



Maria Harrison

Dr. Harrison was inspired by a talk given by Dr. Larry Peterson. His talk on plant-fungal interactions grabbed her attention. Now she studies arbuscular mycorrhizal symbiosis!



A Group Effort

Dr. Harrison values the community effort of science. She is inspired by presentations on other's research and believes that science is "a stepwise process"- all her discoveries have been built on the foundation others have set.

In order to work on fungal-plant interactions, Dr. Harrison needed a new model system. After choosing *Medicago truncatula*, she needed to establish protocols from growth, inoculation, imaging, and screening. Now *M. truncatula* is a robust model system for fungal-plant interactions.

Scientific Work

The Harrison lab identified a phosphate transporter that is essential in symbiosis and discovered how the symbiotic membrane is polarized.



While many may find unexpected results frustrating, Dr. Harrison embraces them. She finds them motivating and uses them to inspire new discoveries.

While doing meaningful research is important, she also wants to be remembered for inspiring the next generation of young scientists and launching them on their own research journeys.



"Science is a stepwise process and sometimes the small steps ultimately have the most impact. I think...that discoveries build from each other, is important to acknowledge."

Sources

Cope, Kevin. (December 14, 2017) "Featured Interview: Dr. Maria Harrison." IS-MPML.

Group icon adapted from DownloadIcons.net

Arbuscular mycorrhizal symbiosis figure adapted from "Genetic regulation of the arbuscular mycorrhizal symbiosis" Department of Biology, University of Fribourg, made by Alyssa Preiser