

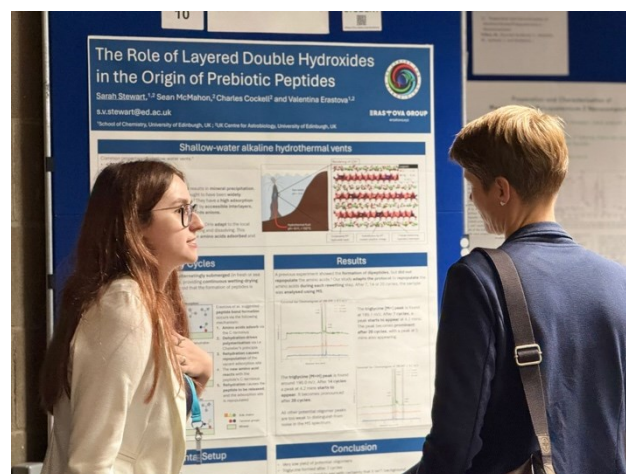
## 18th International Clay Conference

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Thanks to the generous support of the Clay Minerals Group through the CMG Ordinary Bursary, I was able to attend the 18th International Clay Conference in Dublin (13th–18th July 2025). As a second-year PhD student at the University of Edinburgh, this was a valuable opportunity to present and receive feedback on my interdisciplinary research exploring the role of layered minerals in the origin and preservation of biosignatures. I am sincerely grateful to the CMG for supporting early-career researchers in this way.

Throughout the week, I had the chance to share my research in both oral and poster sessions, which sparked insightful conversations with attendees from a range of backgrounds. These discussions offered constructive feedback, fresh perspectives, and suggestions for complementary approaches—some of which may develop into future collaborations. Engaging with experts in both experimental and computational clay science was especially valuable and has already begun to inform the next stages of my project.



Anke Neumann (right) and me, talking at my poster

Beyond presenting my work, I also served as co-convenor and co-chair of the session “*Sorption and intercalation in layered materials: from origins of life to material science*”. This role allowed me to contribute directly to shaping the scientific programme, while also developing my skills in academic leadership, session coordination, and scientific communication. It was a rewarding experience that broadened my perspective on the field and helped strengthen my connections within the clay science community.