

In education we trust

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Annual publication of *The Biomedical Science Industry Handbook* provides a compendium of concise yet comprehensive information on the products and services available from the *in vitro* diagnostics (IVD) industry. Moreover, these pages reflect the expertise available across the IVD industry, which continues to respond to the demands placed upon it; examples being the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, and the impact of antimicrobial resistance on the ongoing provision of effective healthcare.

What is perhaps underappreciated, however, is the role the IVD industry plays in education. Sponsorship of meetings represents a key symbiotic relationship, such as that demonstrated at the biennial IBMS Congress event, and the Annual Microbiology Conference of the BSMT. Neither of these events would be possible to stage without the help, support and cooperation provided by our commercial colleagues.

Attendees at the IBMS Congress can only marvel at the organisation and support required to stage this four-day event. On a smaller scale, the one-day annual BSMT Conference is equally dependent for its continued existence on support from the commercial sector.

The BSMT began life as the British Society for Multipoint Technology in 1985. A relatively simple technique, multipoint technology offers cost-effective testing of large numbers of isolates, and also lends itself to automation. In the early 1980s laboratories were getting bigger, and were processing increasing numbers of specimens. At that time, automation in microbiology was limited or non-existent, so the conditions



were right to look at introducing multipoint technology.

Work undertaken over the latter half of the 1980s was finally brought together in *Multipoint Methods in the Clinical Laboratory*, a 96-page handbook published in 1991. Once the definitive handbook was published, there was little else to discuss on the topic, and it was decided to broaden the Society's remit and change the name to the British Society for Microbial Technology. Its aim was, and still is, to promote an exchange of information on laboratory practices in clinical microbiology.

In 2025, the BSMT staged its 40th Anniversary Conference at what has become the home of the conference – the RAF Museum in Hendon, North London. Forty years of success, both professionally and commercially, says much about the enduring educational relationship between industry and the Society it supports.

For details of the next conference, to be held on 21 May 2026, see the BSMT website: www.bsmt.org.uk.

