

Guide to the European Geosciences Union General Assembly

Last updated: March 2013

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The European Geosciences Union (EGU)

The [European Geosciences Union](#) was formed in 2002 by the merger of the European Geophysical Society (EGS) and the European Union of Geosciences (EUG). The main activities of the Union fall into three categories: Meetings, Publications and Outreach. It convenes the annual General Assembly (more below), topical meetings, conference series, training schools and short courses. The EGU publishes 14 peer reviewed open access [journals](#) and conducts and support outreach activities. These outreach activities include Educational Symposia for Teachers ([GIFT](#)), the support of students, and media services along with Awards and Medals.



The European Geosciences Union Logo.

The General Assembly

A brief history

The first General Assembly of the European Geosciences Union was held in Nice, France, in 2004 and subsequent General Assemblies have been held in Vienna, Austria. Each EGU annual meeting regularly convenes over 11,000 participants from over 95 countries, giving presentations in multiple fields across the Earth, planetary and space sciences.

Online resources

The main source of information is the General Assembly [website](#). Details of previous meetings can be accessed [here](#). This website is where you can submit abstracts, register for the event and browse the session programme.

The European Geosciences Union official blog (geolog.egu.eu) and Twitter account ([@EuroGeosciences](https://twitter.com/EuroGeosciences)) are good sources of information and news.

Before arriving

Submitting an abstract

Abstracts should be short (300–500 words), clear, concise and written in English with correct spelling and good sentence structure. Mathematical symbols and equations must be typed in, and metric symbols should be used. Figures and tables should not be included. It is recommended that the abstract is carefully compiled and thoroughly checked, particularly with regard to the list of authors, before submission to avoid any last minute changes. The submission of an abstract carries with it the obligation of presentation at the meeting (either as a poster or as paper) by the author or one of the co-authors. Upon submission, you must designate a specific session for each abstract. Online guidelines are available [here](#).

- Use a text editor of your choice to compile your abstract: Title, Author(s), Affiliation(s) of author(s), and the
- Abstract Text; Browse through the [Session Programme](#) and select your preferred session
- Use the link "Abstract Submission" at the respective session
- You are asked to login to the [Copernicus Office Meeting Organiser](#). Use your EGU/Copernicus account data or create a new account
- Fill in the information about Title, Author(s), and Affiliation(s) of author(s)
- Choose between Plain Text, LaTeX or Word content with regard to the Abstract Text
- Copy and paste your information into the form or download and use the Word template
- Check the generated PDF file of your edited and formatted abstract
- If the conversion of your abstract fails, please specify your problems when contacting Copernicus
- Please indicate your invoice details and payment details for the Abstract Processing Charge *
- Submit your abstract. Your credit card will be checked and debited.
- Authors may decide to submit their abstract with a preference either for a poster presentation or for an oral presentation. However, given the high numbers of oral requests, there is no guarantee that an oral preference can be realised **

* An Abstract Processing Charge (APC) must be paid for each abstract submission. Abstracts are only processed and available for the session organization by conveners after the payment is completed. Please note that this is a processing charge and not a publishing fee. APCs are not refundable in case of abstract withdrawal, rejection, or double submission. The charges collected cover the cost to process the abstracts whether or not one attends the meeting. The APC does not register you for the General Assembly. Separate registration fees apply. Solicited Speakers do not receive discounted APCs, registration fees, or travel reimbursement.

** First Author Rule: Regarding the oral preference, you are allowed as first author to submit either **one** regular abstract plus **one** abstract solicited by a convener, or **two** solicited abstracts. Further abstracts have to be submitted as a poster. If you submit to a session belonging to the programme group EOS, you are allowed as first author to submit **one** more abstract with an oral preference (**three** in total).



Poster Hall at the European Geosciences Union General Assembly at the Austria Center Vienna (ACV).

Financial support

A limited amount of the overall budget of each EGU General Assembly is reserved to assist young scientists to attend the meeting. The financial support may include waiving of the registration fee and a refund of the Abstract processing Charge (APC) related to the abstract for which support was requested. Additionally, the grant may include support for travel expenditures.

You fulfil the EGU's [criteria](#) as a Young Scientist if you are

- aged 35* or younger.
- an undergraduate or postgraduate (Masters/PhD) student or have received your highest degree qualification (e.g., BSc, MSc, PhD) within the last seven years.*

* Where appropriate, up to one year of parental leave time may be added per child.

Each support award is granted to the contact author for a particular abstract. Should this abstract be withdrawn before the meeting or should this abstract not be presented at the meeting although the author who has been awarded is present at the meeting, the award has to be returned, i.e. the author in question will be asked to register and, if necessary, to pay back the money received. Awards cannot be transferred.

There are currently three different [financial support](#) schemes run by the European Geosciences Union:

1. **Young Scientist's Travel Award for Europeans (YSTA)** This award includes free registration together with a refund of the Abstract Processing Charge (APC) related to the abstract for which support was requested. Depending on the decision of the Support Committee, additional financial support for travel expenditures with a maximum of €300 could be granted as well. Only the granted amount mentioned in the financial support email will be paid out, in person, to the supported contact author during the EGU General Assembly.
2. **Adrian Gill Travel Award (AGTA)** For a young scientist from Britain to take part in a session of the Atmospheric Sciences or Ocean Sciences programme. This award includes free registration together with a refund of the Abstract Processing Charge (APC) related to the abstract for which support was requested. Depending on the decision of the Support Committee, additional financial support for travel expenditures with a maximum of €300 could be granted as well. Only the granted amount mentioned in the financial support email will be paid out, in person, to the supported contact author during the EGU General Assembly.

- 3. Keith Runcorn Travel Award for Non-Europeans (KRTA)** This award includes free registration together with a refund of the Abstract Processing Charge (APC) related to the abstract for which support was requested. Depending on the decision of the Support Committee, additional financial support for travel expenditures with a maximum of €500 could be granted as well. Only the granted amount mentioned in the financial support email will be paid out, in person, to the supported contact author during the EGU General Assembly.

Scientists who wish to apply for financial support must be the principal author of their contribution and they must submit an abstract by an earlier deadline than that for all abstracts. Results of the application process will be announced by early February.

Registration

Discounts for registration are given for EGU members, student and senior scientists. Pre-registration is possible at a lower rate and on-site registration is also available. Further information, including registration fees, can be found on the EGU [General Assembly homepage](#) each year. Registration generally includes a name badge, the programme book, a USB stick with the abstracts and a free travel pass for Vienna for Monday-Friday of the General Assembly. Registration desks are open on Sunday afternoon before the opening reception to allow participants to register and pick up conference materials.

Timetabling

The General Assembly timetable is divided into five time blocks (TBs) as follows:

TB1 08:30–10:00

TB2 10:30–12:00

TB3 13:30–15:00

TB4 15:30–17:00

TB5 17:30–19:00 (not on Friday)

EGU provides a USB stick to the participants. It contains a search tool for abstracts which advances each year. Using search tools on the website and USB stick, you can search abstracts and sessions for key words to identify sessions of interest. Sessions are meant to run concurrently. With the exception of the medal lectures, each presentation is to be no longer than 15 minutes (including questions – 2 to 3 minutes). Rooms for sessions associated with individual Programme Groups tend to be clustered together. Posters are organised by session and therefore posters for one Programme Group will be adjacent to each other.

During breaks between TB1&TB2 and TB3&TB4, free tea and coffee is available in the poster halls. Wine is also available daily from 18:00 in the poster halls. It is easy to get “conference burnout” at the General Assembly so please take the time to visit posters and other events such as the Geocinema and photo competition. Medal lectures can be very interesting, even if they are not in your field. You can also take time out to explore the beautiful park at the back of the Austria Center.

Presenting

Oral presentations

Full guidelines for oral presentations are available on the General Assembly [website](#). Oral presentations are organised by sessions, as indicated in the programme. They are scheduled in specific lecture rooms together with the time of presentation of each contribution including discussion and change over. The 15 minute long oral sessions are scheduled in four time blocks per day, each of which is 90 minutes long. Please note that the duration of an oral presentation includes 3 minutes for questions and discussion, i.e. a 15 minute talk should comprise a 12 minutes presentation and 3 minutes of discussion and questions.

Since the oral presentations are not organised centrally, authors are kindly asked to upload their presentations directly in the respective lecture room at least 30 minutes before the start of the session time block. A lecture room assistant will be available to help with this. Each room has a laptop, projector, microphone, laser pointer, and also the ability to hook up your own laptop if needed (a complete list is available online). Laptops provided have PowerPoint installed. It

is strictly prohibited to take photos and/or copies from notebooks of any scientific material without the expressed permission by the authors.

Poster presentations

Full guidelines for poster presentations are available on the General Assembly [website](#). The poster boards are landscape and 197 cm width x 100 cm height. Posters should be put up between 08:00 and 08:30 in the morning. Tape is available from the student assistants in the halls. You will be sent your poster location (e.g. XY0439) in an email from EGU prior to the General Assembly and it is also listed online in the Session Programme details. You can locate the exact location of your poster using the online floor plans. The attendance time should be sent to you prior to the event. Please retrieve your poster at the end of the day. Those that are not collected will be disposed of.

Some sessions may have a poster walk through (in some cases noted in the session details). This is where poster authors have a short amount of time to summarise their poster and find out more about other posters in their session. Other sessions will have a scheduled Poster Summary and Discussion session (a list of them can be found in the PSD section of the session programme online. These may involve poster summaries and/or discussion points dependent on the session. A list of the equipment in PSD rooms can also be found on the General Assembly website.

PICO Presentations

Full guidelines for PICO (Presenting Interactive COntent) presentations are available on the General Assembly [website](#). PICO presentations can be a Power Point, movie, animation, or simply a PDF showing your research on a display and combine the advantages of both, oral and poster presentations, together with the opportunity to be interactive. They will be organised at designated 'PICO spots', which combine touch screen displays with a presentation screen. PICO sessions start with "2 minutes of madness" in which all authors present the essence of their work with 2 slides in 2 minutes. Afterwards, the audience uses the touch screens to view again their PICO presentation(s) of interest. PICO (Presenting Interactive COntent) is bringing

Union-wide events

Union Meetings (UM)

These are meetings that are open to Union members, some are invitation only (noted). A key Union Meeting to which all are encouraged to attend is Plenary (normally on the Monday at lunchtime). This is an annual event where the past and future development of EGU is discussed. The Plenary is open to all EGU members and all EGU General Assembly participants. The whole council will attend and is the main meeting for bringing forward new ideas to the organisation. A free lunch buffet (sandwiches and soft drinks) is normally served.

Union Symposia (US)

Union Symposia are Union-wide events of general appeal, including the EGU Award Ceremony. Details on the EGU's awards and medals can be found on the EGU [website](#). Union Symposia generally last for one time block (90 minutes).

Union Masterclass (UMC)

Union Masterclasses were introduced in 2011. These are an opportunity to discover from eminent scientists on key questions in their field, key breakthroughs and potential future avenues. Like the Union Symposia, Union Masterclasses last for one time block (90 minutes).

Great Debates (GDG)

Great Debates take the form of short statements and questions from the audience and are often chaired by a journalist. Great Debates involve a variety of expert speakers from different institutions ranging from Academia to industry and last for one time block (90 minutes).

Medal Lectures (ML)

During the General Assembly scientists awarded Union and Division medals give medal lectures. These may be during scientific sessions (for division medals) or during lunchtimes (union medals) or at another time (such as after TB5).

Division Meetings (DM)

Division Meetings are where division level items are discussed and volunteers for items may requested. All are welcome at the division business meeting, where sandwiches are often available.

Townhall Meetings (TH)

Townhall Meetings open for all participants in the conference, and where new initiatives or decisions are announced to a larger audience following an open discussion.

Other scientific events

Splinter Meetings (SM)

Splinter Meetings, public or by invitation only, can be organised by participants during the course of the conference. The EGU reserves a number of extra rooms free of charge for Splinter Meeting organiser(s).

Short courses (SC)

Short courses are opportunities to learn about a subject or further your knowledge in a particular area. These typically run for between 90 minutes, but may be as long as a whole day. Some courses require contact with the convenors in advance, whereas others can be attended without prior notice.

Photo Competition

Since 2010 there has been a photo competition at the General Assembly, open to all those registered. A call for entries goes out in advance of the meeting, with images being submitted to [Imaggeo](#) two months before the General Assembly. Photos can be on any broad theme related to the Earth and Space Sciences. Each pre-registered participant can submit up to **two** images. If you submit your images to the yearly EGU photo competition, you also are submitting the photos to the EGU Photo Database, Imaggeo. Being open access (see the copyright/terms and conditions [online](#)), it can be used by scientists for their presentations or publications as well as by the press. However, you retain full rights of use, since your uploaded image is licensed and distributed by EGU under a [Creative Commons licence](#). If a winning entry, you also agree for the photo to be exhibited at the EGU General Assembly. Ten entries are short-listed with participants at the General Assembly voting for their favourites. The winners are announced on the Friday of the General Assembly. Further information and previous winners can be viewed online at [Imaggeo](#). The top three images are turned into postcards that are distributed at the next General Assembly.



Last year's winning photo: "Melt Stream" by Ian Joughin, distributed by the EGU under a Creative Commons Licence.

Geocinema

The Geocinema presents a selection of geoscience related films. All films have an English soundtrack or English subtitles. Films have duration between several minutes to 90 minutes.

Travel and Accommodation

Food and drink

In addition to the complimentary refreshments provided during the breaks, there are various food and drink outlets within the conference venue. There are also bakeries, cafes, restaurants and a supermarket in close vicinity to the meeting venue.

Accommodation

Information on accommodation options can be found on the accommodation page of the General Assembly website. Please note Mondial Congress and Events cannot guarantee accommodation after a certain date. Other accommodation options are:

- <http://www.jugendherberge.at>
- <http://www.hostel.com>
- <http://www.hotelscombined.com>
- <http://www.apartmentnetzwerk.at>
- <http://www.govienna.net>

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list. You can also consider other hotel booking websites such as hotels.com, kayak.com, expedia.com. When booking accommodation bear in mind that you have a Vienna travel card for Monday-Friday which covers the city area public transport.

Getting to and from Vienna

Vienna's International [Airport](#) is served by many of the major European airlines and is in Schwechat, 19 kilometres from the city centre. You can go from one to the other using the City Airport Train (CAT), suburban railway, buses, or a taxi. The City Airport Train (CAT) takes 16 minutes from the Airport to Wien Mitte station. Fares are from €10 single (cheaper if brought online). Trains leave every 30 minutes from 06:05 until 23:35. The S-bahn (S7) takes 24 minutes from the Airport to various stations in Vienna centre (Rennweg (change for Sudbahnhof), Mitte, Praterstern, Traisengasse, Handelskai and Floridsdorf). A timetable is available online with trains leaving approximately every 30 minutes. Trains leave from 04:54 until 00:18 and fares are from €3.60. There are various bus connections from the airport to the city, taking between 20 and 45 minutes. Buses go through the night and cost from €7 for a single. Taxis are also available at the airport.

If you would like to consider overland transport (e.g. train, car), see below.

Overland Travel to Vienna

For those of you who are interested in car-pooling, the e-carpool site (www.e-carpool.eu) is useful and available in multiple languages.

Travel from the UK

Train or Train + Ferry: The Man in Seat 61 [website](#) is comprehensive and up-to-date, listing four different major paths one can take from London to Vienna by train, and one for train plus ferry (via Harwich & Hoek van Holland). Fares range from £69 for a single to £700 for fully refundable set of train tickets.

Coach: National Express offers coach services from London to Vienna, taking about 21-24 hours one-way, £120 return (fully refundable), less for students. Eurolines: This is a group of 32 independent coach companies operating together, and is Europe's largest regular coach network. When buying a ticket originating in the UK, you are effectively booking a ticket with National Express.

Car: The distance by road from London to Vienna is approximately 1600 km (1000 miles). One can drive this in one very long day (e.g. 14-15 hours) depending on ferry/tunnel crossing, and any car-rental switches UK vs. Mainland

Europe. There are many combinations of Train + Car, Ferry + Car, etc. For instance, some people find that taking a train from the UK to the Netherlands, and then renting a car from there, is an easier alternative than going via Dover/Calais.

Travel from Germany

From Cologne, Bonn, and Frankfurt there is a night train that arrives at 9:00 in the morning. All information on train travel from Germany to Vienna is available from www.bahn.de. There are regular trains between Munich and Vienna, each taking just over 4 hours.

Travel from Northern Europe

From northern Europe, it takes more than one day to reach Vienna. From most of Denmark and the region around Malmö (Sweden), it is possible to travel to Vienna on a very long day. For example, from Lund (southern Sweden), one leaves at 6:39 in the morning and arrives at 23:22 in the evening. The fastest alternatives include a night train. One can take either the Austrian night train from Hamburg to Vienna. Don't forget that the overnight train between Hamburg and Vienna can also take your car (it is an "Autoreisezug"). After booking a car space (giving the model and registration number) you turn up about an hour before departure (check the "Verladezeit") and drive the car on the train yourself - it is an easy way to avoid driving across Europe while still taking your car! The price is very reasonable. One can also take the German night train from Copenhagen to Nürnberg (and then a day train to Vienna). From Oslo and Stockholm, trains departing in the morning provide connections with both night trains going further south.

Affordable travel from anywhere in Europe

For European residents, the most economical alternative is usually an InterRail ticket. On an InterRail Global Pass (€249, or €169 for people below 26), one can travel on trains unlimited for 5 days within 10 days. In addition, one needs to book reservations (typical day-train €5, night-train €25 for a bunk bed), and a ticket with 50% reduction to the nearest border. The reservations are fully refundable; the InterRail pass is partly refundable (15% cancellation fee). Only the InterRail pass can be booked online. Reservations and the ticket to the border need to be booked via a travel agent. A round trip from most destinations in Europe will cost between €300 and €500. For more information on InterRail, see www.Interrailnet.com.

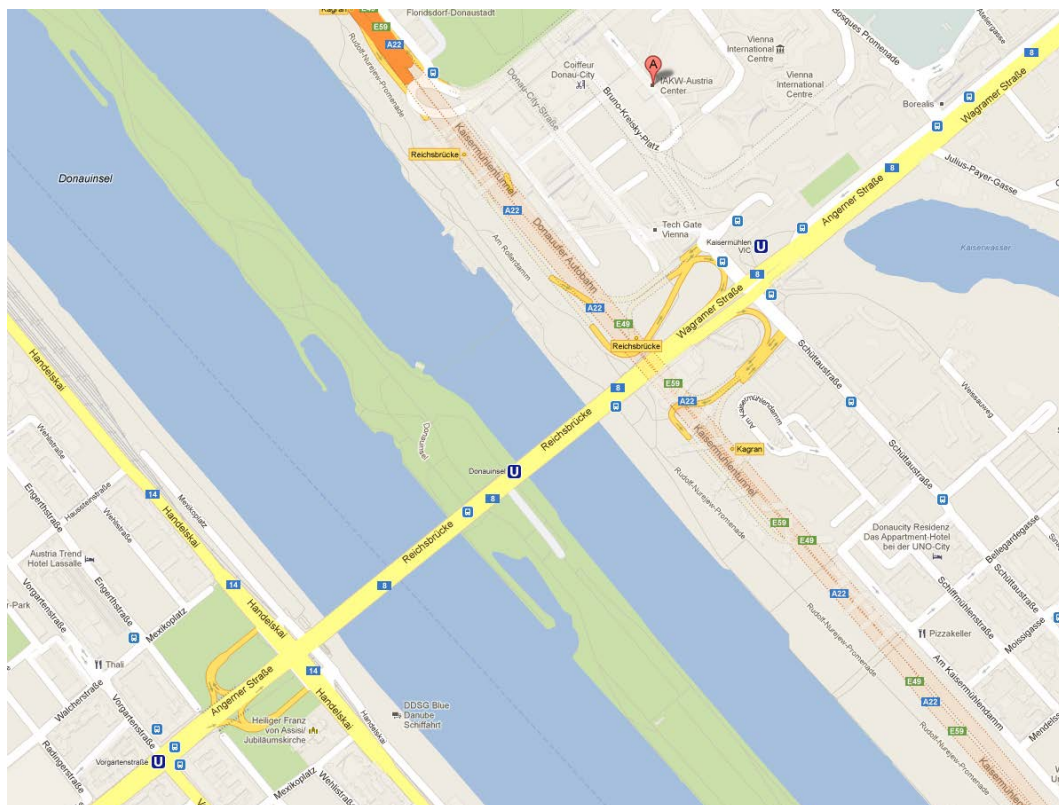
Getting to the EGU General Assembly Venue

The Austria Center Vienna (ACV) is the event venue and is located next to the station "Kaisermühlen/Vienna Int. Centre" on subway line U1 which runs from the city centre (Stephansplatz) to Leopoldau. A Vienna metro plan can be found below and a travel planner for Vienna can be accessed on the city main transport [website](http://www.wienerlinien.at) (Wiener Linien):



Vienna U- and S-bahn map [source].

A Google Map of the Austria Centre Vienna is also below. The Austria Center Vienna is also reachable via the Airport Bus (link) running to the station "Wien Kaisermühlen/VIC" close to the ACV.



Austria Center Vienna location [\[source\]](#).

Things to do in Vienna

The Vienna tourist board has information about sightseeing, shows, shopping, dining and other information about Vienna on its [website](#). A fairly comprehensive list of the museums in Vienna can be found on [here](#).

Tourist information on Vienna can be found in the Arrivals Hall of Vienna International Airport or at the Tourist Information Centre (Vienna 1) at Albertinaplatz / Maysedergasse, behind the Vienna State Opera (open daily from 9:00 am - 7:00 pm). Brochures can be ordered in advance from your local Austrian Tourist Office.

Past participants impressions

For those of you who may be attending the General Assembly for the first time, you may be wondering what it's like from a participant's point of view. The short pieces below give personal views of attending a General Assembly for the first time.

I attended EGU General Assembly for the first time in 2010. When I arrived there the feeling was just "WOW!" EGU General Assembly is such a huge conference! The first day I had to adjust to the mass of lectures and posters, to select which session to attend. But after that it was just so interesting! So many different topics, so many scientists from all over the world!

I took the opportunity to listen to lectures given on volcanoes, freak waves and on contamination of the atmosphere (just a few examples). I really liked the poster sessions. Hundreds of different research projects displayed together. There was the chance to talk to the scientists and to get information on how they did their research.

I had a poster of my own to present. At the beginning of the session I was a little nervous: would people be interested in what I did? Would they think that my work was good? Or would they just walk by and ignore me? But when the first person stopped and started to ask me about my project, such an interesting discussion came up and it is fascinating how an outsider sees things one does not see himself/herself. I was asked many questions and I stopped feeling self-

conscious. That was a great help to me. And I have to admit that I was a little bit proud to present my research in such an environment, such a big conference! This was definitely a great experience to me.

Höpke Andresen was a PhD student at the Institute for Earth Sciences at the University of Heidelberg. Her research looked into heavy metals in river sediments

I am taking this opportunity to share my experience at EGU 2011. I am a PhD student in Physics, and this is my first time at EGU. I am thankful for my advisor who suggested right on time that I submit an abstract for EGU 2011 –which I did on the very deadline day. I was not used to having an impressive audience –with many big names and many unknown faces, I mean. I was not used to very strict timing instructions either, but it felt like it went well. I haven't had the chance/time to catch up with everyone who asked me questions after the talk. The General Assembly is so huge and busy. I am not too frustrated about it, because I think that, once back home, I can recover who is who, who works on what, using the online programme. At the EGU General Assembly, anyway, you should never think in terms of what you are missing out on: the answer is inexorably TONS. I can tell just from browsing the EGU Today editions. So I decided to focus on my session; I appreciated very much the talks being short and self-contained. At the General Assembly, you get to meet people you know but don't get to see very often, people you know by name, new people. So I'm experiencing the usual adrenaline rush you get at conferences, as you (try and) tell about your (more or less solitary) work, as some elements start to make more sense because you're giving them context and motivations, in your explanation effort. Well, at some point you just can't wait to go back home, and try computing/writing what you've been brought to think about. In the meantime, I enjoy the socializing and networking; I haven't done anything cultural/touristy in Vienna, really, but I think I very much like this city – let me mention that I find it incredibly affordable. Hopefully this statement will not cause the Vienna 'stocks' to go up. But the conference assistants are doing a great job in their yellow T-shirts; you can always ask for some help in English. All in all, I am leaving EGU GA 2011 tired but energized. Don't you know what I mean? Come over next year!

Marianne Corvellec is a PhD student at the Ecole Normale Supérieure de Lyon

Welcome to the EGU General Assembly. It will seem massive, certainly I found that when I first attended 7 months into my PhD, quietly following my supervisor and group mates around, not really knowing what was going on, what was happening, and not sure what I should be doing. The second time around, I felt significantly more confident, and while still doing plenty of things with my group mates, I was also doing things for me and while some of this was because I knew more people, some of it was confidence, feeling I could go my own way at the conference. So, after mentioning this out loud, at EGU2011, an e-mail appears asking me to write some advice on being a first timer at EGU, so here it is, I hope this is useful in helping you get the most out of the conference, because there is nothing like the EGU conference with the exception of its American colleague, AGU. The lessons I learned at my first EGU made my first AGU that bit easier, so I would hope that what is written here could be used over there also! Good luck and enjoy.

Pre-Conference

Organise & print out your personal programme

This sounds really obvious, but at my first EGU I didn't do it. The personal programme gives you a chance to work out what sessions you want to be in and when they are. You can then look at it and work out whether you are dashing out of one session to another or are wanting to see all the talks in one session. I'd suggest you add everything you might want to see, you will then make your mind up once you arrive about what you really need to go to.

I would especially recommend that you look out for the Medal Lectures and any Union Master Classes that catch your eye, especially any that are in your field, these are hour long sessions, the medal lectures are given by the EGU Award winner and are a great chance to see one of the top of a field talk on their work over their career and what they find interesting right now. The Union Master Classes, which began last year are an interesting chance for people to put forward suggestions on a topic with some great open floor question and debate. Both session types, especially if relevant to you are a must see event!

Friends

It's always good to find out who of your friends is attending the conference. It's a great opportunity to meet up with them (especially if they are geographically far away from you), and also your friends colleagues are more people for you to meet and get to know and it adds to the experience.

At the Conference

Oral Sessions: So, armed with your plan, start working out what you actually will attend out of everything you added to the plan. It's important to remember that the week will be busy, there will be lots going on and you may not get as much sleep as you would like, especially if lots of your sessions start early. So don't expect to attend everything. Focus first on your key sessions, especially if you have a poster in that session, also there will be talks your supervisor will expect you to be in, so be in them! After that go to sessions you think look interesting or useful, and if they are not panning out as you hoped, don't feel you have to stay.

The hardest part for me when I was first at EGU, was people leaving sessions, it seemed so odd to have someone walk out, but it's important that you realise that it is not unexpected, there are parallel sessions you will want to attend and so moving around is important. If you are self-conscious about it, stay near the door, but don't worry about it, everyone is doing it. It's therefore good if you are going to be in the whole session, to sit away from the door, so that people going in and out can do so easily!

Take breaks, and not just in the slots where there are planned breaks. If a couple of talks in the middle of a session are not relevant, but those either side are, then step out, stretch your legs/get some air or check out the posters, you are not required to attend everything, and you'll be less effective if you sit through talks you don't need to rather than take a break.

Poster Sessions: I really enjoy the poster sessions, they are a rare opportunity to get the scientist to yourself at times and ask the questions you want to. Some people like to read posters then ask questions, or get the poster explained to them, find the way that works for you, but never feel compelled to ask a question, it's better to not ask a question than ask a daft one, in my opinion. Mainly though, remember that the poster presenter expects to be grilled so don't worry about asking questions if you want to.

Networking

A large part of EGU is meeting people, whether they're senior academics, someone you have always wanted to meet or just another PhD student. Use the opportunity to meet people and get talking to them. At the conference it's easiest at a poster session (especially if they have one), but get chatting to people. There is plenty of advice on networking out there, but from my experience, the best form of networking is to be yourself, be natural and not too pushy. With academics it's unlikely that you will be remembered on your first meeting with someone, but think of EGU as the first chance to meet them, after a few meetings they'll start to remember you. With PhD students it's a lot easier, and you'll drift into social groups through friends or group mates, again just be yourself and get to know people, it is amazing how often you bump into these people at future meetings, even if you are only in overlapping fields, they keep appearing and these 'conference friends' become people you get to know and do things with at conferences.

Organisations

Groups such as the YES Network (Young Earth Scientist) or APECS (Association of Polar Early Career Scientists) will have events or stalls organised during the conference. Make sure you find out if the relevant group for you and attend it if possible. It's a fantastic opportunity to meet your fellow PhD and Post-docs in your field and adds to the EGU Experience. These groups usually organise panel sessions with academics in the field followed by a social, in 2011, a joint YES/APECS event was streamed globally followed by a social meal in Vienna, it was great fun and a packed event.

Notes

A day at EGU can be long, frequently sessions will lead to posters to an evening event and then dinner before you get home. For that reason you don't want to be carrying around a lot of bulky kit, and so I'd suggest sticking to the old fashioned notepad and pen for taking notes. While a laptop taken note is less effort to organise post conference, it does require carrying it around all day, so only take it if you are prepared to carry it or have a nice light and small one.

Personally, I focus on the key points in talks when taking notes, but everyone has their own style and so long as you know the session and talk/poster number you will be able to work it out afterwards!

Food

Unless someone else is paying, I'd advise you to not buy food or drink in the Vienna Centre. While it is nice food, the value for money isn't great, the same can be said of the drinks in the Vienna Centre. So, especially for those at institutions which provide a 'daily allowance' I would suggest one of two plans. Either 1) Pop down to the supermarket which is near the Vienna Centre (Come out of the conference centre, turn right and walk past the entrance to the post hall, go down some steps and it is at the bottom) or 2) Jump back onto the U-Baum to Schwedensplatz or Stephansplatz where you can get food from a shop in town or a personal favourite of mine the Wurst stalls, serving hotdogs. Likewise, take a drink with you to ensure that you are not having to buy a drink on site, as again these can get quite costly. I can though, recommend getting a pocket full of the EGU sweets though, they can help keep you going through a session!

In Vienna

Getting Around: The U-Bahn is the way to travel. Your EGU name badge comes with a week ticket for travelling on it and the Vienna Centre is found right off one of the main lines. It runs for all but about 3 hours a day at regular frequency, so makes getting around Vienna that much easier! Make sure you have map with where the lines on it for convenience though!

Food, Drink & Socialising: Explore! Vienna is like any major city, there are some excellent places to eat & drink and those you wish someone had warned you about in advance. I can't offer any advice on this, other than trust your instincts. The advice for this element of EGU is that is one of the most important elements of the conference. If you are going to stick 9000 scientists in one city, you are going to bump into and meet lots of them. It's an amazing opportunity to meet people who might become useful contacts in the future so it is all about networking, and as such you are never really 'off' from working. The networking is not only with senior academics, but with fellow PhD students. PhD students are especially in the short term the most useful contacts and so make the most of the opportunity to chat and get to know them, especially those working close to your project.

Conclusions

Your first EGU will be a bewildering experience and if someone tells you otherwise they are probably lying! It is so easy to get swamped in all the sessions and posters and feel overwhelmed. I hope the advice will help you enjoy the experience. I'd finish by saying to remember that the conference is there for you and you are not required to do anything you don't want to. I will also guarantee that when you return from Vienna, very tired and feeling like you didn't learn a thing, to not panic, because you'll be reading a paper or thinking about an idea a few months later when suddenly that talk you saw at EGU or that poster you read, will come flooding back to your mind and then you will see the learning value of EGU.

Enjoy yourself, be yourself and if you see me, feel free to say hello!

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