

IUGS E-Bulletin #5 (December 2003)

Happy New Year IUGS Colleagues:

Welcome to the International Union of Geological Sciences' fifth E-Bulletin and the last for 2003. All the best for the upcoming year! Our thanks to the many individuals who have contributed information during the past year. In this issue we provide you with commentary by IUGS President Prof. Ed F.J. de Mulder regarding the benefits for affiliation with IUGS. These comments clearly show the mutually beneficial aspects and synergy derived by the joining of forces through one Union. The E-Bulletins are available on the Union's website (<http://www.iugs.org>). Please visit the website for the latest updates in IUGS activities.

IUGS Affiliation: An analysis of benefits

All international, non-governmental, scientific, autonomous organisations may apply for affiliation to the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS). The benefit for such affiliations with the Union is that this provides the Union a wider significance, prominent role and a more acknowledged position in the geoscientific world. Through its affiliated organisations the International Union of Geological Sciences indirectly represents the affiliate's membership in other arenas. At present the Union has 38 affiliated organisations with a cumulative membership of over 250,000 geoscientists, which is more than 20% of all professional geoscientists in the world.

Potential benefits for organisations affiliated to IUGS include:

1. Influence:

- a. Representation through IUGS in major international and supra-governmental bodies, such as the International Council for Science (ICSU), the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme (IGBP), and the Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment (SCOPE). ICSU is the umbrella organisation for all scientific Unions. Through ICSU and via IUGS affiliated organisations may voice their opinions on major scientific and societal issues to global bodies and supra-governmental organisations such as the United Nations. Through ICSU, IUGS is invited to directly and indirectly voice geo-related political statements. This was the case in the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Affiliated Organisations are invited to provide their views that may be communicated via the Union.
- b. Representation in IUGS Commissions and Committees, whose Terms of Reference often stipulate the explicit preferential position for individuals of affiliated bodies.

2. Participation in Projects:

- a. Access to international projects such as those in ICSU's annual Grant Programme, open only to ICSU Unions and ICSU member countries. In the past few years IUGS' affiliated organisations participated in or initiated such projects and several such projects

have been granted for example the Dark Nature Project, a multi-body project coordinated by the International Union for Quaternary (INQUA) and submitted through IUGS which received an 100,000 US dollar grant for 2004. Similarly a joint International Astronomical Union (IAU)-IUGS proposal on Near Earth Objects and their Impact on Human Society also received a 100,000 US dollar grant for 2004.

- b. Access to 50,000 US dollar annual IUGS Grant Programme that is open to members of the IUGS family, including its affiliated organisations.
- c. Affiliated organisations may participate in the big science programme and projects of the International Year of Planet Earth (www.esfs.org).
- d. Affiliated organisations receive first hand information regarding the UNESCO-IUGS joint programme International Geoscience Programme (IGCP). They are also invited to prepare project proposals for this programme.

3. Financial:

- a. Affiliated organisations are eligible to apply for financial support from IUGS for its activities, and some of them rely strongly on such support.
- b. Members of affiliated organisations are eligible to apply for travel grants to attend the IGC through the IUGS Hutchison Fund and through the GEOHOST programme.

4. Exposure:

- a. Affiliated organisations are invited to participate in the major Outreach Programme for the International Year of Planet Earth through which the organisations will attract significant exposure. They may also participate in the Year's Outreach Programme Committee. A brochure on YPE is now available (cf. www.esfs.org).
- b. Recent developments in affiliated organisations will be exposed annually through the IUGS Annual Reports.
- c. With preference affiliated organisations are invited to develop special symposia in the IGC.
- d. Affiliated organisations periodically get free publicity pages in EPISODES and may announce their events in the IUGS Calendar of Events.
- e. Hotlinks through the IUGS website are established with all affiliated organisations.
- f. As members of IUGS, being the largest Union represented in ICSU, affiliated organisations may strengthen their international profile and prestige.

5. Network and infrastructure

- a. Affiliated organisation may profit from the IUGS networks for tapping relevant expertise to support review or consultation activities in their countries.
- b. They may use services from the IUGS Permanent Secretariat and have access to the IUGS Directory.

- c. IUGS has an MOU in place with the Geological Society of London (GSL) for all of its non-serial publications. Affiliates have the opportunity to consider GSL for their publications.

Through affiliation with the Union, organisations become members of the worldwide IUGS family. In sum, affiliation to IUGS provides such organisations outreach beyond their own fields. It also gives their representatives good opportunities to be actively involved in international geoscientific decision-making and provides access to participate in major international science programmes. Through its affiliation the organisation's voice and that of the geoscientific community at large will be heard in major, geo-politically significant events.
