

Meet the SoM PG Committee

Hiba Shareefdeen



Hiba Shareefdeen is PhD student in Prof. Colin Hill's group in APC Microbiome Ireland. She moved to Cork from Canada, which is where she completed her BSc in Biochemistry and her MSc in Medical Sciences, both from McMaster University. Her research involves studying the mechanisms by which bacteriophages influence bacterial community structure in the gut.

Lauren Walsh



Lauren Walsh is PhD student in Prof. Paul Ross's lab in APC Microbiome Ireland. She is from Cork, where she completed her BSc in Microbiology and MSc in Molecular Cell biology with Bio-innovation, both from UCC. Her research involves comparing different antimicrobials and their impact on the gut microbiome. As well as the isolation and characterisation of ribosomally synthesised antimicrobial peptides known as bacteriocins.

Ellen Murray



Ellen Murray is a PhD student in Prof. Colin Hill's Gut Phageomics group at APC Microbiome Ireland. She is from Kilkenny, Ireland and completed both her BSc Microbiology MSc Molecular Cell Biology with Bioinnovation in University College Cork. Her research focuses on the isolation of phage-derived peptidoglycan hydrolases and their potential to be used as alternatives to antibiotics. She is also interested in the possible emergence of resistance to these lytic proteins.

Sam Seymour



Sam Seymour is a PhD student in Prof. Colin Hill's group at APC Microbiome Ireland. Originally from Cork, Sam completed his BSc in Microbiology at Trinity College Dublin, before returning to complete his MSc in Biotechnology in UCC. His research involves investigating how complex, gut bacterial communities change in the presence and absence of bacteriophages.

Clodagh Carr



Clodagh Carr is a BSc Biotechnology graduate and final year PhD student in Prof. Alan Dobson's Environmental Microbiology group. Her research involves investigating marine bacteria as a source of polyester-degrading enzymes, which are potentially useful in the management of PET plastic waste and as a sustainable alternative to catalysts in various chemical processes.

Michelle O'Connor



Michelle is a PhD student in Prof. Paul Ross's bacteriocin group in APC Microbiome Ireland. She is from Cork where she graduated with a BSc degree in Pharmaceutical Biotechnology from CIT in 2018. Her research involves screening for potential novel bacteriocins as alternatives to antibiotics in veterinary settings, as well as focusing on the most studied bacteriocin, nisin, and its characteristics such as immunity, self-induction, and its antimicrobial properties.

Muireann Carmody



Muireann is a PhD student co-supervised by Dr Jerry Reen, School of Microbiology and Dr Gerard McGlacken, School of Chemistry, in UCC. She is from Kerry and graduated with a BSc Chemistry of Pharmaceutical Compounds in 2021. Her research involves synthesising and testing small molecules that interfere with bacterial communication systems.

Daria Nikolaeva



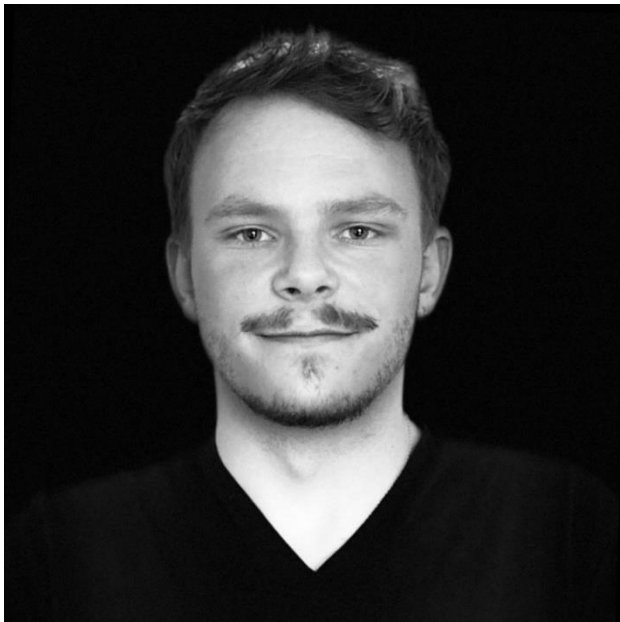
Daria Nikolaeva is a joint PhD student in Prof. Jens Walter's group at APC Microbiome Ireland and Prof. Mikhail Gelfand's group at Skoltech, Russia. She completed her BSc and MSc in Bioengineering and Bioinformatics at Lomonosov Moscow State University in Russia. Her research is devoted broadly to deciphering the biodiversity of environmental and host-associated microbiomes. Her work at APC involves investigating factors governing the inter-individual variability in responses of human gut microbiome to dietary fiber.

Katie Bourke



Katie Bourke is a PhD student in Prof. Paul Ross's lab in APC microbiome Ireland. She is from Limerick and completed her BSc in Microbiology in UCC. Her research involves screening the gut and skin microbiomes for ribosomally synthesised antimicrobial peptides, and then characterising them to identify their clinical potential as alternatives to antibiotics.

David Hourigan



David Hourigan is a PhD candidate in Prof. Paul Ross's lab at APC Microbiome Ireland. His research is centred around the role of bacteriocins, which are small ribosomally encoded antimicrobial peptides produced by bacteria, and their subsequent role within the microbiome. His research focuses on exploiting their effectiveness as selective antibacterial agents to curate the microbiota to tackle AMR and climate change. His interests include functional, ecological and evolutionary genomics, microbial ecology and bacterial competition.



Andriana Grafakou is a PhD researcher in Microbiology, supervised by Prof. Douwe van Sinderen and Prof. Jennifer Mahony at University College Cork and APC Microbiome Ireland. Her academic journey commenced in Greece with an integrated MSc in Food Science and Human Nutrition at the Agricultural University of Athens, where her fascination with the role of microbes in food grew, particularly during her work on kefir microbiota. Her PhD research focuses on bacterial immunity against bacteriophages, with a specific emphasis on *Lactococcus*, an area of significant relevance to the dairy fermentation industry and beyond.