Biochemical Society Science Communication Prize 2020

For the past 10 years, the Biochemical Society has looked to identify and celebrate outstanding science communication talent with an annual Science Communication Competition. In 2020, to mark the 10th anniversary of this scheme, the Society revamped the Competition by renaming it the 'Biochemical Society Science Communication Prize' and opened its applications to secondary/A-level students in addition to higher education students (as had been its exclusive remit in previous years).

The prize attracted an international portfolio of engaging and creative entries, which could be submitted as a written piece or in a media format – such as video or audio – and had to be bioscience themed and aimed at the general public.

The Biochemical Society was delighted with an amazing number of high-standard entries, which made competition for this year's prize especially fierce. These entries were judged by a panel of four expert judges with expertise across science communication practice: Agnese Abrusci (Media Editor at Springer Nature), Catherine Webb (Teaching Fellow in Science Communication at Imperial College London), Güneş Taylor (Postdoctoral Research Fellow at The Francis Crick Institute and Crick Public Engagement Prize-awardee) and Rachel Kahn (Research Communications Manager at Blood Cancer UK).

The Society is pleased to celebrate the 2020 Biochemical Society Science Communication Prize winners, all of them video entries!

The winning entries in the secondary/A-level category covered biomolecular topics as wide as blood clotting, the physiological role of sleep and the myriad of ways our bodies are affected by alcohol when we drink. Resorting to an impressive array of creative techniques, from digital to stop-motion animation, these videos showcased clear and engaging science with remarkable media mastery. The first prize in this category went to Clarissa Pereira from Tiffin Girls' School and her video '*Blood clotting: the good, the bad & the sticky*'. On winning this prize and why she had chosen to tackle her topic via video she said: 'I am so thrilled to have won the Science Communication Prize, especially for such an important topic! The truth about blood clotting is tucked away in scientific journals, hidden behind paywalls and jargon complex enough to put off the most tenacious non-scientist. The difficulties I encountered in researching this topic drove me to make an animated video that could explain the fundamentals of blood clotting in an exciting way.' The second and third prizes in this category were won, respectively, by Olga Kryl with the video '*What is the purpose of sleep?*' and Sasha Scott with the animation '*What happens when you drink?*'

The higher education category comprised another inspiring set of prize-winning videos. The first prize went to Lauryn Deaville, a biochemistry student at St Anne's College, University of Oxford, and her engaging animated explanation of our circadian rhythms and light-sensing visual systems '*What makes you tick? Your body clock, light sensing, and jet lag*'. On winning her prize, Lauryn said: 'after attending a talk on circadian rhythms and hearing about the competition from a tutor, I thought this could be a fun way to develop a new skill and explore an interesting aspect of biochemistry outside of my degree. The application of circadian rhythms to daily life made it the perfect topic for a video entry, and I loved the challenge of creating a story to show to viewers. I am so grateful to have been chosen as this year's winner, and I hope my video might encourage others to explore the science behind daily life in a creative way!' The second and third prizes in this category went to, respectively, Victoria Bolton for her video '*Leishmania – the story of an ancient survivor*' and Shakira Mahadeva for her stop-motion animation on the molecular mechanisms of transcription '*Switching genes on*'.

On this year's Science Communication Prize, Dr Helen Watson, Chair of the Biochemical Society's Education, Training and Public Engagement Committee, said: 'We were very happy to see such a variety of interesting and dynamic topics for this year's competition, especially from our new post-16 category. Science is often a complex topic to communicate, especially in these challenging times. We want to help make science as accessible as possible for the public, so it's essential that we continue to encourage and support effective science communicators.'

Visit our website to view the six winning entries in full: biochemistry.org/science-communication-prize-winners/