

#### Funding to attend a conference

I am a 4th year PhD student at Brunel University London, working on 'Evolution of the Sefidrud delta (South West Caspian Sea) during the last millennia'. The research I am completing has involved carrying out three field-based coring campaigns and a broad range of laboratory analyses. Although my research was fully funded (3 years), but the expenses of performing field campaigns and laboratory analyses and the expenses for attending conferences need to be provided from other sources. I applied for the Gill Harwood fund in the year 2014 and won £ 300 to attend the 19<sup>th</sup> International Sedimentology Congress (ISC) (18<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> August 2014, Geneva, Switzerland). The ISC is the most valuable international congress in the field of sedimentology. It takes place every four years in a different city around the world. ISC2018 will be held in 2018 in Québec, Canada. Therefore, it was crucial for me to attend this congress. This fund together with another two funds from other sources gave me the opportunity to attend the congress. Attending the ISC was a professionally rewarding experience. My aim was to present the results of my research, conducted during the three years of my PhD study. Attending this congress was one of the great learning and development opportunities to extend my ideas for future research. It was also an opportunity to learn new techniques which would be useful my future career. Receiving feedback from experts was one of the most import benefits of attending in this congress, which I then considered them for my dissertation and my manuscripts before they are published. In terms of networking, it was an opportunity to meet potential collaborators, external examiners for my viva voce examination and also other post-graduate researchers at the same stage as me. It was a good chance for me to explore more opportunities for external funding. Talking to the other researchers gave me confidence about how to make my pitch about my research. The excitement and admiration of others upon hearing of my pitch made me even more interested about my research than before. I learned a lot from talking about my work by receiving ideas and suggestions. It was also a chance to meet "famous" people like Professor Reading and Professor Tucker whom I had always dream to meet. During the congress I attended a mid-congress Geology field trip on 'the Cretaceous and Paleogene carbonates from the Platé Massif, northern Subalpine Chains, Haute-Savoie, France' under leadership of Professor Kindler (University of Geneva). The succession was very well exposed and very diverse. This field trip was a great opportunity not only to learn from the experts, but also a chance to build a connection with other researchers and masters. Finally, attending this congress had many more benefits for me than I could have expected.

Finally, here is a detailed account on how the Gill Harwood fund was used:

£ 260 for conference registration fee

£ 70 for Schengen visa fee

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<http://www.brunel.ac.uk/ife/staff-profiles/research-students/safiyeh-haghani>