

00:00:07:02 - 00:00:23:11

Clare

Hello and welcome back to Microbe Talk. It's the last episode of the year, so I've got together with Katie and Adam to talk through our favorite moments of podcasting in 2023. My name is Clare and the communications and Media Officer.

00:00:23:13 - 00:00:28:21

Adam

Hello, everyone. I am Adam. I'm the content and engagement manager here at the Society.

00:00:28:23 - 00:00:33:07

Katie

Hi, everyone. I'm Katie. I'm the policy and engagement officer at the Society.

00:00:33:09 - 00:00:55:05

Clare

Cool, Exciting. Cool. I want you to go through, like, favorite podcast moments of the year. Katie's a good one to start off with. You had a busy year. You launched the looking I Am Our Project. What's your favorite moment of those kind of AMA podcasts and well I think.

00:00:55:05 - 00:01:21:22

Katie

My favorite AMA podcast was actually the first one, which was I think it was in February, it might've been January at the Bacteriophages podcast. And so it wasn't about the project, but it was about an inquiry we responded to about the antimicrobial potential of bacteriophages. And so bacteriophages are basically viruses that can only infect bacteria. So they're trying to use them to treat diseases.

00:01:21:22 - 00:01:47:09

Katie

So you can kind of treat people with bacteria ages and they'll kill all the bacteria that are infecting the patient without killing their human cells. So it's just a really interesting way, that kind of microbiology. So trying to tackle asthma and it was off the back of an inquiry and we had a lot of members contribute. It was one of the one of the biggest inquiries I've done in terms of member engagement, and it was just a really interesting topic.

00:01:47:11 - 00:01:54:22

Katie

Martha Clarke, He was the guest we had on and she's since then launched the first UK phage Research Center.

00:01:54:22 - 00:01:56:13

Clare

In the UK.

00:01:56:15 - 00:02:14:11

Katie

And she also actually gave evidence about bacteriophages in Parliament. So I just really enjoyed that podcast because yeah, I feel like a lot of things, a lot of work led up to it in terms of the inquiry and there were also quite a lot of nice things coming out the other side of it and I got to go and attend the launch of the phage Center.

00:02:14:13 - 00:02:27:09

Katie

It was great to see that Martha and was in Parliament giving evidence. She also did a piece for a magazine about bacteriophages. So yeah, I think that was probably my favorite, my favorite podcast I've done this year.

00:02:27:11 - 00:02:48:04

Clare

Yeah, Bacteriophages is such an interesting, weird part of science. Like I spoke to Professor Chloe James about that one as well when we were talking about asthma. And my first question was just like, But why don't we just take them all in? Why? Why is it complicated? I don't understand. Like just put the viruses and to kill the bacteria don't get it.

00:02:48:06 - 00:02:52:19

Clare

And it's a surprisingly a lot more complicated than that. Well, that's kind.

00:02:52:19 - 00:03:11:22

Katie

Of what made it so interesting, because I was the same like I was very much not an expert in the slightest when I started working on that project, but it was just great to hear all the members discussing it together because it is so complicated that there's so many different policy regulations and like safety considerations and also lots of different opinions as well.

00:03:12:03 - 00:03:32:04

Katie

So I feel like it was just quite an interesting podcast because even though it seems like an obvious fix to AMA, which is such a huge problem, actually is really complicated and it is just interesting, it's kind of pick apart the different reasons why people think we should and people think we shouldn't use them. And yeah, it's quite like a dynamic field I guess at the moment.

00:03:32:04 - 00:03:40:06

Katie

Like there's loads happening and it's constantly moving. So flat will probably have to do an update on that podcast maybe next year. And because things are just constantly changing.

00:03:40:11 - 00:03:46:07

Clare

That would be fun to like check in like bacteriophages. Where are they now? Yeah.

00:03:46:09 - 00:03:58:16

Katie

Because it's impossible to keep up. It's full time job side keeping up with all the changes in like regulation, science, all that stuff. But anyways, that's probably what am I that it was at the beginning of the year? What about you guys?

00:03:58:18 - 00:04:26:02

Adam

And I think one of the things I really enjoy about our podcast is it's, it's, it's a range and it's very broad. And so I was I took over the podcast and to talk about kind of dyslexia in microbiology. And one thing that I suppose we need to say is, is thank you everyone who is willing to contribute to the podcast because it's just so amazing to have members voices kind of leading the podcast.

00:04:26:04 - 00:04:56:19

Adam

And so I spoke to Jon Monarch and he just kind of discusses Journey whilst having dyslexia and, and how he can kind of tackle his issues and he was able to give brilliant advice to people and I'm someone who has a set to as well. So it was just really interesting to hear from a scientist point of view and the fact that he's he's got so involved with the society There is an editor and, and yeah, it was a brilliant, brilliant conversation.

00:04:56:23 - 00:04:59:17

Adam

I was just really pleased to be a part of it.

00:04:59:19 - 00:05:04:11

Clare

Yeah. Especially being able to kind of approach it from your own experience as well.

00:05:04:12 - 00:05:05:14

Adam

Absolutely.

00:05:05:16 - 00:05:17:14

Clare

Because I remember, Adam, you said you were like quite perplexed, weren't you, when you first kind of spoke to Jon, like as to how he was able to go about it with all the reading?

00:05:17:16 - 00:05:39:03

Adam

Yeah, absolutely. So I from my point of view, I don't come from a scientific background. So, you know, I see it in quite simple terms, like being a scientist and having dyslexia. It's just I wouldn't even know where to start with that. And he just clearly is created everything in place he needs to, to just make his life easy.

00:05:39:03 - 00:05:50:10

Adam

And he's now at the point where he can kind of support other people that may have dyslexia or struggle in in and the academia side of science. So it was brilliant at Yeah.

00:05:50:10 - 00:06:16:19

Clare

And I think that's also brings you on to like you mentioned as well, thanking everyone. He takes part and every single time I do a podcast, I'm so in awe about the expertise of the guests that we have on the podcast the way that they are such, like they've got such a good knowledge base that they're able to just like, make like, answer questions, recall information and explain things so well.

00:06:16:19 - 00:06:22:08

Clare

And I think we yeah, we're so, so lucky to be able to talk to those people. It's like the best part of my job. I love it so much.

00:06:22:10 - 00:06:41:08

Adam

Yeah, absolutely. And I'll podcast the one, one way that we can try and tell our stories and tell the messages and you know, you can, you can do it unless you get in the top notch kind of expertise that we, we're getting. And yeah, it's a really nice thing to have this podcast.

00:06:41:10 - 00:06:53:04

Katie

MM We are just so lucky that we get to speak to these people on a regular basis, like people that are like kind of leading, often leading in their field. Yeah, it's, it's exciting.

00:06:53:06 - 00:07:19:23

Clare

Yeah. I think my favorite part of podcasting this year was because it was a whole kind of so normally I talk a lot about kind of promoting our journals content, and I've spoken to some really, really interesting people about that, like Shout out to David Walker's into how the podcast about CRISPR-Cas9 as a kind of method to tackle asthma.

00:07:19:23 - 00:07:44:11

Clare

That was really interesting podcast that was based on a publication in microbiology, but another one sort of stemmed from from Fez, and I spoke to Elaine Kleinman Green, and she was just like, like she was exactly that. She was just so kind of interested in everything that she works towards. You can tell that this isn't just a job for her.

00:07:44:11 - 00:08:07:19

Clare

It's like it's her life. She absolutely loves it. So it was I could have sat and spoken to Elaine for literally hours. She was so interesting and so funny and so nice, and it was really good even that I was planes flying over and ruining my audio. I had like spent hours trying to remove a plane noise. It was just really fun and really interesting.

00:08:07:19 - 00:08:28:18

Clare

And it's quite good to promote events as well. I think we couldn't have this podcast without talking about annual conference. We're already thinking about annual conference 2024. But Adam, you did so much during annual conference 2023. What what was your favorite? Yes.

00:08:28:20 - 00:08:52:03

Adam

I did. So I was tasked with interviewing as many members as I could in those four days, and we talked to the prize lectures, which was my AMA. We talked about our champion scheme, we talked to and journal editors. And again, it's for me, I'm just always so happy with how these people are to talk about these topics.

00:08:52:05 - 00:09:07:12

Adam

They are just so willing to chat about it and so passionate that it kind of makes my life easy. And so I've got lots and lots of interviews I need to get through and hopefully I will be seeing them on our social channels and throughout next year.

00:09:07:13 - 00:09:15:18

Clare

Awesome. And Katie, you also ran the policy event annual conference. Yeah.

00:09:15:20 - 00:09:38:20

Katie

Yeah. So it was the first time we had like an entire session just about policy. Yeah. And it was great. It was really well attended. We had people come and speak from like the research side, but also from the pure policy side. So like non-scientist, I had nothing to do with science. So I think that was quite helpful actually, because I feel like it's easy to become like super focused on your research area.

00:09:38:22 - 00:10:06:02

Katie

But it was nice to have someone like from from a completely different world talk about like how to maximize your impact within policy specifically. And we also had some kind of early career members speak about how they've got involved in policy, which I think was quite inspiring and yeah, it was great. There were lots of people coming up and asking questions afterwards and I think it's going to be more of a regular fixture, hopefully, hopefully having some kind of policy presence that annual conference.

00:10:06:04 - 00:10:22:19

Katie

Yeah, and those a podcast is all that Clara and I did about that policy session. And that was, that was a fun podcast actually. It was slightly different format, it was much more informal and I feel like it worked well because we got to just talk to people about straight after the session about how they found it and.

00:10:22:20 - 00:10:26:14

Adam

What was at the annual annual conference podcast.

00:10:26:14 - 00:10:27:07

Clare

Yeah.

00:10:27:09 - 00:10:35:20

Adam

Yeah. That's, that's definitely one of my favorite. And that YouTube is just running around going to, to us.

00:10:35:22 - 00:10:38:17

Katie

Yeah, it was good.

00:10:38:19 - 00:10:50:11

Clare

Because that's also I also recorded a podcast annual conference with Oliver seven and he does loads for us, isn't it? I think you spoke to him, Adam, didn't you?

00:10:50:13 - 00:10:51:00

Katie

And I think.

00:10:51:05 - 00:10:52:10

Adam

I got an interview.

00:10:52:12 - 00:11:12:13

Clare

Yeah, he's so lovely. So I sat down with him. So Oliver comes from an industry academic background originally, but then moved into industry, so it was really nice. We just found a little back room in the depths of the. It was it the ice. I see. See, I was it wasn't it? He is in the ICC.

00:11:12:15 - 00:11:13:18

Adam

Yes.

00:11:13:20 - 00:11:31:19

Clare

Yes. So we found a little room in the depths of the ICC and just sat down and just talked about all things about careers. And I really loved that one as well because it was just sitting down and having a bit of a conversation, a really honest conversation about careers. And he obviously he's a lovely guy as well.



00:11:31:21 - 00:11:36:08

Clare

So he's really easy to talk to. Yeah.

00:11:36:10 - 00:11:58:18

Adam

I find that he he, he articulates kind of how important our events are, particularly annual conference for industry in terms of connecting with the membership. And he talks about and just kind of keeping up to date with latest trends as well. So I think for kind of industry members, it's a valuable experience for the annual conference.

00:11:58:20 - 00:12:23:11

Clare

Yeah. And then I mean, industry collaboration didn't just stop at that this year as well. Adam and I were so lucky to go to visit back to back. It was really great to visit members where they're working and find out the stuff that they're doing, and we managed to have a full tour of the lab and of course it was to make a video.

00:12:23:13 - 00:12:26:07

Clare

How did you find doing that, Adam? What was that like?

00:12:26:07 - 00:12:49:06

Adam

Yes, it's a bit more context. That collaboration with back to Bio was kind of part of our aim, our projects and and it was just amazing to see the work they're doing and to see and basically I think the thing I took from it is that everyone we spoke to, they just want to collaborate with everyone and anyone they can.

00:12:49:08 - 00:12:54:20

Adam

So the video and if you want to see is on our YouTube channel. But yeah, it's.

00:12:54:21 - 00:12:57:13

Clare

Link in the description.

00:12:57:15 - 00:13:18:00

Adam

Seamless and and yeah I think that yeah we are and but from what I hear from when I've interview people people really are passionate about collaboration not just in the UK obviously internationally as well. And back to bio is a clear example of people that want to reach out and they want to work with other people.

00:13:18:02 - 00:13:45:07

Clare

Yeah, yeah. And it was a great video as well. Thanks. And then I suppose like talking about collaboration brings me on really nicely to talk about like one house. Katie You had some really big kind of names coming in to talk about collaboration. Specifically use Horizon and the UK being back involved in that again.

00:13:45:11 - 00:14:13:15

Katie

Yeah, it was a bit daunting actually, but I think it definitely paid off. We had an Sciple Max on the podcast, so he's a Nobel laureate. He was the former president of the Royal Society and he's just a hugely influential person, like within microbiology, but also science more broadly. And it was to chat about how we officially rejoined Horizon Europe, which is the EU funding program for research and innovation.

00:14:13:15 - 00:14:36:01

Katie

So that was in September and that essentially been years of delays and like negotiations since Brexit about whether we would be re associating and how how it would work. But we have re associated now. So it was great to chat to him just about like collaboration in science talk a little bit about the work that he oversees at the Francis Crick.

00:14:36:03 - 00:14:56:05

Katie

So he's the director of the Francis Crick Institute. And yeah, it was just so inspiring to have someone of such huge influence and he was so nice as well, really easy to talk to. And he's done a few things for the society in the past, so it was just great to kind of reach out to him. And yeah, it was, it was a really good podcast, you think.

00:14:56:07 - 00:15:02:10

Katie

And yeah, that was one of a series we did, which was just about we're about all about collaboration.

00:15:02:12 - 00:15:04:14

Clare

You had Hillary up in Scott, didn't you?

00:15:04:20 - 00:15:17:20

Katie

Oh yeah, Yeah. So Hillary used to be the president of the Microbiology Society. She's now the president of the Federation of European Microbiological Societies. They're a mouthful.

00:15:17:22 - 00:15:19:12

Clare

Huge names, huge name.

00:15:19:14 - 00:15:40:23

Katie

But yet again, she was really lovely. She spoke to me about her career so far. She's had a really interesting career and not the most traditional career, which I think is also quite inspiring because she was really open about how she didn't really know what she wanted to do. Like it's not like she bored, was bored and knew she wanted to be a microbiologist, which is how it seems sometimes, I think, Yeah, yeah.

00:15:40:23 - 00:15:46:17

Katie

Again, it was just a really nice conversation and yeah, that's great.

00:15:46:19 - 00:16:08:07

Clare

I think that's always like it's so easy, I think to, to get really stressed about speaking to these kinds of people who are just so clever, so good at their jobs. Like it would be really easy to be kind of quite intimidated. But then within the first few minutes of talking to someone, you're just like, Oh, they're a person and they're a person too, and they just want to chat.

00:16:08:09 - 00:16:09:12

Clare

And it's lovely.

00:16:09:12 - 00:16:26:24

Katie

Yeah. And I think I feel like because most of the time anyway, everyone I've come across just has an appreciation for what the society does anyway. So they're just keen to get involved and like to help us in any way they can. So I feel like it's always like a really positive. I see it in the room.

00:16:27:01 - 00:16:39:12

Clare

I say. So I suppose it brings nicely over to the final question. What are you most looking forward to next year? Adam, Do you wanna start us off?

00:16:39:14 - 00:17:19:23

Adam

Yes, sure. So I've got. Yeah, lots and lots to look forward to. First thing first is that I'm going to be creating the opening video two annual conference, which will then kind of end up on our website, and that's going to be titled We Are the Microbiology Society, but there's lots of ongoing things that I'm excited about. We've just launched our publishing fundamentals, which is essentially just questions that people need answering before they submit anything to our journals, which is which is going to be useful because we hear quite a bit about and people having questions, quite simple questions like how to do a good title and what abstracts to add and things like that.

00:17:19:23 - 00:17:42:10

Adam

So and that's going to be a real kind of big project for me. And also just going up and down the country and documenting projects with funding, particularly for our Champions scheme and just, just basically giving people the, the promotion that they deserve for their projects they're doing.

00:17:42:12 - 00:17:53:22

Clare

Oh, that sounds lovely. I'm looking very much looking forward to that video because it was the talk of the Town annual conference 2023 at your opening video. So I think.

00:17:53:22 - 00:17:54:09

Katie

Evolved.

00:17:54:09 - 00:18:04:11

Clare

Yeah, I'm looking forward to your talk in that it's going to be good. Katie What are you looking forward to? You got big project because you're so busy.

00:18:04:17 - 00:18:40:00

Katie

Yeah well yeah we just recently well in October so not so recently right now, but we just launched the knocking out antimicrobial resistance or knocking out AMR project and, and it's essentially across society projects looking at developing or supporting the development of solutions to antimicrobial resistance. And it's really exciting. We've already had a lot of members and nonmembers express their interest and we've just been speaking to loads of different organizations that are also working on it in a more about how we can kind of collaborate in 2024.

00:18:40:02 - 00:18:59:20

Katie

We're gearing up for these workshops in January, which will hopefully be a really good place for us to identify areas where we can have the most impact as a society. So yeah, I feel like that's probably going to be what I'm working on most next year, but it's really exciting and we've never really done a project like this before.

00:18:59:22 - 00:19:09:05

Katie

So yeah, we can kind of shape it and how we want C Which is great. So probably the knocking out email project, so I'm most excited for. What about you, Claire.

00:19:09:07 - 00:19:49:13

Clare

Yeah, I think the thing that I'm most looking forward to next year is annual conference. Actually, I think having so we have submissions, final conference, posters, talks and we press release some of those submissions. So I'm really looking forward to going through finding out, you know, all of the, you know, latest research that our members are doing and reading through days and being able to talk to those members to press release their projects, speaking to members and speaking to people who are just so passionate about what they do is my favorite part of my job.

00:19:49:15 - 00:20:04:07

Clare

I just really love talking to everybody and being able to bring the amazing work they do, both within our journals or outside of that. Yeah, it's just a real pleasure. Yeah. Oh, sorry.

00:20:04:09 - 00:20:18:19

Adam

I was just going to say that I'm here into space. You talk about the projects that we've got going on, I've got a little bit of wave of excitement because we are, we are, we are busy and it's very, very exciting. And then there's big things on its way.

00:20:18:21 - 00:20:41:04

Clare

Yeah, next year is going to be great. I think this show is fantastic. Building on the momentum that we've made this year, I'm really excited to see it and I'm looking forward to publishing more podcasts with you guys. I think it's a great tool and thank you so much to everyone who listens to our podcasts. We really enjoy making them.

00:20:41:04 - 00:20:51:21

Clare

We really hope you enjoy listening to them and we will see you next year. You've been listening to Micro Talk. My name's Claire.

00:20:51:24 - 00:20:53:00

Katie

I'm Katie.

00:20:53:02 - 00:20:57:04

Adam

And I'm Adam.

00:20:57:06 - 00:21:01:24

Clare

Thank you for listening to this podcast and our podcast throughout 2023.

00:21:02:01 - 00:21:06:22

Katie

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00:21:07:03 - 00:21:13:02

Adam

If you're interested in anything we talked about today, please look into the description where all the links will be.