



# Career Pathways for Scientists

## Event Report

On Tuesday the 16<sup>th</sup> of April 2019, the ASM Vic Branch hosted their first career development event for the year at the City of Melbourne Bowls Club. “Career Pathways for Scientists” was targeted at student and early career scientists who wanted to know more about the diverse career paths available to them. The event included presentations by 4 members of the scientific community (see below) who have taken various paths after completing their studies, explaining the reasoning behind their career decisions as well as advice for scientists relevant to those both early and late in their careers.



**Professor Ben Marsland** is an NHMRC Senior Research Fellow and Professor in the Department of Immunology and Pathology, within the Central Clinical School at Monash University investigating host-pathogen interactions in the context of respiratory diseases, and has co-founded 2 biotech companies.

**Dr Samantha Byrne** is a former dentist, who since completing a PhD and post-doctoral research in oral microbiology, now holds a lecture position at the Melbourne Dental School, University of Melbourne, and is also a scientific communicator @\_the\_tooth\_fairy\_



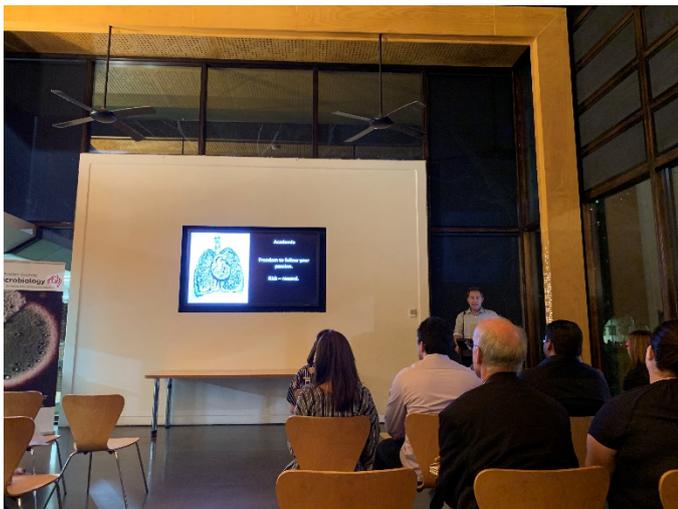
**Dr Sanja Aracic** completed a PhD on extracellular polysaccharides produced by a soil microbe followed by post-doctoral research on the development of microbial biosensors for detection of heavy metals, and now works as a Senior Research Officer at the biotech company Affinity Bio.



**Dr Sam Manna**, completed his PhD on horizontal gene transfer and the regulation of mitochondrial gene expression in protozoa, and after gaining experience as an Associate Lecturer in the Department of Microbiology at La Trobe is now an early career researcher at the Murdoch Children's Research Institute investigating the biology, genetics and virulence of the bacterial pathogen *Streptococcus pneumoniae*.

Whilst each of the presenters have taken different career pathways leveraging their scientific backgrounds, each had very similar advice for the attendees: develop your passions, embrace creativity and innovation, lean in to opportunities, relationships are important and find meaning in your work.

The presentations were followed by dinner and an opportunity to network with the other attendees as well as ask the presenters more specific questions. The event was well attended with around 30 students, early career scientists and even some senior scientists, and received excellent feedback. The ASM Vic Branch is keen to support the career development of all its members and envisage holding similar events in the future.



*Event report contributed by: Jacqueline Heath*