



**Roy Robins-Browne**  
President of ASM

Dear fellow microbiologists

As this is my first communication with you this year, I think it's not too late to wish you a happy new year and all the best for 2018.

As I've mentioned previously, ASM aims to give our members maximum value for their membership. Some new initiatives for 2018 include an annual teacher's travel award, valued at \$4000, to attend the American Society for Microbiology Conference for Undergraduate Educators (AMSCUE), which is the world's premier microbiology teachers' conference. We also have instituted 100 travel awards, each valued at \$200, to make it easier for members within 10 years of attaining their highest qualification to attend our Annual Scientific Meeting. This year's meeting is in Brisbane from 1–4 July (<http://asmmeeting.theasm.org.au/>). The scientific and social programs are shaping up beautifully, and I know you will be fired up and reinvigorated by attending. Please enter the dates in your diary now.

We also have new awards that allow undergraduate students to undertake a research project in an approved laboratory during the summer vacation. Contact your State Branch for more details.

Apart from our Annual Scientific Meeting, ASM is sponsoring the MMM (Molecular Microbiology Meeting) in Sydney this year from 11–12 April. This meeting provides a wonderful opportunity for biological scientists who see potential translational applications for their research, and for clinical scientists and clinicians who want

to hear about recent advances in biology and biotechnology. For more information, visit <http://sydney.edu.au/medicine/criticalinfection/mmm/index.php>.

ASM Council has also resolved to underwrite the biennial BacPath meeting from 2019 onwards. Next year's meeting will be in Western Australia at a 4-star venue near Perth, and like all 14 meetings before it will be collegial, exciting and informative.

I am delighted to announce the appointment of Associate Professor Priscilla Johanesen as our inaugural Student and Early Career Researcher (ECR) Engagement Co-ordinator. Priscilla has long been involved in arranging Students' Day at our annual conference and will now take on the added responsibility of fostering the development of student and ECR members of our Society. The main purpose of her role is to engage students and ECRs to improve their overall experience by providing resources, activities and opportunities that to bring them together and promote their professional development. Please encourage your students to attend our meetings and become involved in these activities. Students who attend just one meeting a year will recoup more than their annual subscription.

Some other ongoing initiatives involve strengthening our ties with microbiological societies in our region, including the New Zealand and Singapore microbiology societies. If you are interested in attending the annual meetings of either of these societies, you can do so at local members' rates. We are also looking at strengthening our ties with other biological societies within Australia, such as the Australian Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, the Australian Society for Antimicrobials and the Australian Society for Infectious Diseases. This may include holding a joint or overlapping conference with one or more of these societies.

Finally, I want to remind you that the **closing date for our annual awards and prizes is 31 March** (<http://www.theasm.org.au/awards/>). Please encourage anyone you know who may be eligible for one of these awards to apply as soon as possible.



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