

Dear Colleagues,

January 2024

I am very happy to serve as the inaugural Director of International Programs of the Geological Society of America. I am honored to follow in the footsteps of the people who led GSA international activities and look forward to building on that work.

GSA's international vision is to advance global geoscience and support the scientists at all levels who make it possible. We will do this through enhanced GSA international presence, improved engagement of and service to GSA's international members and U.S. members with international interests, and more and better collaborations among individuals and organizations globally.

We are forging and growing relationships with current and new international associated societies and supporting the careers of students and geoscientists at all stages of their careers. GSA's international efforts aim to bolster the geosciences community in all its expressions by all practitioners.

In this newsletter we showcase some of our recent activities and solicit your participation in GSA's international activities, be they based in the U.S. or elsewhere in the world. Please write to me at [esztein@geosociety.org](mailto:esztein@geosociety.org) with your comments and ideas. I look forward to hearing from you!

Ester Sztein  
Director of International Programs  
Geological Society of America



Ester Sztein, Director of GSA International Programs

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## A Message from the Executive Director

Dear Members and Colleagues,

I am thrilled to connect with our expanding community through this issue of the GSA International Newsletter. Since stepping into the role of Executive Director and CEO at the Geological Society of America, I have been continually inspired by the passion and commitment to international collaboration demonstrated by our staff, leadership, and associated societies. It is through these valuable partnerships that we are able to deepen our understanding of Earth sciences and cultivate a more inclusive and diverse scientific community.

I warmly invite each of you to actively engage in our international programs and initiatives. Your participation and insights are indispensable to our collective mission of advancing geosciences across the globe.

Please join me in anticipating an exciting year ahead, one that promises groundbreaking research, fruitful collaborations, and the forging of new friendships.

Warm regards,  
Melanie Brandt  
Executive Director and CEO  
Geological Society of America



Melanie Brandt, Executive Director and CEO of GSA

## Looking Back on 2023

### New Partnerships

The Geological Society of America has signed Memoranda of Understanding with four societies including The Geological Society of Korea, The Geological Society of India, The Geological Society of Serbia, and most recently at Connects 2023, The Geological Society of Nigeria!

During GSAI's reception at Connects 2023, we had more than 100 attendees present to celebrate these new partnerships, as well as celebrate our 2023 awardees. This event served as a wonderful reminder of just how close this community is. We are so grateful to all who were able to attend, and we are looking forward to seeing everyone again in Anaheim, CA for Connects 2024! As we look to the future, we are excited about the opportunities that lie ahead and remain dedicated to fostering the growth and advancement of geosciences and geoscientists around the world.



From left to right: Uba Saidu Malami, President of the Geological Society of Nigeria; Chuck Bailey, President of the Geological Society of America; Melanie Brandt, Executive Director and CEO of the Geological Society of America. Photo Credit: Jennifer Stalcup.

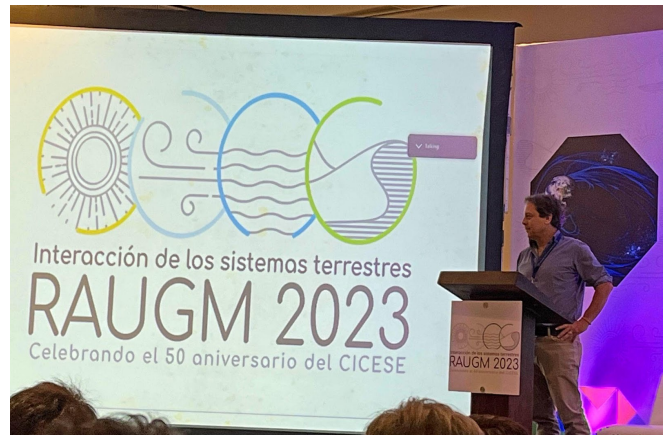
## Fostering Relationships

In the past year, The Geological Society of America has been actively participating in events around the world in an effort to continue to foster relationships and collaborate with our international associated societies. A few examples:

- In August, GSA President-Elect Carmala Garzione and Ester Sztejn traveled to South Korea to attend the International Geological Congress-I meeting in Busan, where Dr. Garzione signed the Memorandum of Understanding with the Geological Society of Korea.
- In October, GSA President Chuck Bailey traveled to Puerto Vallarta, in Jalisco, Mexico to attend the annual meeting of the Unión Geofísica Mexicana. The 5-day meeting was attended by approximately 1,000 people. Dr. Bailey gave two talks - a presentation in a bilingual session with speakers and study areas from both Mexico and the United States, and a plenary session keynote address. He relates that “At that session, I finished early and opened the floor to discuss how geological societies can work better together. It was a solid discussion and the Mexican graduate students were engaged and happy to share their opinions.”
- On 6 September 2023, GSA hosted a webinar featuring Dr. Mark Little, immediate past president of GSA, Dr. Harsh Kumar Gupta, president of the Geological Society of India (GSol), and Dr. Abhijit Mukherjee, a professor of geology and geophysics at the Indian Institute of Technology in Kharagpur and a GSA Council member. This conversation spanned major issues facing the geoscience community and ways that GSA and GSol can work together, and can be found on the [GSA International website](https://rock.geosociety.org/net/gsatoday/archive/33/12/pdf/i1052-5173-33-12.pdf).



GSA President-Elect Carmala Garzione (left) and Geological Society of Korea President Daekyo Cheong. Photo Courtesy of the Geological Society of Korea.



GSA President Chuck Bailey presenting at RAUGM 2023. Photo Courtesy of Chuck Bailey.



The December 2023 Issue of *GSA Today* (pictured to the left) featured a summary of this in-depth discussion. The topics discussed included the issues facing the geoscience community and ways GSA and the Geological Society of India can work together for the advancement of the field.

<https://rock.geosociety.org/net/gsatoday/archive/33/12/pdf/i1052-5173-33-12.pdf>

## 2023 Awardees

Please join us in congratulating the 2023 GSA International Award winners!

### Christopher I. and Irene N. Chalokwu Travel Grants

- 2023- Mehdi Ousbih (Ibn Zohr University, Morocco)
- 2022- Margaret Adeniran (University of Ibadan, Nigeria), presented in 2023

### GSA Student Travel Grants

- Andrea Apuzzo (Università degli Studi “Roma Tre”, Italy)
- Fatiha Askkour (Ibn Zohr University, Morocco)

### GSA Professional Travel Grants

- Danish Khan (Institute of Geochemistry, Chinese Academy of Sciences)
- Md. Jakir Hossain (Bangladesh Water Development Board, Bangladesh)
- Diab Hamida (University Badji Mokhtar Annaba, Algeria)

### Farouk El-Baz Student Research Grants in Desert Studies award

- Yonesha (Yannie) Donaldson (University of Georgia, United States)
- Lea Davidson (University of Georgia, United States)



From left to right: Mary Hubbard, Cecilia McHugh, Md. Jakir Hossain, Andrea Apuzzo, Margaret Adeniran, Fatiha Askkour. Photo Credit: Jennifer Stalcup.



Top left: Fatiha Askkour; bottom left: Danish Khan; middle right: Andrea Apuzzo; bottom right: Md. Jakir Hossain. Recipients of GSA Travel Grants recognized at GSA Connects 2023 in Pittsburgh, PA. Awards presented by Ester Szein. Photo Credit: Jennifer Stalcup.



### GSA Distinguished Career Award (DCA)

GSAI selected **Cecilia McHugh** as the recipient of the 2023 Distinguished Career Award (DCA). Cecilia McHugh is a Distinguished Professor at the School of Earth and Environmental Science, Queens College, City University of New York.

Cecilia was nominated by Beth A. Christiansen (Rowan University, NJ, USA), who wrote eloquently about Dr. McHugh's credentials:



Director of GSA International Ester Sztejn and Cecilia McHugh at the GSA International reception at GSA Connects 2023 in Pittsburgh, PA. Photo Credit: Jennifer Stalcup.

“Cecilia McHugh is the definition of this award. She has made important scientific contributions in a variety of fields, in many countries, working with many local scientists. She pioneered application of marine geologic methods to study earthquake frequency and magnitude. And she seeks out collaborative relationships with local scientists. As Distinguished Professor at Queens College, City University of New York (NJ, USA), one of the most diverse universities in the U.S., she provides an outstanding role model for students in the classroom and the lab.

McHugh and collaborators forged the field of submarine earthquake geology, developing methods to study paleoearthquakes and tsunami in the submarine environment first with field work and research in Turkey to develop techniques to determine earthquake history. This was followed by rapid-response missions to map submarine faults and earthquake-related sediment plumes in Haiti (2010; 2021) and Japan (2011).

She spearheaded international paleoseismology workshops focused on the Marmara Sea, Turkey, and the Japan Trench. In Bangladesh, McHugh and PhD student Mondal documented evidence for the 1762 earthquake and tsunami associated with the 500-km rupture of the Arakan segment of the Sunda Subduction Zone. While conducting field work in Bangladesh, they experienced the March 2017 earthquake and documented evidence of extensive liquefaction and fracturing of buildings 50 km away from the epicenter. McHugh routinely involves scientists and students from the areas she is studying.

Her commitment to the international community is further exemplified by her participation in IODP, including several panels and expeditions that foster international collegiality and collaboration. She embodies the tenets of this award as a leader in her field with an outstanding, international reputation.”

**GSA James B. Thompson, Jr. Distinguished International Lecturer**

**Mary S. Hubbard** (Professor of Geology, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT) was selected as the outbound lecturer for 2023-2024. Mary’s research specializations are in Structural Geology and Tectonics with focus on the Himalayan region. She conducts collaborative research on cross faults in the Himalaya. These faults have not been extensively studied yet have a possible relationship with seismicity and an influence landslide location in N-S valleys.



Mary Hubbard during the GSA International reception at GSA Connects 2023 in Pittsburgh, PA. Photo Credit: Jennifer Stalcup.

Prosun Bhattacharya (GSAI member) stated, “Hubbard’s research interests lie in understanding the processes of deformation of our Earth’s crust and the formation of orogenic belts. Her topic of lecture will be of great interest from the perspectives of the identification of mineral resources and natural hazards.”

Professor Hubbard started her James B. Thompson international lecture tour this fall. She gave several talks in Bangladesh and Nepal. She wrote a [blog post](#) sharing her experiences from the first leg of her trip. She is also working on a spring trip that will start in Japan, followed by Indonesia and finish in India.



Top Left: Bangladesh Open University administrative team with Mary Hubbard. Bottom Left: Mary Hubbard presents at Dhaka University. Right: Students and faculty with Mary Hubbard at Dhaka University. Photo Credit: Md. Jakir Hossain.

## 2024 Awards

GSA International Awards: Applications **due 1 March 2024!**

### **Distinguished Career Award**

Given to a geologist who has made numerous, distinguished, and significant contributions that have clearly advanced the international geological sciences through service and scientific activities. The nominee must be a GSA Member.

### **J.B. Thompson, Jr. International Distinguished Lecturers**

Thompson International Lecture Tours are made possible through a gift to the GSA Foundation by James B. Thompson Jr., whose bequest contributed to the endowment of two lecture tours by distinguished geologists. One is for a non-North American scientist to tour academic and related institutions within North America, and the other for a North American scientist to tour foreign universities and geological institutions.

### **GSA Honorary Fellow Award**

The GSA Honorary Fellow Award is presented to an international geoscientist who has distinguished themselves in geoscience investigations, promoting environmental awareness, linking science and society, providing notable service to implementing public policy in natural-resource management, or otherwise making outstanding contributions to science.

## 2024 Travel Grants

GSA International travel grant applications are **due 8 March 2024!**

### **Christopher I. and Irene N. Chalokwu Travel Grants**

The purpose of this fund is to support undergraduate or graduate student travel for students in Africa, working on any aspect of African Geology, to attend and present their research at GSA's annual meeting.

### **GSA International Travel Grants**

Funding to travel to GSA Connects is available to people living outside of North America (The United States, Canada, and Mexico). Applicants do not need to be members of GSA or GSA International to apply (although it is preferred). Successful applicants must present their research at GSA Connects to be eligible to receive the grant.

Please visit [this link](#) for more information on all these awards.

**For 2024, and every four years:**

### **37th International Geological Congress (IGC) Students and Early Career Scientists Travel Grant and Mentoring Program 25-31 August 2024 in Busan, Republic of Korea**

The Geological Society of America, the Geological Society of America Foundation, and the U.S. National Committee for Geological Sciences announce a travel grant and mentoring program for graduate students and early career scientists (within 7 years of receiving their PhD). To be eligible, applicants must be residents or citizens of the U.S. and be enrolled in, or employed at, a U.S. institution.

Congress abstract deadline: 16 February 2024. Grant application deadline: 10 April 2024.

To apply to the travel grant program please visit: <https://rock.geosociety.org/eo/igc>

### GSA International Committee Meeting at Connects 2023

On October 15, 2023, the GSA International Committee held a business meeting during the GSA Connects conferences in Pittsburgh, PA. The meeting, the first chaired by Dr. W. Berry Lyons, was well attended. Most members participated in-person, and others joined via Zoom. The restructuring of the committee with four subcommittees was approved during this meeting. The subcommittees are:

- Grants and Recognition
- Programming
- Partnerships and Collaborations
- Communications and Outreach

The committee also approved the creation of the GSAI Past Chair position, which will be held by Nazrul Khandaker.

### Multilingual Captioning on Session Recordings

GSA Connects On-Demand recordings are now available! To get started:

- Sign in. Access the recordings by navigating to the GSA Connects 2023 [online meeting program](#) and signing in with the username and password for your GSA account.
- To view recordings, open the “Programs” link in the left-hand navigation of the [online meeting program](#). Make a selection from any oral Technical Session, Special Lecture, or Noontime Lecture. From there, open the session you are interested in to view the recording.

### GSA International Booth

The GSA International Booth at Connects 2023 provided information to hundreds of attendees on all of our upcoming programs, travel grants, and opportunities for collaboration. In addition to providing useful information, it often served as a point of connection among good friends in our GSA International community.



From left to right: Nazrul Khandaker, Professor at York College/CUNY and GSAI Past Chair; Macie Schiller, GSA Administrative Coordinator; Ester Szein, Director of GSA International; Melisa Diaz, Assistant Professor at Ohio State University.

## Funding Available in 2024

### Funding Opportunities:

- Japan Society for the Promotion of Science: <https://www.jsps.go.jp/english/>
- Fulbright Programs
  - [Fulbright Scholars Program](#), managed by the Institute of International Education (IIE) and the Fulbright Scholar Advisory Board (CIES)
    - Subprogram for administrators is [here](#)
  - [Fulbright Student Program](#), also administered by IIE
  - [Fulbright Specialist Program](#), a program for professionals seeking shorter projects
- U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
  - Science for Development Fellowships: New two-year fellowships <https://usaid-sdf.usmax.com/Default.asp>



### *Obtaining Visas*

GSA is aware of backlogs and delays throughout the process to obtain nonimmigrant visas when traveling internationally. As such, we are closely monitoring recent legislation that would address these issues in the United States. This bill (The Visa Processing Improvement Act) seeks to address a backlog in nonimmigrant visas, which would include those for scientists traveling internationally to attend conferences. The bill, if passed into law, would expand the eligibility for in-person interview waivers and establish a pilot program for remote video conference interviews as an alternative to in-person interviews.

- **Status:** The bill was introduced on July 27, 2023 and referred to the Senate Committee on the Judiciary. Before becoming a law, the bill needs to be passed in both the United States Senate, and then in the House of Representatives.
- **Related Bills:** The following is a list of other legislation that has been introduced that could affect the visa process
  - “H-1B and L-1 Visa Reform Act of 2023”
  - “Eliminating Backlogs Act of 2023”
  - “Securing the Visa Waiver Program Act of 2023”

### *Obtaining Research Grants*

GSA is also tracking legislation that would limit the availability of NSF grants. The bill, entitled The American Science First Act, seeks to prioritize American research by blocking NSF grants to entities that might work to advance technologies used by the Chinese military. Proponents of the bill argue that the act is crucial for protecting intellectual property and maintaining the United States’ competitive edge in science and technology, while opponents raise concerns over the impact this would have on international collaboration and the broader impact it may have on research and development.

- **Status:** The bill was introduced in the House of Representatives on January 20, 2023 and was referred to the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. Before becoming a law, this bill would need to be passed in both the United States Senate and the House of Representatives.



Photo of the U.S. Capitol Building, Washington, D.C.

## Upcoming International Events

### EUROPEAN GEOPHYSICAL UNION GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2024

**14-19 APRIL 2024!**

EGU 2024 will be held in Vienna, Austria. GSA will be located at booth X205, and throughout the week we will be sharing information on our upcoming events and programs. Keep an eye out on social media and stop by the booth to participate in a mineral raffle!

### INTERNATIONAL GEOLOGICAL CONGRESS 2024

**25-31 AUGUST 2024!**

The 37th International Geological Congress will be held in Busan, Republic of Korea in 2024. Abstract submissions close on 16 February 2024 and Early Bird Registration will close on 26 April 2024.

### GSA CONNECTS 2024

**22-25 SEPTEMBER 2024**

[GSA Connects 2024](#) will be held in Anaheim, CA, and will bring together the geological community to share ideas, best practices, and state of the art knowledge. Share your scientific findings with colleagues, network with leaders in the field, and keep your skills relevant in a rapidly changing world. The official themes for 2024 are “Water in Our Changing World” and “Life Along an Active Margin.” The deadline for session proposal submission is **February 5, 2024**.

### AMERICAN GEOPHYSICAL UNION FALL MEETING 2024

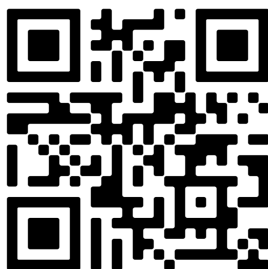
**9-13 DECEMBER 2024!**

AGU 2024 will be held in Washington, D.C. For more information, visit [AGU's Meetings Page](#).

## GSA's Updated Community Page

Do you have information or questions about geoscience relevant to the international community? Do you know of opportunities that might be of interest to geoscientists around the world? Join the [GSA International Members Community page](#)! This is a space for sharing and discussing the many facets of geology on the international stage, and we would love to hear from you! To join:

- Go to [community.geosociety.org](https://community.geosociety.org)
- Sign in using your GSA membership credentials.
- Use the search bar at the top of the screen to search for “International Member Community” or select “All Communities” from the “Communities” dropdown menu and look for “International Member Community”.
- Click “Join”!



*This newsletter was written by Josh Martin, GSA Science Policy Fellow, with contributions from Ester Szein, GSA Director of International Programs.*

### **Leadership**

Chair, GSAI: W. Berry Lyons, *The Ohio State University*

Secretary, GSAI: Monica Jasper, *New Zealand Department of Conservation (New Zealand)*

Chair, IIG: Federico Solano, *USGS*

Past Chair, GSAI: Nazrul Khandaker, *York College/CUNY*

### **Membership**

Abhijit Mukherjee, *IIT Kharagpur (India)*

CM China (Yu Zhongbo), *Hohai University (China)*

Ibrahim Cemen, *University of Alabama*

Isheka S. Orr, *Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis*

Maeve A. Boland, *iCRAG (Ireland)*

Mark Gabriel Little, *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and GSA Immediate Past President*

Mihai N. Ducea, *University of Arizona*

Natalia Bykova, *Trofimuk Institute of Petroleum Geology and Geophysics (Russia)*

Onema Christopher Adojoh, *Northwest Missouri State University*

Prosun Bhattacharya, *KTH Royal Institute of Technology (Sweden)*

Sharon M. Locke, *Southern Illinois University*

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