



Roy Robins-Browne
President of ASM

As this is my first communication with you as your new president, I should start by thanking ASM's Council, and especially the Executive Committee, for honouring me in this way and for putting their faith in me. I must also thank Jon Iredell for the wonderful job he did as ASM President for the past two years, and for the amazing support and guidance he has given me to date (and hopefully in future).

I also want to acknowledge and thank Peter Timms for his major contribution to ASM and Council. Peter is stepping down from his role as Chair of the National Examination and Qualifications Board, a position he has held for many years. He will be succeeded by Julian Rood, who as a former President of the Society will ensure that the NEQB remains in safe hands.

Times are changing for biological societies around the world, and ASM will need to embrace some changes too. Our large sibling (I hesitated to write 'Big Brother'), the American Society for Microbiology, recently coalesced its two annual flagship meetings: the Annual General Meeting and the Interscience Conference on Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy (ICAAC) into one; and is supporting more specialised meetings as a way to compensate for the loss of one annual conference.

Our own ASM may need to do something similar. This is one of the issues that Enzo Palombo and his team will be addressing as part

of the comprehensive review they are undertaking for ASM. The overarching aim of this review is to ensure that our Society remains relevant to its members. I will keep you updated on the review as things progress and will be seeking your input on all proposals and recommendations to emerge from the review in future.

I recently returned from our Annual Scientific Meeting in Perth. While there, I attended Educon (the educators' conference), all plenary sessions and several symposia. For those of you who did not attend, you missed an outstanding conference. Unlike many other scientific meetings I have been to, I felt spoiled for choice. For example, I had great difficulty choosing between concurrent symposia on 'Infections in Regional Australia', 'Viral Discovery', 'Gut Ecology', and 'Bacterial Pathogenesis', all topics that interest me greatly.

The Local Organising and Scientific Program Committees, chaired by Charlene Kahler and Megan Lloyd, respectively, deserve our thanks, admiration and warmest congratulations on an extremely valuable, interesting and enjoyable conference. The invited plenary speakers, in particular, were top class. Another excellent Annual Scientific Meeting is being planned for Hobart next year. Mark the dates 2–5 July, 2017 in your diary to ensure that you do not miss out.

Finally, please visit our website: www.theasm.org.au to see a list and photos of our award winners for 2016, as well as information regarding upcoming meetings, awards, and, for those who may be interested, our financial statements and minutes of recent meetings. Please also consider making www.theASM.org.au your Internet homepage. You may also like to follow, and contribute to ASM on Twitter, @AUSSOCMIC, to make sure you keep up with the latest news, trends and developments in microbiology in Australia and elsewhere.

Things that the ASM does to look after and promote the interests of its members

ASM is a member of Science and Technology Australia (STA)

Who is STA?

STA is Australia's peak body in Science and Technology. STA's mission is to bring together scientists, governments, industry and the broader community to advance the role, reputation and impact of science and technology across the nation.

The formal members of STA are some 60 Australian scientific and technological societies and organisations with total membership of 68 000 individual scientists, engineers and technologists.

STA has three formal objectives:

- encourage scientific dialogue between government, the science and technology community, and industry
- promote public understanding of science
- foster close relations between the societies

Go have a look at the STA website:

<http://scienceandtechnologyaustralia.org.au>

Maybe you will find something of interest and value to you.