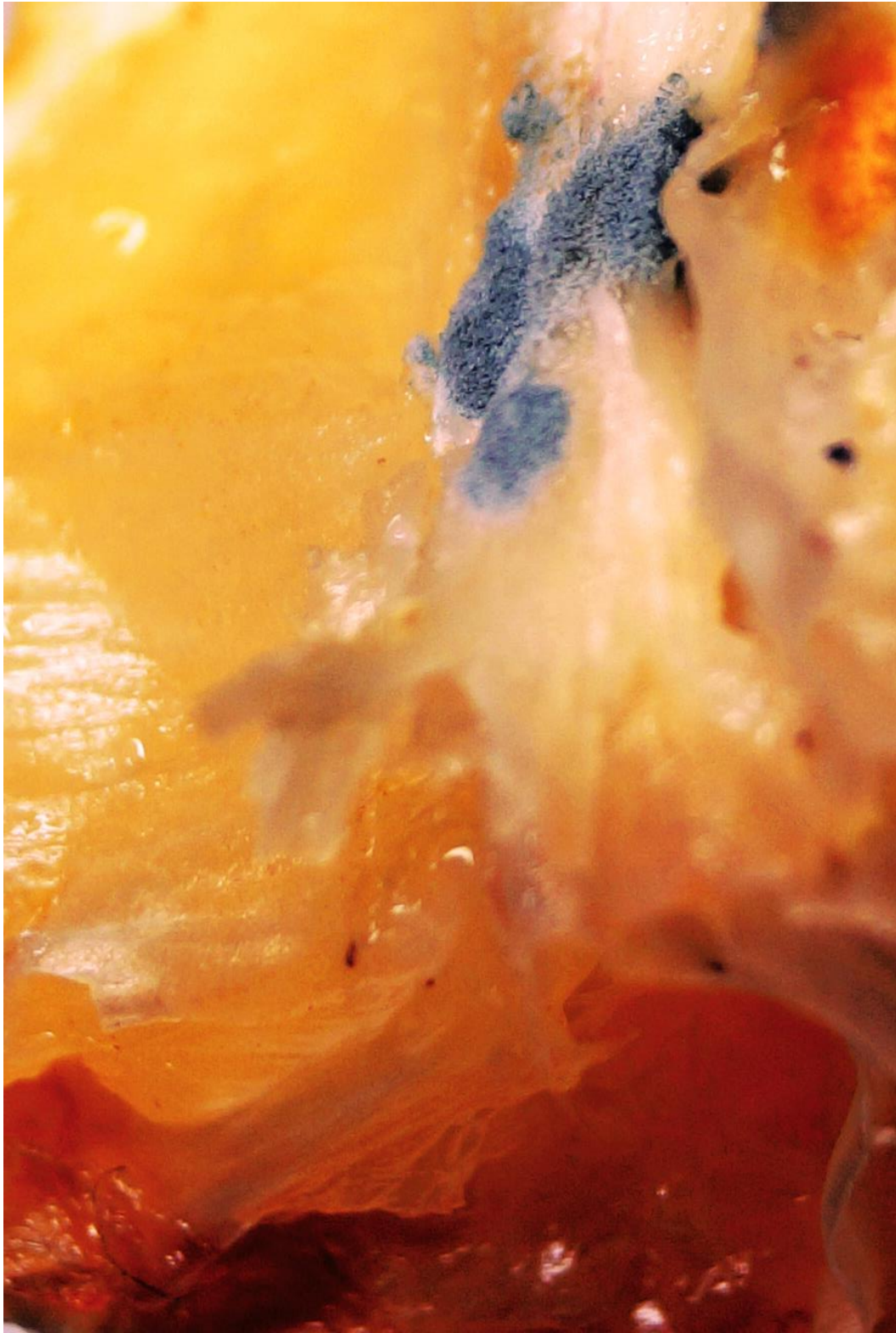
The Australian Society
for **Microbiology** 



Victorian News

The Australian Society for Microbiology VIC Branch Newsletter

August 2021, Vol 541



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2020-2021 Calendar

Event	Date
MicroSeq2021	8 th -9 th September
BACPATH2021	27 th September, 2021
ASM2022	11 th July – 14 th July 2022

Events

MicroSeq2021 8th - 9th September 2021

MicroSeq2021, an online conference designed to bring together early career researchers in Australia from a broad range of microbiology domains, who are united by their use of DNA and RNA sequencing technologies to investigate microbes.

This event was born from the observation that our national program lacks the opportunity for cross-disciplinary interaction and discussion on the broader use of high-throughput sequencing. With the impact of COVID19-so many event cancellations resulting in limited opportunities for early career researchers to network, present and receive feedback on their work, it seemed like the perfect time to try something new. We were delighted by the success of MicroSeq2020, so we have decided to do it again.

Please keep an eye on our twitter account @MicroSeq_ASM for updates. Registration and abstract submission is now open. Please visit the Registration and Abstract information page for more details.

Key Dates:

- **6th September:** Registration Deadline

Plenary speakers include:

- Dr. Benjamin Schwessinger (Australian National University)
- Dr. Martinia Jelocnik (University of Sunshine Coast)
- Dr. Robyn Hall (CSIRO)
- Dr. Vanessa Marcelino (Hudson Institute of Medical Research)

For more Details see www.MicroSeqConference.com



Virtual BacPath2021 27th September 2021

This virtual BacPath2021 will be aimed at final year PhD students and early career post docs (<https://www.trybooking.com/BPPZW>), and abstracts should be sent directly to John Atack (j.atack@griffith.edu.au). We plan to select abstracts for short (10 min) talks only, with 8-10 talks planned



Submit an abstract if you are a final year PhD student or early career (<5yrs) post-doc

Keynote speakers



Catherine Satzke
Murdoch Children's Research Institute,
Melbourne

*Synergism and antagonism of
bacterial-viral co-infection in
the upper respiratory tract*



Tim Barnett
Telethon Kids Institute,
Perth

*Host-dependent resistance
to antifolate antibiotics*

Registration for Zoom seminar is essential

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

Free for ASM Members \$5 donation for Non-ASM Members

Registrations close 8am (AEST) Sept 27th

Submit abstracts direct to j.atack@griffith.edu.au by 5pm (AEST) Aug 27th

The Australian Society
for **Microbiology** 
bringing Microbiologists together

Save the Date ASM2022 11th-14th July 2022

**ASM
2022**
11-14 | ICC
JULY 2022 SYDNEY
www.theasm.org.au

PROF JILL BANFIELD
University of California, USA
Rubbo Orator

PROF NEIL GOW
University of Exeter, UK

PROF DENISE MONACK
Stanford University, USA

PROF TRACY PALMER
Newcastle University, UK

DR REBECCA VEGA THURBER
Oregon State University, USA

Registrations & Submissions open in February 2022

Microbial Genomics Workshop Series Coming Soon

Has Covid-19 affected your ability to complete all your lab work for that important project? Do you want to add some value to your lab work, or learn some new techniques? Then we have something for you.

The ASMVic Branch will be running a Microbial Genomics workshop towards the end of the year under the theme “**Improving your lab work with microbial genomics/bioinformatics**”. This workshop is aimed at laboratory researchers at all levels who would like to complement their laboratory work with some bioinformatics/microbial genomics, and there will be no command-line/coding used so it’s a fantastic entry point if you have little to no experience.

This workshop provides an overview of:

- Strategies used to enhance laboratory work with bioinformatics/Microbial genomics
- Methods used to investigate the diversity and characterise a protein or gene of interest
- Methods for validating and confirming mutants and unexpected phenotypes.

More information to come soon. If you have any questions for this upcoming event, please contact Jake Lacey at jake.lacey@unimelb.edu.au

Microbial Art Prize Coming Soon

The much-anticipated Microbial Art Prize is being held again this year, so start getting creative in your lab. More information to follow shortly.



Winner of the Microbial Art Prize 2020 - ‘Lysis of a Blockteria by Polydron-phage’ [@JW_likedirt](https://twitter.com/JW_likedirt) from the [@FranksMicrolab](https://twitter.com/FranksMicrolab)

Other upcoming events:

- Public Health Night
- News in the Hospitals

These will be a mix of online and in person events, so stay tuned for emails and future announcements and don’t forget to renew your ASM membership.

News and Views

Renew and Update your ASM Membership

The main objective of the Australian Society for Microbiology (ASM) is to advance the science of microbiology in Australia.

The society does this through the production and promotion of reading material, lectures, seminars, symposia and demonstrations on topics relevant to microbiology, as well as establishing and maintaining suitable standards for the practice of microbiology as a profession.

The ASM also promotes the awareness of microbiology and its role in everyday life, and actively liaises with governments and other professional bodies at both State and Federal levels in support of its members and the profession.

It's that time of year when your membership is due for renewal. Don't forget to update your details so you don't miss out on all the members benefits including:

- Reduced conference registration,
- Free entry to many of our Victorian branch events
- Access to the new online community
- Professional development opportunities
- Eligibility for many ASM awards

Don't forget to recommend your friends and colleagues to join us.

If you have finished your PhD and have been working for the last two years in the field of microbiology you should consider applying for a professional membership MASM.

Professional membership eligibility criteria:

- Completed an academic qualification in microbiology at degree level or alternative qualifications acceptable to the Council; and
- Have satisfactorily completed two years of postgraduate work to advance the discipline of microbiology.

If you meet these criteria, all you need to do to obtain a declaration form a referee who is a MASM or FASM financial member of the society, your curriculum vitae and academic record/copy of degree and submit online.

For more information see.

<https://www.theasm.org.au/professional-membership-masm>

If you have 10 years or more experience in the field of microbiology and are a ASM MASM you should consider applying to become a Fellow of the Australian Society of Microbiology (FASM)

Fellows of the Society are those microbiologists who, through a process of peer assessment, are determined to be either specialists in their field, or scientists who have made a significant contribution to the profession.

Fellowship is the higher qualification of the ASM which is granted by the Council on the recommendation of the National Examinations & Qualifications Board.

Fellowship eligibility criteria:

- A financial MASM member of ASM at the time of applying for the fellowship.
- At least 10 years' experience in the field of microbiology.

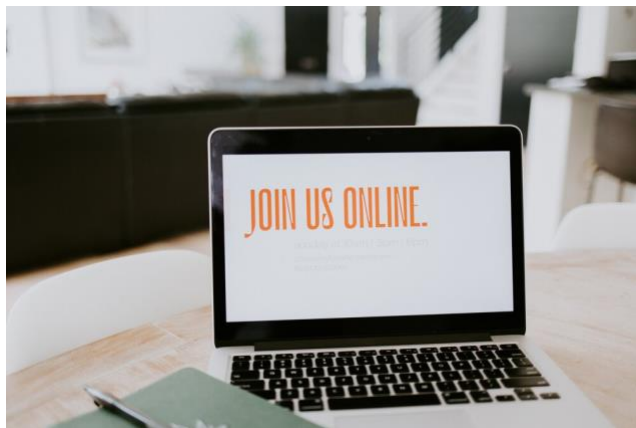
Required Supporting Documents:

- Curriculum Vitae, including details of your tertiary and other relevant qualifications, a list of your major publications.
- Completion of a FASM Referee Declaration (form downloadable below).

Further details can be found on the ASM National Website

<https://www.theasm.org.au/fellowship-fasm-1>

The ASM online community



We are excited to launch the ASM online community to members. A space where you can communicate to individuals or your special interest groups, share branch events, post announcements such as employment opportunities and scholarships, or request protocols and strains.

Now you don't have to wait for the next meet-up to connect with other members.

Please log in, explore, set up your profile and introduce yourself in one of our forums.

To login:

- Go to: <https://community.theasm.org.au/>
- Click the "Sign in" button located at the top right corner.
- The first time you login you will need to set up your password. Click the "Can't access your account?" link.
- Enter the email address on file with ASM and then click the "Send Password Link" button.
- Check your email for the link to set up your password.

Cracking COVID Documentary

If you have not had the opportunity to see the Cracking COVID documentary we recommend you take the time to sit down with your family and put it on. It is a fabulous showcase of Victorian researchers (and ASM members) and how they tackled the challenge of COVID in the early days of the pandemic.

Tracking the real-time story of Australia's scientific response to the pandemic. As teams of scientists unlock the secrets of the virus, researchers work to build a vaccine, and patients confront symptoms of this new disease.

Director: Sonya Pemberton

Link: <https://iview.abc.net.au/show/cracking-covid>

How to Book your COVID-19 Vaccine

Victoria's vaccination centres are offering all healthcare workers the Pfizer vaccine, regardless of your age. To book your priority appointment, call 1800 675 398 and mention you work in the healthcare sector.

Please note: People who have already received a first dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine should receive a second dose of AstraZeneca. Thank you for your continued support of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout



For people yet to receive their first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, the following groups are eligible to receive Pfizer vaccine, regardless of age:

- all health care workers (i.e. eligible under [Phase 1A and 1B](#)).
 - all hotel quarantine and red zone airport and marine port border workers
 - household contacts (those living in the same primary residence) aged 16 years and over of hotel quarantine and border workers
 - residential aged and disability care workers (nursing, personal care, allied health, and kitchen, cleaning, laundry, garden and office staff) and residents.
-

Statement on the Doherty Institute modelling

The Doherty Institute understands how extremely challenging lockdown restrictions are for everyone.

There is light at the end of the tunnel – once we achieve 70%-80% vaccination we will see less transmission of COVID-19 and fewer people with severe illness, and therefore fewer hospitalisations and deaths. COVID-19 won't go away but it will be easier to control in the future. These estimates come from the modelling work completed to date led by the Doherty Institute and commissioned by the Commonwealth Government to advise on the National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response

This level of vaccination will make it easier to live with the virus, as we do with other viruses such as the flu. However, it won't be possible to maintain a situation where there are no cases at all. The focus will shift to keeping the number of people going to hospital and dying at a minimum.

In an average year of influenza, we would roughly have 600 deaths and 200,000 cases in Australia. Any death is a tragedy, but our health system can cope with this. In the COVID-19 modelling, opening at 70% vaccine coverage of the adult population with partial public health measures, we predict 385,983 symptomatic cases and 1,457 deaths over six months. With optimal public health measures (and no lockdowns), this can be significantly reduced to 2,737 infections and 13 deaths.

We've learned from watching countries that have removed all restrictions that there is no 'Freedom Day'. We will need to keep some public health measures in place – test, trace, isolate and quarantine – to keep the reproduction number below 1, but as vaccination rates increase, we'll be able to ease up further and it is unlikely that we will need generalised lockdowns.

Once we reach 70% vaccine coverage, opening up at tens or hundreds of cases nationally per day is possible, however, we will need vigilant public health interventions with higher caseloads.

It might seem that these 'test, trace, isolate and quarantine' measures aren't currently working – in New South Wales or Victoria. But they are. They are stopping transmissions and reducing the effective reproduction rate from 5 to closer to 1.3 in New South Wales. These measures will become more effective with more people vaccinated as vaccines also contribute to stopping transmission.

We are moving towards these targets at a rapid pace, but we need to keep suppressing COVID-19 through public health measures while we work towards 70%-80% vaccination across the country. This will ensure we continue to keep the level of hospitalisations and deaths as low as possible to protect the community

and prevent our healthcare system from becoming overrun.

The team of modellers from across Australia led by the Doherty Institute is now working through the implementation issues specific to the states and territories, specific populations and high-risk settings.

We are moving towards better control of COVID-19 and a more stable future. We encourage everyone to stay vigilant, get vaccinated if you are eligible and take care of each other as we transition to living with COVID-19.

To read the Doherty modelling report see here:

https://www.doherty.edu.au/uploads/content_doc/DohertyModelling_NationalPlan_and_Addendum_20210810.pdf

Contact and Society Details



Vic Branch Committee

Chair: Catherine Satzke
(catherine.satzke@mcri.edu.au)
Deputy Chair/Public Health: Andrew Greenhill
(Andrew.greenhill@federation.edu.au)
Secretary: Sarah Baines (bainess@unimelb.edu.au)
Treasurer: Chris Stubenrauch
(christopher.stubenrauch@monash.edu)
Immediate Past Chair: Karena Waller
(klwaller@unimelb.edu.au)
Communications and Marketing (incl. Newsletter Editor): Jake Lacey (jake.lacey@unimelb.edu.au), Louise Miles, (lo.miles@alfred.org.au)

Committee Members: Maria Liaskos (M.Liaskos@latrobe.edu.au), Seema Kanade (seema.kanade@dorevitch.com.au), Mary Valcanis (valcanis@unimelb.edu.au) Priscilla Johanesen (priscilla.johanesen@monash.edu), Steve Petrovski (Steve.Petrovski@latrobe.edu.au), Harshini Weerasinghe (harshini.weerasinghe@monash.edu.au), Sam Manna (sam.manna@mcri.edu.au), Andrew Greenhill (Andrew.greenhill@federation.edu.au)

Committee Working Groups

One Health: Jake Lacey, Chris Stubenrauch, Mary Valcanis, Steve Petrovski.

Medical Microbiology: Sarah Baines, Seema Kanade, Louise Miles, Sam Manna, Harshini Weerasinghe, Jake Lacey

Regional Engagement: Andrew Greenhill, Catherine Satzke, Steve Petrovski

Skills, Education, Engagement and Communications: Sam Manna, Priscilla Johanesen, Karena Waller, Seema Kanade, Lauren Zavan, Harshini Weerasinghe, Maria Liaskos, Harshini Weerasinghe.

Submissions: Deadlines for ASM Victorian News is the 5th of the Month. All notices should be emailed to Jake Lacey (jake.lacey@unimelb.edu.au).

Find us on:

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

Twitter: [@ASM_VicBranch](https://twitter.com/ASM_VicBranch)

Facebook: [The Australian Society for Microbiology \(ASM\) - Victorian Branch](https://www.facebook.com/TheAustralianSocietyforMicrobiology(ASM)-VictorianBranch)



Becoming a Member: 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
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.

Upgrade to a professional membership (MASM): to be eligible for MASM, you must have: Completed an academic qualification in microbiology at degree level or alternative qualifications acceptable to the Council; and have satisfactorily completed two years of postgraduate work to advance the discipline of microbiology. If you meet these criteria, all you need to do it obtain a declaration form a referee who is a MASM or FASM finical member of the society, your curriculum vitae and academic record/copy of degree and submit online. For more information see. <https://www.theasm.org.au/professional-membership-masm>

Visiting speakers' program (VSP): 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), who is the VSP Coordinator for the ASM VIC Branch.

Organising events: 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) for more information

Advertisements: Would you like to advertise your event, job vacancy or other news item in our newsletter? If so, please contact Jake Lacey (jake.lacey@unimelb.edu.au) Advertising rates are: Not-for-profit adverts: free of charge and For-profit adverts: \$50 per advert.

ASM History SIG: 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

ASM National Office:

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Tel: 1300 656 423
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ABN 24 065 463 274

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Email: catherine.satzke@mcri.edu.au or
asmvicbranch@gmail.com

A list of the other ASM branches can be found online at <http://www.theasm.org.au/>