

The Geochemical News

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From the GS President,

As I sit here writing this message, I am realizing that we will all be reading this in print in Australia, gathered again for a Goldschmidt conference. At this Conference, the GS has teamed with the group from EarthChem, including Kerstin Lehnert, to foster a Town Hall meeting to discuss issues of data storage and sharing for geochemistry. In my last letter as President, I discussed issues related to how we can move geochemists toward greater collaborations: I believe that data sharing and storage are part of this issue. Did you know that many European countries and the US have data and sample sharing policies? For example, the US National Science Foundation Earth Sciences (EAR) Division states that, "Preservation of all data, samples, physical collections and other supporting materials needed for long-term earth science research and education is required of all EAR-supported researchers." I bet many US earth scientists, even those that are NSF-supported are not aware of that policy!

The policy further states that, "data should be made openly available as soon as possible, but no later than two years after the data were collected." Again, I bet that policy would be a surprise to many in the U.S. geochemistry community.

In my last note, I argued that the geochemical community will be well-served by organizing itself to articulate and pursue large questions across important areas of the earth sciences. Many other branches of the earth science have successfully promoted such organizational initiatives, and branches within geochemistry have accomplished such efforts. However, many areas in geochemistry, especially including areas within earth surface processes, have not successfully organized despite the need for collaboration in larger networks. I believe that a part of this process of collaborative organization will include finding appropriate ways to provide cyberinfrastructure that will promote global dissemination of geochemical data. This is one of the topics that will be discussed at the Town Hall meeting (Monday Aug 28, noon, Bellarine room 2, lunch provided).

I hope to see you there!

Susan L. Brantley, GS President

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Susan Brantley