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16th International Clay Conference ‘Clays from the Oceans to Space’, Granada, Spain
16th – 21st July 2017.

Thanks to a generous bursary provided by the Clay Mineral Group (Mineralogical Society of Great Britain and Ireland), I was recently able to attend and present some of my work at the 16th International Clay Conference held in Granada, Spain.

This major conference, attended by more than 650 clay scientists, was held at the modern and spacious Parque de las Ciencias in the historic city of Granada, southern Spain.



The conference venue

The conference featured 6 main themes (mineralogy, geology and geochemistry, environment and soils, interaction between clays and organic molecules/organisms, ceramics and zeolites, nanomaterials and clay technology) with 40 specialised sessions spread across 4 days of oral and poster presentations. The beautifully produced but weighty 900-A4 page book of abstracts certainly proved a handful in the mid-40 degree temperatures ! A pre-conference workshop (Computational modelling in clay mineralogy) and a series of mid-conference fieldtrips (Bentonites from Cabo de Gata, the Guadix Basin and the Western Sierra Nevada) completed the hectic scientific schedule.

I helped convene and chair a popular session entitled ‘Clays in faults and fractures’ on the second afternoon of the conference. I introduced our keynote and 18th George Brown lecture ‘Fault dating of authigenic clays – History and status’ by Peter Vrolijk (and Dave Pevear) which was very well received and stimulated a lengthy discussion. Oral presentations by students Catalina Sánchez-Roa and Annette Süssenberger were very professionally delivered. My poster presentation entitled ‘Clay mineral dating of the Sronlairig Fault, Scottish Highlands’ provoked some great feedback and discussion which will undoubtedly improve the draft manuscript for future submission to *Clay Minerals*.

No trip to Granada would be complete without a visit to the World Heritage site of the Alhambra and the conference laid-on superb guided-tours of the 'red fortress' including the Nasrid Palaces on the Tuesday evening.



*Presenting Peter Vrolijk
(left) with his
certificate for
delivering the 18th
George Brown lecture*

I am therefore very grateful to the Clay Minerals Group for awarding me a bursary to participate in an unforgettable 16th ICC.