

## Online conferences



### Dynamic Cell IV

14–19 March 2021, Online

The Dynamic Cell series is an inclusive cell biology meeting organized jointly by the Biochemical Society and the British Society of Cell Biology (BSCB). The scientific remit of this conference is broad, but with a focus on cell dynamics that is intended to stimulate novel collaborative approaches and the application of new technologies to established fields. The programme for Dynamic Cell IV will explore cross-kingdom cell biology. This online meeting will bring together researchers using dynamic methods to interrogate cellular behaviour and there will be dedicated sessions covering: Cell Division: Mitosis and Meiosis; Cell Migration; Cytoskeletal Dynamics in Cells and Tissues; Cellular Transport and Trafficking; and New Technologies for Imaging and Probing Cell Function.

## Meeting reports

### 6<sup>th</sup> Young microbiologists symposium on microbe signalling, organization and pathogenesis

26–27 August 2020, University of Southampton, UK

This biennial event aims to bring together early career researchers from around the world to share and discuss their exciting, recent research. This year, the event was hosted by the University of Southampton (UK) and was held virtually owing to the ongoing pandemic.

The oral presentations were divided into four major categories: secretion and transport across membranes, gene regulation and signalling (sponsored by Biochemical Society), host-microbe interactions, and microbial communities and biofilm formation. In addition to talks from four internationally recognized leaders in the field, talks from two EMBO Young Investigators were included. ‘Hot-spot talks’ gave enthusiastic young researchers a platform to present their key findings in short presentations.

Over 200 delegates from 44 countries attended, with the majority presenting their research by oral presentation, ePosters and virtual meeting rooms. Prizes were awarded for the outstanding ‘Hot-spot talks’ and poster

presentations. Reuter Audrey (University Lyon, France) won the Biochemical Society poster prize. We also gave away participation prizes to the attendees who asked great questions during the event.

There were many highlights from the meeting, ranging from descriptions of the molecular mechanisms underlying biofilm formation through to the structural characterization of the type IV pilus machine involved in motility and the use of a novel invertebrate model to examine bacterial infection. Along with discussing the diversity of current microbiology research, the meeting also highlighted successful examples of collaboration among scientists from very different disciplines.

**Shi-qi An** (University of Southampton, UK)

**Clare Kirkpatrick** (University of Southern Denmark, Denmark)

**Bruno Silvester Lopes** (University of Aberdeen, UK)

### The Biochemical Society's events programme continues

We may not have been able to meet face-to-face this year, but the Biochemical Society is still running a full events programme!

We started our webinar series, *Biochemistry Focus*, in June, kicking off with a range of topics including angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 (ACE2), the Human Cell Atlas and non-academic careers for molecular bioscientists. The webinars are usually 1 hour and recordings can be found on our website or YouTube channel: [www.biochemistry.org/webinars](http://www.biochemistry.org/webinars).

We are also running on demand conferences, giving delegates access to recordings of scientific meetings held before the pandemic on topics such as ‘Organ-on-a-chip: current gaps and

future directions’, ‘Drug Repurposing’ and ‘The changing landscape of research on ageing’.

Our first online scientific meeting, ‘Low molecular weight thiols: lessons learned and new perspectives’, is on 7–9 December and our second online meeting, ‘The Dynamic Cell IV’, will take place on 14–19 March 2021.

Our digital events have reached over 5000 people from over 60 countries so far! As well as being accessible and affordable, they have enabled us to continue to meet the Society's goals of promoting and sharing knowledge and supporting career development and lifelong learning. Look out for our forthcoming events at [www.biochemistry.org/events](http://www.biochemistry.org/events).

### Biochemistry Focus webinar series available on demand

#### ACE2: friend or foe?

Twenty years after its discovery, angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 (ACE2) has become one of the most studied proteins. Since ACE2 was identified as the SARS-coronavirus 2 receptor, it

has held centre stage with already more than 500 peer-reviewed publications in 2020. Chaired by Professor Rhian Touyz, Director of the Institute of Cardiovascular & Medical Sciences and British

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Heart Foundation Chair of Cardiovascular Medicine at the University of Glasgow, this webinar launched our series and looked into the historical background and ACE2 discovery, exploring the enzymatic and non-enzymatic functions of ACE2. Speakers included

Professor Anthony Turner from the University of Leeds and Professor Michael Bader from The Max Delbrück Center for Molecular Medicine. Available online: <https://youtu.be/YAqfIIvBrQ>

### ***Building gene drives to beat malaria***

Representing one of our 2020 Early Career Research Award recipients, Dr Andrew Hammond completed his PhD at Imperial College London, working on gene drives. Gene drives are genetic modifications with an incredible potential to modify entire populations of the malaria mosquito for sustainable vector control. Andrew's PhD research established CRISPR and gene drive technologies in the African malaria mosquito, including the first demonstration that gene drives can

invade insect populations. During his postdoctoral training, Andrew investigated the molecular basis of evolved resistance to the technology and incorporated this understanding to build the first gene drive capable of eliminating entire populations of laboratory-contained mosquitoes. This webinar was chaired by Sheila Graham, Professor of Molecular Virology at the University of Glasgow. Available online: <https://youtu.be/0wIxFTiZChg>

### ***A decade in biology: what have the biosciences done for us?***

Running in conjunction with a special issue of *Emerging Topics in Life Sciences* (our journal co-owned with the Royal Society of Biology), we welcomed three speakers who contributed to this issue and in turn showcased what the biosciences have done for us in this accompanying webinar. Dr Karl Frontzek, a consultant neuropathologist and senior researcher at the Institute of Neuropathology, University of Zurich, Switzerland, spoke about his work on the immunological aspects of prion diseases. Dr Kim Hardie, Associate Professor in the School of Life Sciences at the University of Nottingham, presented her research group's aims to

decipher the complexity of polymicrobial biofilms, especially in the context of serious chronic infections and antimicrobial effectiveness. Also, Dr Oliver Elemento, Director of the Englander Institute for Precision Medicine, spoke about his institute's work using genomics and informatics to make medicine more individualized. This webinar was chaired by Professor Patricia Kuwabara, University of Bristol, and Trustee at the Royal Society of Biology. Available online: <https://youtu.be/gXdVrQleib4>

View these webinars on demand, and many more, via our website: [www.biochemistry.org/past-webinars/](http://www.biochemistry.org/past-webinars/).