

ASG Travel Grant Report – 2023 European Conference on Plasma Spectrochemistry (EWCPS)

The European Winter Conference on Plasma Spectrochemistry is an annual conference in which leading scientists from across Europe meet to discuss the ongoing work in fields relating to metallomics, speciation, isotope characterisation and other applications of ICP. This year the conference took place in Ljubljana, the capital city of Slovenia, where it was hosted by Slovenia's National Institute of Chemistry and chaired by Vid Simon Šelih Martin Šala. The conference attracted a wide range of research disciplines within analytical sciences, ranging from seasoned experts to emerging researchers such as myself.

The conference was abundant with research on the less abundant trace elements, and allowed an in-depth exploration of the forefront of chemical sciences. Applications ranged from chicken bone to glacier analysis, exhibiting how developments in instrumentation, both commercialised and home-grown have allowed the transformation of what is possible for analysis on modern spectrochemical & MS based techniques. The conference also attracted a wealth of sponsors, which guided the space between talks with news of new instrumentation and techniques that help to make complex analysis accessible to the wider scientific community.

Whilst the conference offered a familiarity, new and diverse contributions from wider disciplines made the scientific discussion all the more lively. Multimodal analysis became a pertinent topic for discussion as exhibitions of multimodal MSI showed how a multifaceted and multi-disciplinary approach to analytical science can help our community grow and change more rapidly, keeping analytical science at the forefront of research.

I feel extremely privileged to have met such a warm community of similarly minded scientists, and grateful to the RSC for the opportunity to attend a well renowned conference in a richly cultured city like Ljubljana.

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Report for the RSC Travel Bursary to attend EWCPs 2023

I would like to thank the Royal Society of Chemistry Atomic Spectroscopy Group for the travel bursary to attend the European Winter Conference on Plasma Spectrochemistry (EWCPs), which was organized by the National Institute of Chemistry, Slovenia, and took place in Ljubljana between the 29th January and 3rd February 2023. With the support from this bursary, I was able to present my work as an oral contribution with the title “Characterisation of gas cell reactions for 73 elements with nitrous oxide for tandem mass spectrometry measurements”.

The conference began with 6 short courses covering a wide variety of aspects of ICP-MS theory and use. The opening ceremony then followed, with two musical performances from Slovenian artists, and a lecture on the use of multi-collector ICP-MS by Sir Norman Alexander Halliday. Over the course of the week, there were numerous lectures and poster presentations given in various fields, such as fundamentals, isotope ratio analysis, nanomaterials, speciation, and imaging. Additionally, there was an exhibition containing 25 different companies that furthered the transfer of knowledge. Attendees could inquire about new products as well as learn more about the equipment they use directly from the manufacturers.

Attendance at the EWCPs has been very valuable for expanding my network, getting input to ongoing projects, and paving the way for new collaborations. I also had the pleasure to join and contribute positively to a very interesting panel discussion on the future of ICP-MS research, as well as attending a focus group on promoting scientific research. The EWCPs has been an incredible experience, both in terms of learning and networking, and I am very grateful to the Royal Society of Chemistry Atomic Spectroscopy Group for supporting my academic journey.

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