

Astrobiology Society UoM: Rethinking the Mission of University Student Societies

Joaquin Perez-Grande¹, Silvia Castillo², Marco Del Val Fernandez², Salma Malaika², Salome Urien², and Luna Noguera²

¹Astrobiology Society UoM, The University of Manchester

²Astrobiology Society UoM

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Abstract

As the leading astrobiology university student society, run by students, for students, at the University of Manchester Astrobiology Society we are embarked on a mission to spread the word about astrobiology, enrich the university community by delivering high-quality events and resources, and create a global network of students and young professionals that will become the astrobiologists of tomorrow. Ever since our foundation, we have gone beyond the classic student society activities by inviting world-renowned researchers, creating a dedicated careers program, or even organizing the first student-led online congress at the university. In addition, our innovation team always ensures that we use the latest tools and technologies to keep thriving in our ever-evolving world. In this sense, we have developed an all-in-one website where people interested in astrobiology can discover, learn and connect. Furthermore, we have also built a global community using social media, with almost 3000 followers spread over 17 countries. By leading by example, we want to spark change among student societies and for them to redefine their boundaries and to achieve bigger. At AbSciCon 2022 we aim to further pursue this goal, grow our network, share expertise, and learn from others.

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Joaquin Perez-Grande^{1,2}, Silvia Castillo^{1,2}, Marco Del Val Fernández^{1,2}, Salma Malaika^{1,2}, Salomé Urien^{1,2}, and Luna Noguera^{1,2}

¹Astrobiology Society UoM (Steve Biko Building, Oxford Rd, M13 9PL, Manchester, United Kingdom)

²University of Manchester (Oxford Rd, M13 9PL, Manchester, United Kingdom).

As the leading astrobiology university student society, run by students, for students, at the University of Manchester Astrobiology Society we are embarked on a mission to spread the word about astrobiology, enrich the university community by delivering high-quality events and resources, and create a global network of students and young professionals that will become the astrobiologists of tomorrow. Ever since our foundation, we have gone beyond the classic student society activities by inviting renowned researchers, creating a dedicated careers program, or even organizing the first student-led online congress at the university.

In terms of our resources, we provide outreach and writing opportunities, weekly featured articles, publications and news, a list of astrobiology-related courses, and a map of institutions where to study or research astrobiology, a volunteering scheme open for everyone, and more.

The events we deliver are mainly research updates from leading academics with our Singularity Talks, together with special access to congresses, workshops for students, trips to UK facilities and conferences, movie nights, coffee discussions, socials, and our flagship event: 'Universal Dialogues', an annual Astrobiology Expert Panel where we invite world-famous speakers to discuss about life, its origins, and its future. In its first edition, it brought together over 700 attendees from all over the world and six panelists, with Nobel Laureates Didier Queloz and Richard J. Roberts among them.

We also have big plans for the future: creating a bursary for undergraduate students seeking astrobiology-related work experience, bridging the gap between undergraduates and academia at their home university, assess the extent of astrobiology in the UK with a national survey, or even laying out the foundations of the first Bachelor's in Astrobiology in the country are among our top priorities.

In addition, our innovation team always ensures that we use the latest tools and technologies to keep thriving in our ever-evolving world. In this sense, we have developed an all-in-one website where people interested in astrobiology can discover, learn and connect. Among other things, it allows them to stay up to date with the latest research in the field, read or write for our online blog, obtain a student membership, discover how to become an astrobiologist, join our in-person or online weekly events, explore our community. Furthermore, we have also built a global community using social media, with almost 3000 followers spread over 17 countries and over 35,000 monthly impressions.

By leading by example, we want to spark change among student societies and for them to redefine their boundaries and to achieve bigger. Joining AbSciCon 2022 will help us pursue this goal, grow our network, share expertise, and learn from others.

Our ultimate goal is to join forces with like-minded organizations and future astrobiology student societies to work towards the same goal: showcase the potential of astrobiology as a discipline and as a must-known in order to discover what we are, where do we come from, and where are we heading to.



ASTROBIOLOGY SOCIETY
THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

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Joaquin Perez-Grande

joaquin.perezgrande@student.manchester.ac.uk



ASTROBIOLOGY SOCIETY
THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

The gap, and the **opportunity**

Creating a student society from scratch

Spread the word and enrich the university community

Deliver educational and careers resources and host events

Build a global network of students into astrobiology

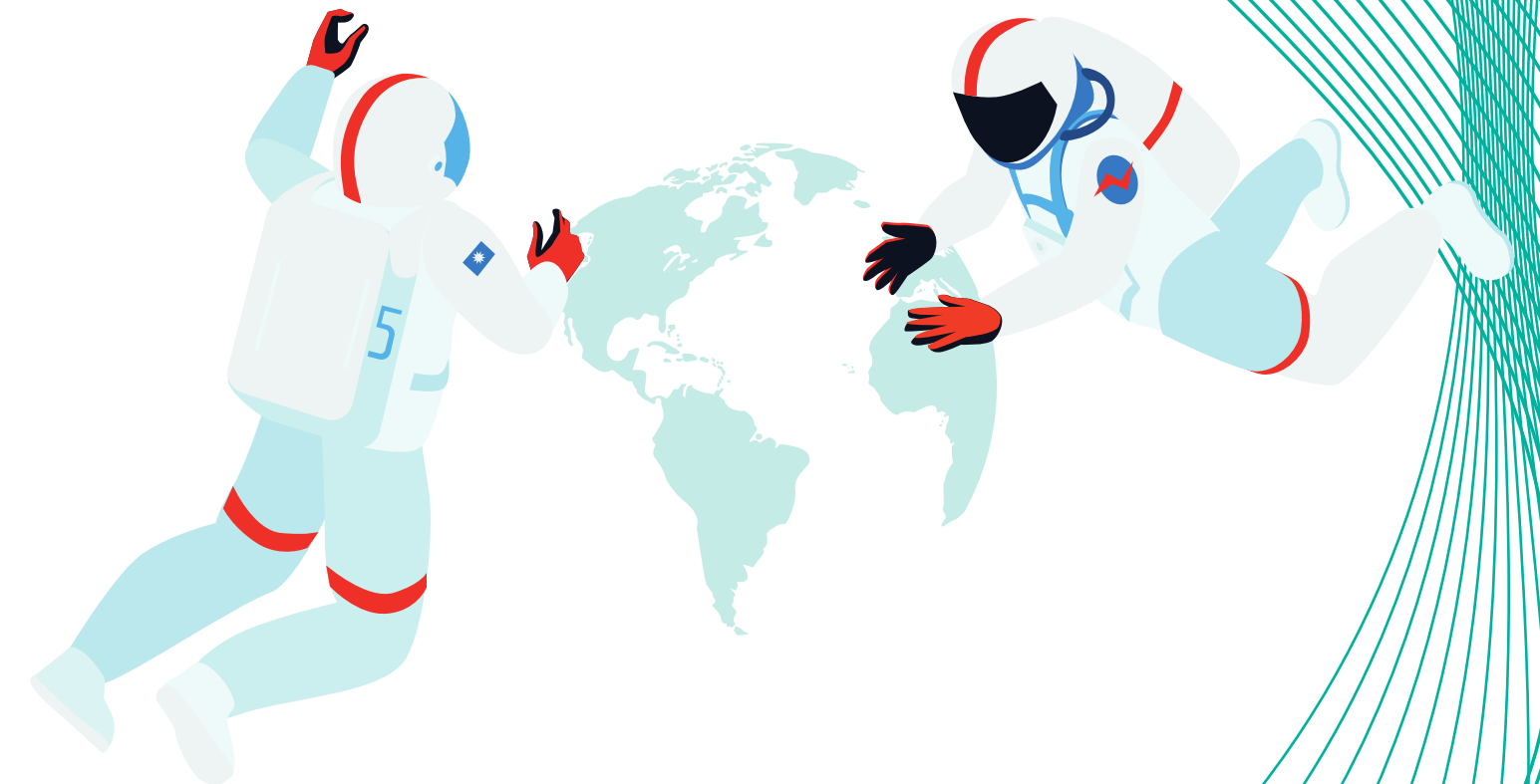
Going beyond the classic student society activities

Invited world-renowned researchers

Created a dedicated careers program

Organized an online astrobiology congress

What is it we actually do?





Resources and events

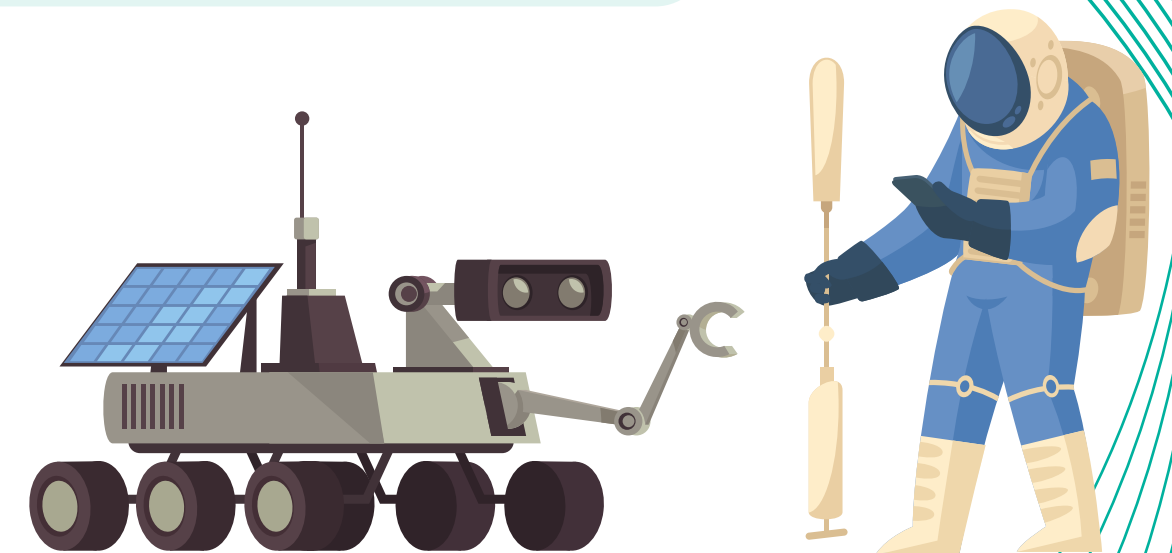
Resources we provide

- Outreach and writing opportunities
- Articles, publications and news
- Astrobiology-related courses
- Institutions and research groups
- Volunteering opportunities

Events we deliver

- Research updates from experts
- Careers events and workshops
- Trips to facilities and congresses
- Movie nights, discussions, socials
- Universal Dialogues

What impact this have had?





ASTROBIOLOGY SOCIETY
THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

Building a **community**

Our achievements in the last two years

One of the biggest student-led astrobiology online community

+3500 followers across social media platforms

+500 interested members in over 17 countries

Collaborations with several organisations and institutions

Daily content in social media

Our own discord server

Recognisable brand

**The keys to the
success of our
online community**

How to thrive in an ever-evolving world?



An innovative **digital approach**

The **Astrobiology Society's website**

An all-in-one online platform for students in astrobiology

A space where they can discover, learn and connect

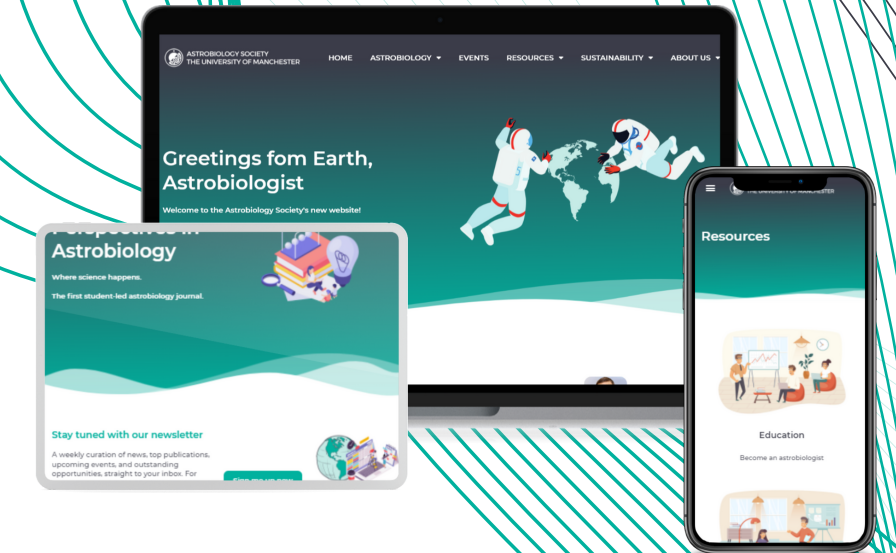
Innovation is at the core of our operations team

- Stay up to date with the latest research
- Read or write for the online blog
- Obtain a free student membership
- Discover how to become an astrobiologist
- Stay tuned and join weekly events
- Explore the community and the offerings

What is it we want to achieve?



ASTROBIOLOGY SOCIETY
THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER



Leading by **example**

We want to spark change among student societies

Societies can push their boundaries and achieve bigger

We want to redefine what a student society can be

What we are working towards to

Grow our network, share expertise, and learn from others

Join forces with like-minded organizations

Showcase the potential of astrobiology



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