

Wonderful experience at the MedGeo'17 Conference in Moscow

« The student perspective »

This year, I had the great opportunity to attend the 7th International Conference on Medical Geology held in Moscow, Russia, 28th August – 1st September 2017, where I won the Oral presentation award. During this time, I realised one golden rule: Science is felt and understood in the same way all over the world and it doesn't have any geographical or political borders.

What a great lesson learned!

Before embarking on my journey towards Moscow, I received the great news that I have been awarded a student travel grant from the part of International Medical Geological Association (IMGA) and I'm very grateful for being offered this award. The travel checklist was complete: good research results; documents ready; my Russian skills turned ON; and an extra bonus my first name which originates from Russia.



Fig.1. Holding the Oral presentation award

Pre-conference course

People interested in learning more about Medical Geology were able to attend pre-conference courses given by experts and leading practitioners in this field.

This workshop was very inspiring: my scientific horizons were expanded, and I realised that I can do many things with my research data.



Fig.2. Attendees of the Pre-conference course on Medical Geology

Four days of interesting talks and original posters

There was a diverse conference program, including topics from large research areas such as Geology, Chemistry, Microbiology, Toxicology, and Policymaking. This event gathered scientists, experts, and students from Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America and South America, who shared innovative ideas, experiences, and offered constructive feedback.

My presentation was scheduled for the 3rd day of the conference, so I had plenty of time to meet and talk to people, to attend different presentations and to see what other scientists are doing in my research area of human health risks assessment of contaminated land.

The day before my presentation, I was honoured to be asked if I could chair a session « Urban Medical Geology: Integrating Geologic and Anthropogenic Processes (UMG) », a challenge which I accepted with great pleasure. I really enjoyed this experience, and it made me determined to develop these skills for my professional career.

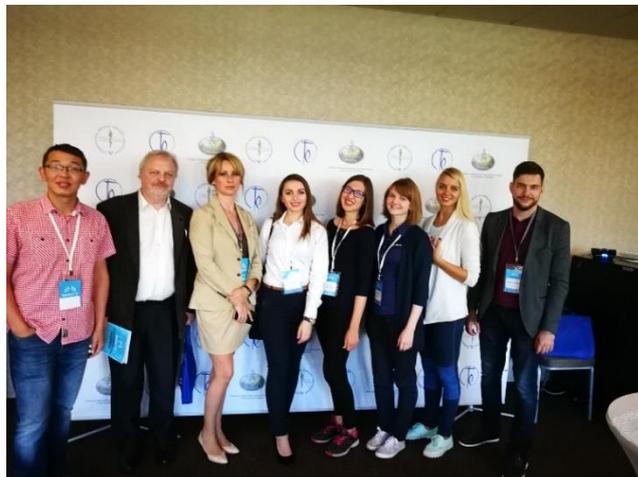


Fig.3. Researchers and PhD students from Russia



Fig.4. Chair of the session UMG



Fig.5. Presenting my research work at MedGeo'17

My presentation was also included in this session, and switching from chair of the session to presenter was easy. After my presentation, the audience asked some very good questions and the feedback was positive and constructive.

Social program and networking

The gala dinner was organised on a cruise on the river Moscow. Once we stepped on board the beautiful boat Chizhik-2, we enjoyed magnificent views of the Russian capital.

Inside the restaurant, there was a lovely atmosphere with good music in the background and delicious food. The emotional toasts made by the organisers of the conference and founders of IMGA turned this evening into a great one.



Fig.5. Gala Dinner



Fig.6. Enjoying the amazing views over the river Moscow with PhD students from Australia, Russia and the UK

Closing Ceremony and Awards

After a week of great talks, inspiring research and interesting posters, the closing ceremony summarised the achievements of the conference, acknowledged the attendance and work of every participant, and presented awards for the best presentations.

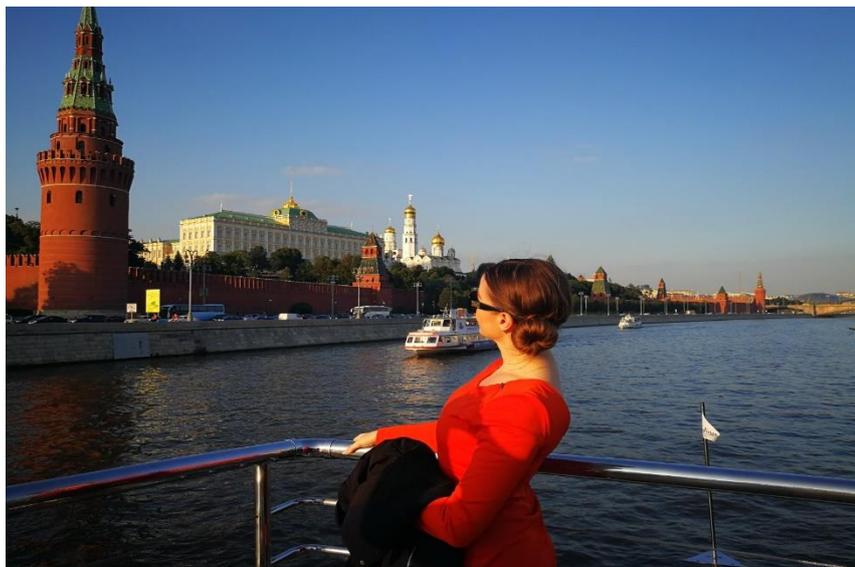
I was already very pleased by the good experience I had in Moscow, the nice people I met and new friends I had made, but hearing my research work classified as the «Best Oral Presentation Award» represented an unforgettable moment in my life.



Fig.7. Scientific committee of the MedGeo'17

I am honoured and grateful for the recognition I received for my work and I would like to express my gratitude to our research team for helping me reach this high level. Special thanks go to Dr. Mark Cave (British Geological Survey) for his assistance in setting up the Unified BARGE Method and to Dr. Rebekka McIlwaine for providing the urban geochemistry dataset for Belfast.

Overall, the MedGeo'17 Conference was a big success and I would like to thank to the organisers for their hard work invested to offer us, in turn, a memorable experience.



I look forward to attending the next MedGeo Conference, which will be held in Guiyang, China, August 12-15, 2019.