



IUGS James M. Harrison Award for distinguished service

Rationale for the award

IUGS, which is one of the largest international scientific unions, is run by many dedicated individuals who devote much of their time to its activities. Some of them have greatly contributed to the IUGS activities and hence to the global geosciences. The purpose of the IUGS Harrison Award is to acknowledge such persons. The award, established in 2004, celebrates Dr. James M. Harrison (1915-1990), an internationally respected Canadian geologist who was the first IUGS President from 1961 to 1964, as well as President of ICSU (International Council of Scientific Unions) from 1966 to 1968.

Awardee profile

Nominees should have made an outstanding contribution to the Union over many years. Active officers of the various IUGS bodies and initiatives, including -among others- the IUGS Executive Committee, Commissions, Task Groups and Initiatives are excluded.



Dr. Kristine Asch

Citation for Dr. Kristine Asch for the IUGS James M. Harrison Award

It is a pleasure to write in support of Frau Doktor Kristine Asch for the IUGS James M. Harrison Award.

Kristine Asch is an internationally acknowledged mapping geologist and an expert in the establishment of terminological vocabularies and definitions for Geoscience databases (providing the foundation for international communication). She applies her expertise of harmonisation and interoperability of data systems in geoscience and information systems know-how to international projects, throughout the World. Her great strength lies in her ability to lead and co-ordinate substantial groups of geoscientists – a skill that requires a broad knowledge of geology and diplomacy - as well as an infectious enthusiasm for the subject. This work includes building and convening international committees, such as her role as the Secretary General of the Commission for the Management and Application of Geoscience Information (CGI). She has similarly organised the Geoscience Information in Africa Network (GIRAF), a network of over 290 members. This also includes convening

and gathering international groups of scientists and organisations with disparate approaches for the functioning of multi-disciplinary projects, within Europe and beyond. Examples include, the co-ordination of the International Geological (bedrock) Map of Europe (IGME 5000) and the new edition of the CGMW/BGR/INQUA International Quaternary Map of Europe (IQUAME 2500), the CGI-OneGeology scientific 'International Geoscience Language' Workshop (IGLW), and the production of the Europe-wide EMODnet project for mapping the ocean-floor geology and geomorphology adjacent to the European continent.

In her role of head of the Geological Information Systems and Maps at BGR, since 1996 Kristine Asch has been working with the Commission of the Geological Map of the World (CGMW) on the production of both the International Geological Map of Europe and its counterpart, the International Quaternary Map of Europe, mentioned above. The experience she developed through managing this project provided her with a deep understanding of the state of geological mapping across the European national geological surveys and research institutes, and in the co-ordination of disparate groups of geoscientists for the



production of international projects. Both projects have required the development of a nation-by-nation understanding of the geology of the entire European continent and even beyond, achieved through the application of digital information systems and the creation and maintenance of a substantial international network of geoscientific contacts.

Finally her substantial contribution as Vice-President of IUGS from 2016-20 has reflected her unique abilities, experience and enthusiasm for the subject.

It is beyond question that Kristine Asch deserves the IUGS James M. Harrison Award for her effective and continuing contribution to the work of the IUGS and to her leadership of international co-operation and co-ordination within geoscience in general.

Philip Gibbard
Emeritus Professor
University of Cambridge

Dr. Kristine Asch's response to James Harrison Medal

President John Ludden, Secretary General Stan Finney, Treasurer Hiroshi Kitazato, dear friends, colleagues, fellow companions, ladies and gentlemen.

When I received the news that I had been awarded the James M. Harrison Outstanding Achievement Award I was absolutely surprised and equally overwhelmed! James Harrison was one of the parents of the IUGS and helped in the creation of the IUGS. It is a truly great honour and a delight to receive

this special acknowledgement of outstanding achievements from the IUGS, the organisation which fosters and encourages us geoscientists to cooperate globally and to work peacefully together on geoscientific issues and questions notwithstanding political boundaries.

Indeed, I am proud to be the first member of my home organisation, the Federal institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources, BGR, to receive the award. BGR enabled and supported my IUGS activities for many years.

These began in 2004 since when I have served the Union with dedication and enthusiasm to strengthen international cooperation, scientific communication, geoscience information, interoperability and harmonisation, and finally to enable a common understanding of the geosciences without political boundaries. It was a great joy to rebuild the IUGS Commission on the Management and Application of Geoscience Information together with the fantastic core team consisting of Ian Jackson, John Broome, Simon Cox, Max Fernandez, Anna Nguno, Dave Soller and Koji Wakita, to which later Francois Robida, Ollie Raymond, Zhang Minghua, Bruce Simmons, David Percy, Harvey Thorleifson, Robert Tomas and others joined.

This led to the establishment of international geoscience standards such as the GeoScience Markup Language (GeoScience ML) and geoscience vocabularies today used globally to describe geological map units. A similar great experience was to work together with many excellent African scientists to initiate and build the Geoscience in Africa Network (GIRAF). From 2016 to 2020 I was immensely honoured to be a part of the IUGS executive committee as



vicepresident and help running the IUGS. And in the last years it was and is a pleasure to work within the Nominating Committee.

As a recipient of the prestigious Harrison Award, I feel extremely privileged to be in the company of the previous awardees, several of whom have been – and still are – my advisors, friends and mentors over many years.

During my activities for the IUGS, which encompass numerous events, working meetings, presentations, workshops and conferences, I came to work together with outstanding and experienced scientists from all over the world – which I see as both an immense privilege and an inspiration. These were – and still are - exciting years.

So, I would like to take the opportunity to thank my colleagues, mentors, advisors, friends and companions of the whom I have known throughout the last 2 decades of IUGS-related work. They include the CGI core team members mentioned above and Peter Bobrowsky, Wolfgang Eder, Wolfgang Frisch, Wolfgang Franke, Jean-Paul Cadet, Qiuming Cheng, Jean Dercourt, Guiseppe di Capua, Tim Duffy, Ezzoura Errami, Stan Finney, Phil Gibbard, Werner Janoschek, Hiroshi Kitazato, John Laxton, the late Yuri Leonov, Özlem Adiyaman Lopez, Jean Mascle, Brian Marker, Jenny McKinley, Aberra Mogessie, Roland Oberhänsli, Gbenga Okunlola, Silvia Peppoloni, Lola Perreira, Manuel Pubellier, Steve Richards, Philippe Rossi, Alexander Rudloff, Ester Szein, Leni Scheck-Wenderoth, Felix Toteo, the wonderfully effective and helpful colleagues of the IUGS Secretariat and many more. I apologize in advance for any dear companion

and colleague I forgot to mention.

I am also grateful to the BGR for its great support, without which the work for the IUGS would not have been possible, and, in particular, Friedrich-Wilhelm Wellmer, Willi Struckmeier, Adolf Voges, and in the later years Hans-Joachim Kümpel, Ralph Watzel and Christian Bönemann.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my uncle, the late Hans-Christoph Höfle, a geologist who inspired me as a child with presents of rocks and adventurous stories about expeditions and motivated me to study geology; and to my late parents for their enthusiasm in travelling with us, my brother Holger and me, and showing us the beauty of nature. Finally I would like to express my thanks to my husband Rüdiger for his support, encouragement, discussions and sometimes (he would say quite often) enduring my activities for the IUGS and the geological community.

Finally, I offer my sincere thanks to Stan Finney who initiated my nomination, Phil Gibbard who compiled the documents, and to Ian Jackson, Hiroshi Kitazato, Francois Robida, and Harvey Thorleifson for their letters of support.