



[www.eag.eu.com](http://www.eag.eu.com)

## European Association for Geochemistry

### EUROPEAN JOB OPPORTUNITIES

One of the major challenges to young scientists is finding an academic job. Despite the founding of the European Union, this challenge is made surprisingly more difficult by the different regulations, requirements, and job titles in each European country. In an attempt to clarify the job-hiring process, we will periodically publish on job opportunities in Europe.

### OBTAINING AN ACADEMIC POST IN FRANCE

The academic job system in France is so complex that even many of its natives find it confusing. Most have no idea how the government goes about hiring the educators for the halls of higher learning. Academics in France are employed by its universities, by the national 'normal' schools (École Normale Supérieure, ENS) and by the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS).

#### University Faculty

University faculty are either temporary or permanent. Temporary faculty can be hired towards the end of their thesis year for a maximum duration of two years. These posts, termed *Attachés Temporaires d'Enseignement et de Recherche* (ATER), provide employment during a brief period between finishing a thesis and finding a permanent job. Other individuals who are either working on their thesis or who are already employed outside the university sector can also teach at the university; these *Chargés de Cours* (CC) teach courses on an as-needed basis for many years if they and the university desire. These posts are roughly equivalent to assistant or temporary lecturers in the British system.

Full-time permanent university faculty have two job titles: *Maître de Conférences* (MCF) and

*Professeur*. An MCF post is roughly equivalent to a position as Associate or Assistant Professor in the United States or Lecturer in the United Kingdom. A *Professeur* is equivalent to a Full-Professor in other countries. The starting salaries of MCF and Professors are approximately 1700 and 2500 Euros per month after social charges, but before taxes. The tenure process in France is different from other countries. The first year as a permanent academic in France is an 'internship' year. After one's first year as either MCF or Professor, the university grants the equivalent of tenure if the local committee and/or department have no qualms about the choice. If an MCF is promoted to Professor at some point (more about that process below), the Professor does not need to go through this tenure process again. One additional distinction of the French system is that promotion from MCF to Professor is not direct. To be promoted an MCF must apply for an available Professor post and compete against other candidates as though he or she were applying for the first time.

The application process differs markedly from those of many other countries. The national committee, *Le Comité National Universitaire* (CNU), is divided into over 70 sections, each representing a major field of academic study. The sections for

the geosciences are sections 35 (Structure and Evolution of the Earth and Planets) and 36 (Solid Earth: Geodynamics of Terrestrial Reservoirs). Before one is allowed to apply for any of these academic posts, the interested candidate must be 'qualified' by this committee. The candidate must register towards mid-October via the Internet to announce his/her intention to request qualification to the CNU section. The candidate is then required to submit a dossier composed of several parts by early January to two reviewers selected by the CNU. Qualification applications and instructions are available on the web at [http://www.education.gouv.fr/per\\_sonnel/default.htm](http://www.education.gouv.fr/per_sonnel/default.htm). In order to register for qualification the candidate must create an account on 'Antares'. A list of candidates who have successfully qualified is announced at the end of January or in early February.

In general, to be qualified to apply for MCF posts, one needs a completed PhD, publication of one to three papers, and some teaching experience. To be qualified to apply for Professor posts, one generally needs at least ten published papers, teaching experience, and to have completed an *habilitation*, if available, in the country of his or her origin. An *habilitation* is different from a thesis in that it delineates an established field and program of research demonstrating not only the ability to do research and publish in one's field but also the capacity to direct doctoral and post-doctoral students. Those with foreign PhDs are not obligated to furnish proof of an *habilitation*, but it is considered good form to have the *habilitation* when applying for a Professor post.

The list of available posts is published on the Internet during February and March on the same website as the Antares module. As the qualification dossier deadline will have been the previous fall or winter, candidates will have needed to anticipate their interest in any post and submit a qualification dossier before the posts are published! Only after one is qualified can one apply for any job available in the country and in the desired section. This application is sent directly to the university offering the post. The university reviews the applications and then selects a number of

candidates to interview, usually between three and five. Each candidate is interviewed for 15 to 20 minutes and all are interviewed on the same day by the same recruitment committee. The recruitment committee classes their top candidates. Candidates are expected to attend the interviews, called *auditions*, on very short notice and at their own expense. Commonly, candidates are notified less than a week in advance of their *audition*. A given candidate can travel from one end of France to the other within a matter of days in order to participate in the *auditions*. Any candidate not present for his or her interview is immediately removed from the pool of candidates.

After the local hiring committees have announced their choices, each candidate must again connect to the Internet and acknowledge their preference for a job. Candidates are given final notice of hiring in early June.

#### CNRS Posts

CNRS posts are somewhat less complicated to obtain than MCF and Professor posts. There are two levels of CNRS posts: *Chargé de Recherche* (Research Scientist) and *Directeur de Recherche* (Research Director). These posts are roughly equivalent to junior and senior faculty posts and have starting salaries similar to those of the MCF and Professor posts in France. As is the case of university posts, CNRS posts are divided into sections among scientific disciplines. The bulk of Earth scientists are employed in section 18 (The Structure, History, and Modeling of the Earth and Planets) and section 20 (Earth Surface and Interfaces). Applications are made directly to the CNRS by e-mail. A website explaining the recruitment procedure is available at: [www.sg.cnrs.fr/drhchercheurs/concours/default-fr.htm](http://www.sg.cnrs.fr/drhchercheurs/concours/default-fr.htm)

Applications are due in early January and must include a curriculum vitae and a detailed research project. The research project is usually written in collaboration with the laboratory where the candidate plans to work once recruited by the CNRS. This typically requires the candidate to be in close contact with this laboratory several months prior to the application

deadline. It is extremely rare that the CNRS recruits candidates that are not supported by one of its laboratories.

Over the past several years, sections 18 and 20 recruited on average six to eight new scientists per year, from a pool of approximately 100 applicants for each section; the level of competition is high. Recruitments are generally made at one of three levels: *Chargé de Recherche* level 2, *Chargé de Recherche* level 1 and, more rarely, *Directeur de Recherche*. The *Chargé de Recherche* level 2 post is a lower-level position than the *Chargé de Recherche* level 1 post.

Until recently, the level 2 posts were restricted to scientists who had not yet reached the age of 32. As is the case of MCF and Professor posts, recruitment is based on a 15-minute interview, and candidates are expected to attend the interviews at their own expense. As in the case of MCF and Professor posts, CNRS posts become permanent after a short trial period, and promotion from *Chargé de Recherche* to *Directeur de Recherche* requires an application process similar to that of the original recruitment.

S. Callahan and E. H. Oelkers  
Toulouse, France

### POST-MEETING REPORT: 3<sup>rd</sup> WORKSHOP ON HIGHLY SIDEROPHILE ELEMENTS, DURHAM, UK

The 3<sup>rd</sup> International Workshop on Highly Siderophile Elements was hosted in the Department of Earth Sciences, Durham, UK, on July 4–7, and was organized by Ambre Lugué, Graham Pearson and David Selby. The format of the workshop was broadened from the previous two incarnations and included HSE behaviour during low-temperature processes. The 45 delegates were treated to summaries of the most recent developments in HSE geochemistry, in systems ranging from experiments on siderophile element behaviour, atmospheric PGE fluxes, mantle peridotites, magmatic ore bodies and basalts through to foraminifera and the dating of oil formation. The workshop provided a forum for interaction among experimental petrologists, mineralogists, trace element and isotope geochemists and economic geologists and highlighted the powerful insights highly siderophile elements have to offer in wide-ranging areas, such as atmospheric chemistry, climate change and the evolution of planetary bodies. True to the spirit of the workshop atmosphere, the lively, broad-ranging and extensive discussions spilled over into drinks in the Undercroft bar and dinner in the Senate Room of Durham's Norman castle, now a student college. The workshop was generously sponsored by Thermo Electron, New Wave Research, Anton Paar and IUGS-SECE. The proceedings will be published in a special issue of *Chemical Geology*, the official journal of EAG, and will appear next year.



Delegates having pre-dinner drinks at the Durham Castle



**THE EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION  
FOR GEOCHEMISTRY INVITES YOU ALL TO**

# GOLDSCHMIDT 2007

**“Atoms to Planets”**

**The 2007 Goldschmidt Conference will be held in Cologne, Germany, on August 19–24, 2007. The Goldschmidt Conference is the premier annual meeting in geochemistry and mineralogy. In addition to its usual sponsors, the European Association for Geochemistry and the Geochemical Society, the Cologne meeting is co-sponsored by the German Mineralogical Society. This meeting will cover the full range of geochemistry, from cosmochemistry to mineralogy and the origin of life. Sessions are planned on the following themes:**

- Analytical Geochemistry
- Atmospheres and Oceans (including Climate Change)
- Biogeochemistry and Geomicrobiology
- Computational Geochemistry
- Cosmochemistry
- Crystal Chemistry and Crystallography
- Environmental Geochemistry and Mineralogy
- Experimental Geochemistry and Mineralogy
- Fluid–Rock Interaction
- Geochemistry and Mineralogy of Surfaces
- Igneous Petrology
- Isotope Geochemistry and Geochronology
- Metamorphic Petrology
- Mineral Deposits and Economic Geology
- Mineralogy
- Organic Geochemistry
- Planetary Geochemistry
- Sedimentary Geochemistry

Cologne has just over one million inhabitants and is the fourth-largest city in Germany. Founded by the Romans, Cologne is the oldest of the major German cities and is still characterized by its 2000 years of history. The metropolis on the Rhine annually attracts many millions of visitors.

To get further information on the 2007 Goldschmidt Conference, please visit the website

**[www.the-conference.com/gold2007](http://www.the-conference.com/gold2007)**

