



International Association of Geoanalysts

<http://geoanalyst.org>

QUALITY ASSURANCE WORKSHOPS

A major initiative of the IAG over the past year has been the development of a workshop syllabus devoted to quality assurance in analytical geochemistry. The first such IAG-organized workshop was held in September 2007 in conjunction with the Cologne Goldschmidt Conference, the success of which inspired the IAG to offer such courses at further venues. In 2008 similar workshops were held in conjunction with the Vancouver Goldschmidt Conference (July 2008) and in advance of the German Mineralogical Society's annual meeting in Berlin (September). In view of the lively discussions at both venues, we conclude that these courses were also well received. The IAG is therefore planning to hold such workshops in 2009, in conjunction with the Goldschmidt Conference (June, in Davos, Switzerland) and also in advance of the Geoanalysis VII Conference (7–11 September 2009) in KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa. Other venues in Europe and North America are also under consideration for 2009. Due to the large amount of material involved in providing a basic understanding of quality assurance, the IAG is discussing an expansion of future workshops from the current one-day format to a two-day short course format. Lengthening the course duration would have the important benefit of allowing more time for participants to work on examples of real-world data sets.

Contents of the IAG's Quality Assurance Workshop

- Method Validation: How "good" is your analytical procedure?
- Measurement Uncertainty: How do you estimate uncertainty?
- Metrological Traceability: Principles and concepts.
- Reference Materials: What are they?
- Reference Materials: How are they used?
- Proficiency Testing: The key to quality assurance.



Participants during the lunch break at the IAG's QA workshop held at the Freie Universität in Berlin. This event was led by IAG members Thomas Meisel from Montanuniversität Leoben, Austria (third from right) and Conny Kriete from the Federal Institute of Geosciences and Natural Resources in Hannover, Germany (second from right).

GEOSTANDARDS & GEOANALYTICAL RESEARCH

GGR is the official journal of the International Association of Geoanalysts. It is now approaching two years since the IAG entered into a publishing agreement with Blackwell Publishing (now Wiley-Blackwell), a period which has brought great advances to the journal in terms of both content and distribution. Significantly, 2007 saw the journal's ISI impact factor climb to 3.00, ranking it in the top 10% of the "geoscience multidisciplinary" category. Further achievements over the past two years include a fully online manuscript submission and tracking service and the availability of color printing. In parallel with moving from a four-month to a quarterly publication cycle, the submission rate to the journal has climbed, and the time between submission and final publication has decreased.

Beginning in 2009 IAG members will receive online access to *GGR*, including all issues reaching back to volume 1 published in 1977. This decision was reached by the Association's governing council at its September 2008 meeting. Council hopes that everyone receiving this new benefit will find it a valuable addition to their membership package.

EARLY CAREER RESEARCHER AWARD

At this year's Vancouver Goldschmidt Conference, the IAG sponsored its third-annual Early Career Researcher Award. As at the previous two Goldschmidt Conferences, this prize was awarded for the abstract judged by an IAG panel of experts as best reflecting key goals of the IAG: the development or validation of new analytical methods, the identification and characterisation of new reference materials, and the development of improved approaches to sampling and data evaluation. As in past years the criteria for eligibility were: (1) the first author of the work must either be enrolled at an institute of higher education or have completed his/her most recent academic degree within the past five years, (2) the abstract must largely reflect the research efforts of the first author, and (3) the award winner had to

travel personally to Vancouver to present his/her paper. In 2008 a total of 517 abstracts were submitted to our judges for consideration, and the quality of the submissions was found to be remarkably high. With great pleasure, the IAG reports that the winner of the 2008 prize was Dr. Alon Amrani from the California Institute of Technology for his abstract entitled "Development of Coupled GC/ICPMS for Analysis of $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ in Individual Organic Compounds." We congratulate Alon on his research achievements and wish him all the best in his future career as a geoanalyst.



Dr. Alon Amrani (left) receiving the IAG's 2008 Early Career Researcher Award from Prof. Thomas Meisel, chairman of the IAG's Sample Certification Committee. The framed certificate was presented during the awards ceremony held during the Vancouver Goldschmidt Conference.