

Dr. Ana Maria Porrás is an Assistant Professor of Biomedical Engineering at the University of Florida, where she leads the Tissue-Microbe Interactions lab. Her group engineers models of disease to study human-microbe interactions mediated by the extracellular matrix. The TMI lab applies these models in the contexts of the gut microbiome, neglected tropical diseases, and cardiovascular health. Her lab is also interested in understanding and broadening global participation in microbiome and biomaterials science. Additionally, she is a science artist and an expert on inclusive bilingual science communication. Dr. Porrás is the co-founder and Senior Advisor of the Latinx in Biomedical Engineering community, and the recipient of the 2024 AAAS Early Career Award for Public Engagement with Science. Prior to arriving in Florida, Dr. Porrás was a Presidential Postdoctoral Fellow at Cornell University. She holds a B.S. in biomedical engineering from the University of Texas at Austin, and a Masters and Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where she was an American Heart Association Predoctoral Fellow. When she isn't doing all that, she loves to read, dance, travel, and, above all, eat ice cream.