

Postgraduate Conference Attendance Report – AGU Fall Meeting 2018, Washington DC

Shiuan-An Chen

School of Geographical Sciences, University of Bristol, UK; sc16970@bristol.ac.uk

I am a third-year PhD student of geography, and British Society for Geomorphology (BSG) awarded me £750 for attending the American Geophysical Union (AGU) Fall Meeting 2018 in Washington DC. This report outlines my experience of joining this conference and the values I gained from the BSG grant.

AGU Fall Meeting is the largest conference of earth and space sciences in the world. There are enormous presentations, workshops, field trips, and networking events during the meeting. This year is AGU's centennial, in which over 28,500 people converged. The purpose is to highlight the latest scientific discoveries, advance researches in different disciplines, and help attendee with their careers.

In this meeting, I presented a poster entitled 'Climatic Controls on River Longitudinal Profiles Globally' (abstract number: EP53F-1968). My research focuses on the relationship between climate and river longitudinal profile shape at the global scale. We produced a global dataset of river longitudinal profiles and use it to show that river concavity varies systematically with climate. We also use numerical modelling to demonstrate that the hydrological expression of climate is a primary control on landscape development. I am excited that I could present my results to a wider geomorphology audience at AGU, get feedback from them, and practice my presenting and communicating skills. To gain the most benefit, I also joined the 'Outstanding Student Presentation Award', in which I got valuable feedback from judges, giving me a direction for improving my presenting skills.

I attended various presentations on Earth and Planetary Surface Processes session. By joining this, I learned different research methods, popular research topics/areas and the latest findings. I also met researchers who discussed with my research and we may even cooperate in the future! In addition to academic presentations, there were workshops targeting student for helping us seeking our careers. I joined 'Student and Early Career Scientist Conference', 'Career planning and networking workshop for students', and 'Introduction to Careers in Academia'. The first conference focused on how to build the bridges between researchers and communities. I learned the skills of communicating with policymakers, connecting other disciplines, and using social media to promote our researches. The last two workshops helped me understanding the characteristics of academic jobs, and how to prepare the CV.

After the AGU meeting, I attended 'The 35th Gilbert Club meeting' at the University of Maryland. Gilbert Club is an informal meeting for geomorphologists to share their researches and meeting people. In this meeting, several experienced researchers shared their findings in the areas they have studied for a long time. The main contents include land surface processes of the river delta, vegetation, and hillslope. Although these talks were not directly linked with my study, it is worthy to know what are other geomorphologists studying and learn details of processes in different parts of landform.

This was my first time attending the AGU meeting. I learned a lot from joining presentations, sharing my research findings, meeting new friends, and attending workshops. As a self-funded and a final year PhD student, I appreciate BSG was willing to give me invaluable support for achieving my aspirations.

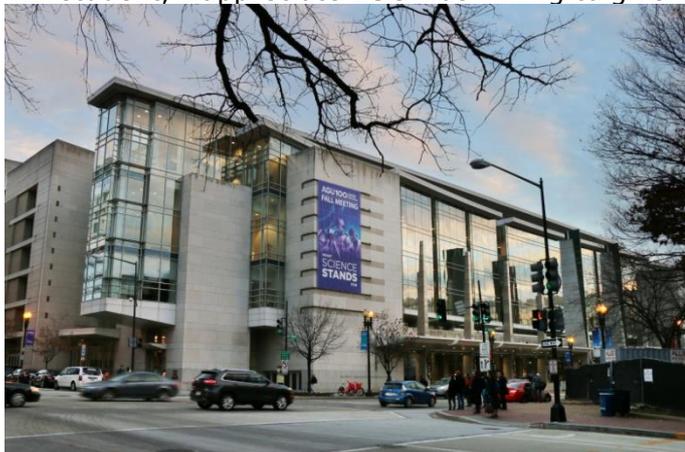


Figure 1 AGU Fall Meeting 2018 was held in Walter E. Washington Convention Center, Washington DC.

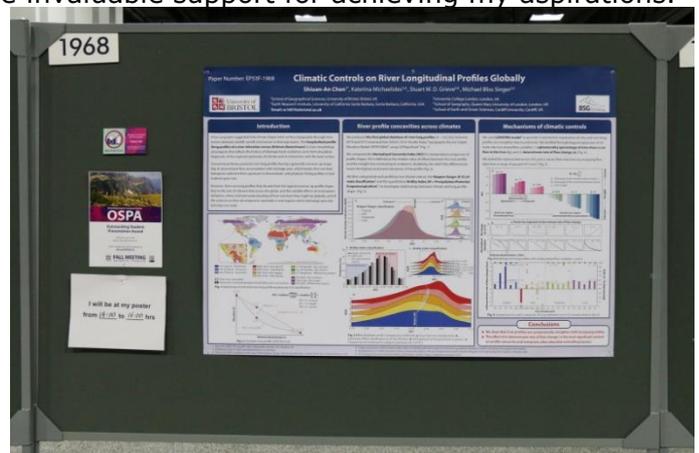


Figure 2 My poster at the conference.