

Issues of *Microbiology Australia* usually have a specific microbiology theme; however, this issue is different. It resulted from a call from the Editorial Board to Early Career Researchers of *The Australian Society for Microbiology* for expressions of interest to contribute to an issue showcasing upcoming leading Australian research, over a year ago. After submission, the Editorial Board then invited full submissions from Early Career Researchers who had 'breaking' research to present. These went through the normal process of peer review and revision before acceptance.

The completed articles proudly showcase the achievements of our younger ASM members, including a number who are still students, illustrating the diversity of studies that our students are involved in.

Martina Jelocnik with Adam Polkinghorne present a study of *Chlamydia pecorum*, which is affecting one of Australia's iconic animals – the koala. They discuss the occurrence of the pathogen in Australia's livestock. Research on a necrotic disease of bivalve larvae, affecting our economically prized Australian seafood industry, is presented by Tzu Kwan.

The remaining articles focus on pathogens affecting us, and our loved ones, including viral, bacterial and fungal pathogens. Susama Telwatte reports on her work in California with Steven Yukl exploring HIV latency using transcription profiling. Lucy Furfaro with Barbara Chang and Matthew Payne report on serotype prevalence and distribution of maternal Group B *Streptococcus*, highlighting differences in Perth versus the rest of Australia. Caroline Firacative, with colleagues Luciana Trilles and Wieland Meyer describe research leading to a better understanding of cryptococcosis and its aetiological agent, *Cryptococcus* spp. Joshua Newson discusses the understanding and controlling of *Salmonella* infections in Australia.

Outbreaks of infections are always a concern. Claire Gorrie discusses the hidden reservoirs of hospital-associated infections, specifically of *Klebsiella pneumoniae*. Felise Adams reports on a key regulatory mechanism of antimicrobial resistance in pathogenic *Acinetobacter baumannii*. Leah Roberts shows how whole genome sequencing is helping to rapidly characterise nosocomial bacterial outbreaks, and Shakeel Mowlaboccus reveals new insights on *Neisseria meningitidis* that are emerging from whole genome sequencing.

Finally, Erin Shanahan, along with colleagues Gerald Holtmann and Mark Morrison report on life in the small intestine, which can be regarded as the forgotten microbiome.

In the ASM Affairs section Anthony Baker recaps on the recent ASM National Conference in Hobart, and gives details of the latest awards and accolades for ASM members. Congratulations to all the ASM award recipients.

*Microbiology Australia* continues to hold a valued position as a source of communication and a source of peer-reviewed information. The journal is listed by Thompson Reuter's Emerging Sciences Citation Index (ESCI) since 2015 and applications are underway for the journal to be listed by Scopus and Web of Science.

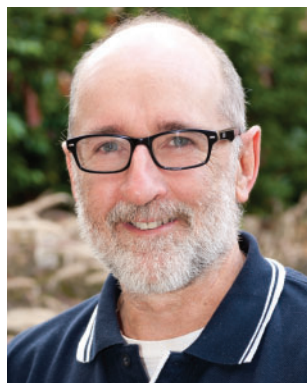
*Microbiology Australia's* open access policy ensures wide readership and access to articles. The ASM Executive and Editorial Board are very encouraged by the widespread readership and we can see the effect of ASM ambassadors as they promote the journal. Turkey, Brazil, Iran and Russia have appeared in the top 10 lists of countries accessing *Microbiology Australia*, and this appears to be attributable to outreach by our Editorial Board members and University of Tasmania to these countries.

Finally, the Editorial Board would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the early career researchers and their mentors for their excellent contribution to this issue. We also reiterate Professor Roy Robins-Browne's thanks in the last Vertical Transmission for the long service given by Professor Peter Coloe and Chris Burke to *Microbiology Australia*. We also welcome the new Editorial Board members, Ross Barnard, Sam Manna, Chris Owens and Erin Shanahan.

We strongly encourage suggestions for content and feedback from all of our ASM members and readers of *Microbiology Australia*. The Editorial Board is keen to have similar themed issues, and welcomes your submissions and ideas.

From the Editorial Board of *Microbiology Australia*:

Ipek Kurtböke (Chair), Ian Macreadie (Editor-in-Chief), Ross Barnard, Mary Barton, Linda Blackall, Chris Burke, Narelle Fegan, Gary Lum, Sam Manna, John Merlino, Wieland Meyer, Chris Owens, William Rawlinson, Roy Robins-Browne (ASM President), Paul Sell-eck, Erin Shanahan, David Smith, Helen Smith and Jack Wang.



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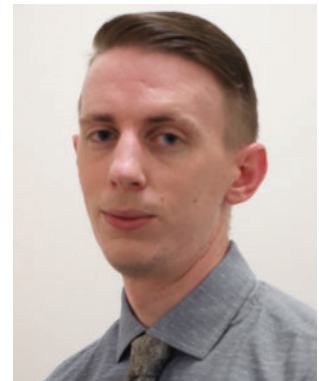
*Sam Manna*



*John Merlino*



*Wieland Meyer*



*Chris Owens*



*William Rawlinson*



*Roy Robins-Browne  
(ASM President)*



*Paul Selleck*



*Erin Shanahan*



*David Smith*



*Helen Smith*



*Jack Wang*