



Thursday 14 September 2017

Major grants to help Aussie and NZ Geoscientists further their work on the global stage

The Australian Geoscience Council (AGC) and Australian Academy of Science (AAS) have opened a new round of major grants to support early-career Australian and New Zealand Geoscientists to travel overseas to work with global scientific experts, and progress research, in a wide range of critical Geoscience subject areas.

Research supported by the grants is anticipated to bring significant benefits to the people of the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

Previous grant rounds in 2015 and 2016 supported recipients' travel to undertake:

- cutting edge research into what triggers volcanoes
- field-based research into the potentially-explosive hazards posed by the interaction of magma with water in volcanic fields in Arizona
- research on volcanic lava domes in Chile, to assist with risk assessment of future lava dome eruptions in New Zealand
- state-of-the-art earthquake experiments in a Paris laboratory
- research into novel approaches to the underground storage of carbon dioxide
- research using a drone to map and understand the link between brown coal and weed expansion on sand-dunes in New Zealand, in order to better understand past climate change

The grants have also supported:

- research into more accurate methods of timing major geological events
- the planning of an oceanographic survey of deep-sea volcanoes
- research into an improved understanding of New Zealand gold deposits
- work to determine the geological pathways by which Australian mineral deposits have formed
- participation in geological mapping work in Papua New Guinea

The grants are being offered by the AGC (Australia's peak body for more than 8000 Geoscientists) and AAS under the 34th International Geological Congress Travel Grant Scheme for Early-Career Australian and New Zealand Geoscientists.

Applications for the 2017 grants round are now open, and close on 31 October.

AGC President, Dr Bill Shaw, said: "Our annual travel grants are extremely popular and highly competitive, and have supported many talented young Australian and New Zealand Geoscientists to undertake very significant research, much of which benefits the people of Australia and New Zealand — and indeed the global community as a whole.

"Importantly, all of this research leads to long-term benefits for Australians and our regional neighbours.

"While the work undertaken on geo-hazard mitigation is clearly beneficial, understanding how to locate minerals and extract them efficiently — while monitoring the local environment — also helps support economic development for our region.

"The grants provide funding for early-career Geoscientists to undertake field work, meet and work with international experts in their field, access laboratories not available locally, inspect rock exposures in mines, study other significant geoscientific features, and participate in major international geoscientific conferences.

“Our Travel Grant Scheme is just one of a number of high-profile initiatives of the AGC, assisting young Geoscientists to benefit from research opportunities on the world stage...and equally, for the world stage to benefit from our highly skilled scientists.

“The AGC also supports the participation of high performing secondary school students in the **International Science Olympiads** — with [students from Australian high schools taking out Gold, Silver and Bronze medals](#) last month at the International Earth Science Olympiad in Côte d’Azur, France.

“This bodes well for the quality of Geoscientists that Australia and New Zealand will continue to produce in the decades to come, at a time when Geoscience will play an increasingly important role in how we live, and how we respond to global environmental challenges and resource security.”

For the 2017 travel grant applications, additional funds are available to early-career Geoscientists who propose to make a significant contribution to the [Australian Geoscience Council Convention](#) to be held in Adelaide in October 2018 (www.agcc.org.au). This will be the first time that all of Australia’s major Geoscience organisations will come together under the AGC umbrella to address Big Issues and Ideas in Geoscience.

Find more information on the current round of the 34th International Geological Congress Travel Grant Scheme for Early-Career Australian and New Zealand Geoscientists at www.agc.org.au.

Available for interview:

AGC President, Dr Bill Shaw, on 0438 010 851 (Perth)

(Previous travel grant recipients may also be available for interview on request)

Note to media:

AGC Expert Spokespeople are available to provide commentary on a range of Geoscience topics, including mineral resource security; climate change; water resources; geotourism; petroleum reserves and resources; dryland salinity; and seismic hazards. Their contact details are available at www.agc.org.au (see Expert Spokespeople).