LAURA BOWATER

I started my career as a microbiologist working in a laboratory where my research added to the scientific understanding of microbial physiology. My current roles are to research how scientists engage with the public and to facilitate and support scientists to interact with a wide variety of audiences to promote a mutual understanding of microbiology, science, and research with a variety of key stakeholders.

EDITOR IN CHIEF / MICROBIOLOGY TODAY

What steps have you taken to get to where you are?

I have actively sought opportunities to break out of the laboratory environment to work in a cross-disciplinary way. This has enabled me to take on new challenges and develop new skills that have allowed me to move from laboratory researcher to researching the laboratory and communicating microbial science with a wider audience.

How do you see the field of microbiology changing in the next 20 years?

Our understanding of the microbial world will continue to expand as we exploit the new tools and technologies that will provide a greater knowledge of the diversity of microbial life that we know is out there but that, at the current time, remains outside our “field of vision.” At the same time, we will seek to exploit the potential that microbes offer to improve every aspect of our lives, from promoting health, combating disease, ensuring food security, to combating global challenges.

What is the best part of your job?

My job allows me to constantly learn about the depth and breadth of knowledge that underpins our understanding of microbiology. At the same time, I have a variety of roles that allow me to inform and enthuse others about the wonders of science, especially the microbial world.