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DISTINGUISHED LECTURER DR. SARAH GLEESON: REFLECTIONS FROM EASTERN EUROPE



Prof. Sarah Gleeson lecturing in Bucharest.

Sarah A. Gleeson is a professor of sustainability geoscience at the UCD School of Earth Sciences in Ireland. For the 2024–2025 EAG Distinguished Lecture Program, she travelled to Hungary, Poland, and Romania to give a series of talks drawn from her research experience on mineral deposit genesis, base metal deposits in sedimentary basins, sedimentary geochemistry, diagenesis, and ore-forming processes. Read about her experiences and reflections in her report below.

I finished my undergraduate degree at Trinity College, Dublin in 1992. At that time in Ireland, the unemployment rate was 16% and there was very little money in the Irish system to support research. So, it was clear we would have to emigrate if we wanted to continue our studies or get a job in the geosciences—certainly a permanent academic position was an impossible dream. In the decades since then, many remain scattered around the globe. I have just returned to live in Ireland after more than three decades and it is a very different country from the one I left. It is certain that the European Union had a major impact on the research landscape and the infrastructure required to build our current economy.

I was privileged to be awarded the EAG Distinguished Lecturer award in 2024–2025 and I travelled to give lectures in Hungary, Poland, and Romania. In Hungary, I travelled to Veszprém for the 20th Winter School in Mineral Sciences and gave two talks. Thanks are due to Mihály Pósfai and Csaba Szabó and their teams for their hospitality and efficient shepherding to and from the venue. I then travelled to Krakow to visit the Institute of Geological Sciences at Jagiellonian University where my host was Kinga Jarosz. Finally, in Romania, I was hosted by Gabriela Iorga and Mihai Ducea of the University of Bucharest and gave a talk on copper deposits to members of the graduate school.

Overall, I was struck by similar themes in all three countries. All three countries have had some investment from the EU, and early career researchers that have access to EU grants and programs like the ITN have many more opportunities for training and travel than previously. On top of this, there has been some

investment in new scientific infrastructures. I visited the TEM facility in Veszprém, the microscopy suite in Jagiellonian University, and the University of Bucharest is building a major new radiogenic isotope facility. Of course, more investments are always needed!

The publication of the Critical Raw Materials Act by the EU in 2023 also opens the door for new opportunities for Eastern Europe. For example, many of the geological surveys in the EU are developing National Exploration Programs. This means there are renewed opportunities in mapping, geochronology, and the collection of new geochemical and geophysical datasets. There is also an uptick in mineral exploration activities in Eastern Europe, with a mixture of traditional mineral exploration projects as well as interest in activities such as “re-mining”



Audience members at the University of Bucharest, Romania.

waste materials from old mining operations. Such activities should be carried out in collaboration with the local universities and offer training opportunities for undergraduates and post-graduate students.

Finally, in all three countries, I met talented and passionate early career researchers who dream of permanent positions in their home countries, but like me at the same stage, must decide whether to leave academia or to travel internationally to find post-doc opportunities. Although this prospect is daunting, this is also an opportunity to build new skills and develop an extended global network, which will benefit all in the long term. It is clear there is a large pool of talented researchers looking for opportunities and I hope that, eventually, many of them will end up living and working in their home countries...perhaps without having to wait 30 years!

Sarah A. Gleeson, 2024–2025 EAG Distinguished Lecturer



At the 20th Winter School in Mineral Sciences in Veszprém, Hungary.

FUNDING FOR EARLY CAREER SCIENTISTS IN 2026

The EAG **Early Career Science Ambassador Program** provides funding for those in the final stages of their PhD or up to 6 years post-PhD to attend conferences held outside Europe or online. For in-person events, applicants must be based in Europe and the conference must be held outside Europe, and successful applicants will receive 50% of expenses, up to 1500€ maximum.

2026 application deadlines:

1 March, 1 June, 1 October

Find out more and apply at <https://www.eag.org/early-career/student-sponsorship/>.

The **Student Sponsorship Program** allows junior scientists from all countries to apply for funding to participate in geochemistry-related conferences, workshops, summer schools, short research stays, or training courses in Europe or held online. Successful applicants will receive awards of up to 1000€ to cover registration and abstract fees and travel expenses.

2026 application deadlines:

1 February, 1 May, 1 September, 1 December

Find out more and apply at <https://www.eag.org/early-career/student-sponsorship/>.

Are you planning to attend Goldschmidt 2026? The **Goldschmidt Grant Program** supports early career delegates based in low-income or lower-middle-income countries through waived abstract and registration fees, and travel grants.

2026 application deadline: 12 February

Visit the [Goldschmidt 2026 website](https://www.goldschmidt2026.org) at <https://www.goldschmidt2026.org> for more information.

EAG BLOGOSPHERE: 2025 ROUND UP!

2025 was a busy year on the EAG Blogosphere, with new contributions every month from across the community! Visit www.eagblog.org/ to read any you may have missed and bookmark your favourite series to follow the latest posts!



The EAG communications committee interviewed several scientists for their blog series “**Geochemists on the Move**” in which scientists who have moved internationally to pursue geochemistry share their experiences and advice.

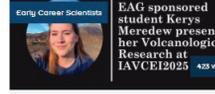
The **Goldschmidt 2025 Blogging Team** published 17 reports on different aspects of the conference, including early career events and interviews with the plenary speakers and selected scientists from conveners to first-time attendees.

The **DEI committee** of the EAG continued their “**Peoples Profiles**” series, featuring an interview with Mahyra Tedeschi, a Brazilian geologist working at the Geological Survey of Finland.

In the “**Go Big! Large-Scale Facilities for Geochemical Research**” series, new contributions from the Potsdam SIMS User Facility, and the European Synchrotron Radiation Facility were featured.

Several blog reports from **2025 EAG Sponsored Students and Early Career Science Ambassadors** describing their activities at a range of conferences, workshops, and co-sponsored research stays can also be found on the blog.



 <p>EAG sponsored student Laura Piccirillo visits the French Research Institute for Ocean Science (IFREMER)</p> <p>AUGUST 12, 2025 INVITED CONTRIBUTION</p> <p>EAG sponsored student Laura Piccirillo visits the French Research Institute for Ocean Science (IFREMER)</p> <p>EAG Sponsored Student Laura Piccirillo from the USA reports back on her research stay at IFREMER in France...</p> <p>Read more →</p>	 <p>EAG sponsored student Kerys Meredith presents her Volcanological Research at IAVCEI2025</p> <p>AUGUST 11, 2025 INVITED CONTRIBUTION</p> <p>EAG sponsored student Kerys Meredith presents her Volcanological Research at IAVCEI2025</p> <p>This summer, I had the privilege of attending the International Association of Volcanology and Chemistry of the Earth's Interior (IAVCEI) Scientific Assembly held in Geneva, thanks to the generous support of the EAG Student Sponsorship.</p> <p>Read more →</p>	 <p>Sponsored Student Cathrin Wittig joins the Fjords in a Changing Climate 2025 workshop</p> <p>AUGUST 8, 2025 INVITED CONTRIBUTION</p> <p>EAG sponsored student Cathrin Wittig joins the Fjords in a Changing Climate 2025 workshop</p> <p>EAG sponsored student Cathrin Wittig reports back from the Fjords workshop 2025 in Steiheim, Norway...</p> <p>Read more →</p>
 <p>Dr. Pim Kaskes at GSA Connects meeting in Anaheim, California</p> <p>JUNE 3, 2025 INVITED CONTRIBUTION</p> <p>EAG Early Career Science Ambassador Pim Kaskes travels to GSA Connects 2024</p> <p>In this Blog report EAG Early Career Science Ambassador Pim Kaskes, a postdoc at the Université libre de Bruxelles, shares his experiences from the GSA Connects 2024 meeting in Anaheim, California...</p> <p>Read more →</p>	 <p>EAG sponsored student Blair Harbour attends EGU2025</p> <p>MAY 12, 2025 INVITED CONTRIBUTION</p> <p>EAG sponsored student Blair Harbour attends EGU2025</p> <p>EAG sponsored student Blair Harbour currently studying for a Master's by Research at the University of St Andrews, reports back on her attendance at EGU2025 in Vienna, Austria.</p> <p>Read more →</p>	 <p>EAG sponsored student Alessandro De Leo joins the FIERCE Isotope Short Course 2025</p> <p>MAY 12, 2025 INVITED CONTRIBUTION</p> <p>EAG Sponsored Student Alessandro De Leo joins the FIERCE Isotope Short Course 2025</p> <p>EAG Sponsored Student Alessandro De Leo shares his experiences from the FIERCE Isotope Short Course 2025 at the University of Frankfurt am Main, Germany.</p> <p>Read more →</p>

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