



Association of Applied Geochemists

www.appliedgeochemists.org

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT, DENNIS ARNE



I would like to begin by acknowledging the great honour bestowed upon me in being asked to serve as President of the Association of Applied Geochemists (AAG) for 2020–2021. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the AAG, and it brings to mind the many applied geochemists who started our association in 1970 and the team of dedicated volunteers who have maintained the AAG since then and who continue to support it. I would also

like to take this opportunity to thank Stephen Cook for shepherding the AAG through the last two years, beginning with our very successful contribution to the Resources for Future Generations (RFG2018) conference held in Vancouver (Canada), to his help in planning for the 29th International Applied Geochemistry Symposium (IAGS) to be held in Viña del Mar (Chile) in November 2021, which will be co-sponsored with the Geological Society of Chile (SGCH). Steve was ably supported by the AAG councillors and our business manager, Al Arseneault, and by the late Peter Winterburn, who led the local organizing committee for RFG2018.

As past president, Steve will now head the Awards and Medals Committee. I would also like to thank Ryan Noble for heading this committee for the last two years. David Murphy continues to head the Education Committee, Paul Morris is responsible for New Membership, Nigel Radford leads Admissions, and David Cohen oversees Symposia. Gwendy Hall continues to serve us well as Treasurer and will face many new headwinds this year. David Smith is our unfailing guide to proper procedures as Secretary. Please feel free to contact any of these people if you would like to help or have questions regarding their areas of responsibility.

Steve will also be stepping into the role of Business Manager for *Explore* magazine, replacing Pim van Geffen who has ably fulfilled the role for the past number of years. I would like to personally thank Pim for his good work and take the opportunity to thank Beth McClenaghan for her continuing efforts in editing *Explore*. *Explore* provides an excellent venue for short technical articles, reports from regional councillors, news regarding upcoming conferences, and listings of recent publications relevant to our profession. Beth is supported behind the scenes by a team of peer reviewers and contributors. Please consider contacting Beth about making a short contribution or offering your assistance.

John Carranza has agreed to take over my role as vice-president and will also be responsible for regional councillors. Regional councillors play an important role in representing and advocating for the AAG in many parts of the globe. We are in the process of changing our council meeting times to accommodate councillors based in Europe and Africa, and hope that this change will elevate their presence within the AAG. John will then assume the role of President for 2022–2023.

It is also a pleasure to welcome (and in several instances, welcome back) five new councillors for 2020–2021: Maurizio Barbieri, David Murphy, Yulia Uvarova, Thomas Bissig, and Beth McClenaghan. Councillors provide the active support the AAG needs to carry out its activities and to promote the profession of applied geochemistry. Councillors must be Fellows of the AAG, but this is not an onerous requirement. In addition to being sponsored by three existing Fellows (you need only approach one; they will help find the other two), candidates must: (1) possess a Bachelor's or equivalent degree in pure or applied science

from an educational institution recognized by the council; (2) have completed a period of training and professional experience of at least six years in pure or applied science which shall include at least two years in applying, developing, researching, or teaching methods of applied geochemistry—up to three years of post-Bachelor's training at a university can be applied toward the six-year requirement; (3) be actively practicing applied geochemistry at the time of their application; and (4) satisfy the council that they are a fit and proper person to become a Fellow.

I encourage all members of the AAG to consider becoming Fellows if they meet the above requirements and to become more involved in the running of the AAG. I would further call upon existing Fellows to consider standing for council later this year. Like all organizations, new ideas are needed at council to ensure our continuing relevance.

As for the future, our membership numbers have stabilized, but we need to do more to promote and engage with the next generation of geochemists. With that in mind, council has endorsed several initiatives. One development underway is a new series of practical problems in applied geochemistry to be available to members on our website. A prototype should be available for viewing shortly, and a call for contributors will be forthcoming. We're also looking into mechanisms by which completing the problems can be rolled into a micro-credential in applied geochemistry, perhaps with the support of university partners. Another proposed initiative would be through our journal, *Geochemistry: Exploration, Environment, Analysis (GEEA)*. This would involve a thematic issue to review the state of the science in applied geochemistry, including recent advances in instrumentation, geochemical digestion techniques and data interpretation. We continue to either provide or contribute to short courses in applied geochemistry, not only at our own IAGS conferences but also in conjunction with partner organizations. Taken together, these initiatives will keep the AAG at the forefront of applied geochemistry and provide a professional development pathway for geoscientists seeking further qualifications.

Other initiatives through *GEEA* include a recent call for papers to contribute towards a thematic volume entitled "Big Data Advances in Exploration and Environment Geochemistry". The deadline for contributions is 30 April 2020. A thematic set of papers based on presentations at the Exploration '17 conference (held in Toronto, Canada) will be edited by Hugh De Souza and should be available as this letter is published. Another thematic volume, "Uranium Fluid Pathways: Advances in Unconformity-Related Uranium Exploration Driven by Discoveries in the Patterson Lake Corridor, Athabasca Basin, Canada" is also currently underway. Guest editors include Eric Potter, Victoria Tschirhart and Jeremy Powell. In addition, plans are underway for a thematic volume in 2021 entitled "Carbon Sequestration in Mining", edited by Rob Bowell. I would like to thank Scott Wood for his work as Editor-in-Chief, as well as his editorial team.

As mentioned, the AAG will be celebrating its 50th anniversary at the 29th IAGS in Viña del Mar. We had planned to hold the symposium this coming November. However, just as this message was heading to press, the AAG Executive and the Local Organising Committee chaired by Brian Townley unanimously agreed to postpone the 29th IAGS until the latter half of 2021 due to the uncertainty created by the coronavirus pandemic. The submission of abstracts and registrations will be put on hold until we have confirmed a new timing for the conference in consultation with the conference sponsors. New dates and a revised schedule will be announced shortly.