

Conference Support Grant Report: American Geophysical Union Fall Meeting 2014, San Francisco

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I was generously awarded £750 from the British Society for Geomorphology (BSG) in a Postgraduate Conference Support Grant to help cover the costs of attending the American Geophysical Union (AGU) Fall Meeting in 2014.

Attended by nearly 24,000 scientists, and with a combined total of over 23,000 oral and poster presentations, the AGU Fall Meeting is the largest conference in the Earth and Planetary Sciences. By providing researchers with a platform from which they can showcase their research to an international, multidisciplinary audience, it is an exceptional opportunity for early career researchers to engage with other researchers and expand their professional networks. It also offers a fantastic opportunity to learn about frontier research across a diverse range of relevant fields, from Flood Hydrology to Ecology to Planetary Science.

I presented a poster, titled "How Does Vegetation Impact Hillslope Response to Changing Channel Incision?" (Abstract number: EP33B-3644), in a session dedicated to hillslope geomorphology: "From Rock to Rolling Regolith: Advances in Hillslope Geomorphology". My poster explored sources of heterogeneity in the geomorphic response of the Sierra Nevada landscape to changes in fluvial incision, specifically focusing on the coupled effect of lithology and vegetation. The session was very well attended; discussing this poster with other researchers greatly facilitated the development of this research, which is now being written up for publication. As a PhD student, I was enrolled into the Outstanding Student Presentation Awards. As part of this framework, I received valuable feedback on the research and quality of my visual and oral presentation. This feedback is invaluable in furthering the development of my science communication skills.

Throughout the conference, I was able to attend a number of excellent, provocative talk and poster sessions, covering a broad range of topics. The diversity of research on display not only demonstrated the range of exciting research currently being undertaken within the global Geomorphology community, but also in other related fields, and exposed me to new insights and ways of thinking about problems that have undoubtedly benefited my academic development. Moreover, my experience of attending the conference highlighted the importance of meeting other researchers and exchanging ideas.

Immediately following the conference, I attended the Gilbert Club meeting across the Bay in the Lawrence Hall of Science, University of California Berkeley. This is an annual event, focused on Geomorphology, comprising three keynote talks, pop-up presentations and informal discussions. It provided a further chance to find out about recent advances and challenges from across the Geomorphology community, and provided additional networking opportunities, which will be important when it comes to finding a position after completing my PhD.

I would like to thank the BSG for their generosity in awarding this Postgraduate Conference Attendance Grant, which made attending this event possible. It was a hugely enjoyable experience, and the opportunity to share my research with such a large and varied audience has helped improve the quality of my research, expanded the boundaries of my knowledge in the broader Earth Sciences and enabled me to further develop my contact network.