

International Geographical Union ***Union Géographique Internationale***



2023 Annual Report of the International Geographical Union (IGU)

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1. Highlights of the IGU Executive Committee (EC) meetings of 2023

Year 2023 witnessed two business meeting of IGU Executive Committee. The first meeting was hosted by Vice-President Holly Barcus and took place in Stillwater, Minnesota, USA adopting a hybrid mode to enable virtual participation. The second executive committee meeting was also conducted in hybrid mode at the International Guest House, University of Delhi. Where necessary, EC members unable to travel to the in-person event availed themselves of remote participation through the Zoom application, thereby ensuring comprehensive engagement and collaboration across diverse geographical locations. These strategic gatherings played a crucial role in addressing pertinent matters of IGU governance.

The first IGU EC meeting convened on April 28th and 30th, 2023, at the Lowell Inn, Stillwater, Minnesota, USA. The meeting covered a wide range of topics, commencing with EC member reports and financial updates. The Treasurer provided a brief overview, and discussions included the Promotion & Solidarity Fund (P&S) and its potential use to support geography and geographers in less equipped countries. Proposals for future EC meetings were presented, addressing the pressing need for face-to-face discussions, especially considering the evolving role of geographers amid various global crises. Despite a previous decision to arrange only one in-person EC meeting annually, the committee accepted a proposal for an additional meeting in October 2023, hosted by the University of Delhi. Several operational matters were discussed, including the Commission Excellence Award for 2022, IGU Statutes, social media strategy, IGU publications, and the IGU Handbook. In recognition of its range of activities, publications, communication, and overall engagement, the IGU Commission on Geography and Gender is the recipient of the IGU Commission Excellence Award for 2022. The committee also reviewed a draft Memorandum of Agreement for Thematic Conferences. Updates on ongoing and upcoming conferences were provided, emphasizing the success of the Paris Congress in 2022 and the preparation for the Dublin Congress in 2024. Plans for thematic conferences in various locations, including India, Italy, Mexico City, Ecuador, and Egypt, were discussed, showcasing the global reach of the IGU. The committee discussed cooperation and outreach initiatives, including participation in the International Year of Basic Sciences for Sustainable Development, collaboration with the American Association of Geographers (AAG), and with EUGEO (Association of Geographical Societies in Europe) and involvement in events like the Conference of Latin American Geography (EGAL) and Geodiversity Day. The meeting concluded with discussions on various global initiatives, including the International Science Council (ISC) activities,

collaboration with the ISC on water sustainability, and participation in ISC Standing Committee for Gender Equality in Science supporting geographers worldwide, and fostering collaboration in the ever-evolving field of geography.



Photos: Field visit during IGU EC Stillwater, USA

The second IGU EC meeting took place at the International Guest House, University of Delhi on October 2nd and 4th, 2023. The meeting covered various aspects of the organization's activities and emphasizing the ongoing update of the IGU handbook. The financial report highlighted the operating account balance sheet and prompted discussion about reconsidering national membership fees. A subcommittee was established to explore this further. Additionally, updates on IGU Commissions, Task Forces, and the acceptance of Royal Scottish Geographical Society and Catalan Geographical Society as Corresponding Members were reported. The EC addressed the schedule for upcoming meetings, including the next meeting at Nanjing University, China, in April 2024. Election of new EC members, including the position of President, are to be held in 2024 and arrangements for the call for nomination were finalized. Various operational aspects, including social media presence, the IGU *Bulletin*, and the publication of research volumes were discussed, along with detailed reports on the Extraordinary International Geographical Congress in Paris 2022, several thematic conferences and future events in Dublin, Cairo, and Melbourne. Travel grant arrangements, conference proposals, and updates on various initiatives and collaborations were reviewed, emphasizing the IGU's global footprint. In terms of cooperation and outreach covered reports on international initiatives, such as the International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development (IDSSD), International Science Council (ISC) activities, and collaborations with organizations like CODATA and IUCN. The IGU's partnership with the Royal Geographical Society and Open University that is manifest in the ongoing "Voices from the Global South" was highlighted. Various events, such as the Festival International de Géographie (FIG) and *GeoNight*, showcasing IGU's ongoing engagement with diverse geographical communities. The need for strategic positioning and increased visibility in the international arena was emphasized. The meeting concluded with expressions of gratitude, acknowledging the hard work of the organizers and the opportunity to interact with India's geography community.



Photos: IGU EC meeting on 2nd and 4th October, 2023 at IGH, University of Delhi, Delhi.

2. Cooperation with other organizations

The IGU is highly active within both the International Science Council (ISC) and the International Council for Philosophy and Human Sciences (CIPSH). We enjoy a particularly strong relationship with sister unions within the International Science Council (ISC), as IGU President Meadows is chair of the GeoUnions for the period 2023-25, and we play a prominent role within the ISC Standing Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction. IGU also plays an important role in the United Nations Group of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) Geospatial Societies (Vice-President Rozenblat is currently the chairperson), in the ISC Standing Committee for Gender Equality in Science, and in the International Year of Basic Sciences for Sustainable Development (IYBSSD), ISC CODATA. First Vice-President Lemarchand attended the ISC-SCGES meeting in Paris on 13th – 14th February as representative of IGU, with Marianne Blidon from the steering committee of the IGU Commission on Gender and Geography. The mid-term ISC meeting in Paris (10th to 11th May 2023) was attended by both Meadows and Lemarchand. Vice-President Holly Barcus and Meadows met with the Executive Director and President of the American Association of Geographers at the annual AAG meeting in Denver, and discussed possible synergies between the two organizations. In response to a meeting with the CIPSH President, Past-President Himiyama shared a number of ongoing and prospective CIPSH initiatives. Assistant Secretary-General Kumar represented IGU in the Alliance of International Science

Organizations (ANSO) Silk Road Forum and the Second ATES (Association for Trans-Eurasia Exchange and Silk-Road Civilization Development) Open Science Conference during 23-25 August, 2023 at Lanzhou University, Lanzhou, China. Lemarchand and Lois-González both represented IGU in EUGEO conference from 4th to 7th September, 2023 in Barcelona, Spain. Meadows, Barcus and Kumar all represented IGU in the International Workshop on Geography and Sustainability 2023 (GEOSUS 2023) held from 26-29 October 2023 at Beijing Normal University, Beijing, China. CIPSH Executive Committee was held from 21st to 24th August 2023 in Tokyo. Former V-P Elena dell'Agnese, as IGU nominee was elected as member of the CIPSH Executive Committee. Himiyama was invited as a panelist at the Special Panel Session on BRIDGES programme, which is designed to enhance the participation of humanities in sustainability science and was also selected as

3. Communication

The IGU website (<https://igu-online.org/>) plays an important role in communication and outreach. Vice-President Rozenblat edits the IGU e-Newsletter, which is published and distributed four times a year (<https://igu-online.org/igu-e-newsletters/>) and this complements the IGU's list servers that have simplified email correspondence with IGU members (igu_members@unil.ch) and Commissions (igu_commissions@unil.ch). In addition, a general list is now open to anybody who wishes to be directly informed of IGU activities (igu_news@unil.ch). To subscribe to this distribution list, visit: https://igu-online.org/https-sympa-unil-ch-sympa-subscribe-igu_newsnewsletter-subscription/

IGU continues to maintain its presence on
Facebook(<https://www.facebook.com/IGUOnline>),
Instagram(https://www.instagram.com/igu_online/),
Twitter (now 'X') (https://twitter.com/IGU_Online) and
LinkedIn (<https://www.linkedin.com/company/international-geographical-union/>).

The part-time appointment of Jorge Salgado at the University of Lausanne has led to a significant improvement in the IGU social media profile across all the relevant platforms.

4. Outreach

The IGU EC remains committed to increase its outreach activities and its members participated in a diverse range of international and national conferences and seminars during 2023, including the ISC mid-term meeting in Paris, the ISC Global Knowledge Dialogue held in Kuala Lumpur; SCGES's meeting, GeoUnions Steering Committee meetings; IYBSSD, UN-GGIM, UNGEGN, CODATA meeting, AAG meeting, USA; ATES Open Science conference, China; GEOSUS 2023, China, Geospatial Sciences Committee (GGSC), USA; RGS annual meeting, UK; EGAL Conference, Santo Domingo; EUGEO Barcelona; ANPEGE Congress, Tocantins, Brazil; FLACSO, Quito, Ecuador; FIG and GeoNight 2023 events; AIGF, Rabat, Morocco and African Studies Commissions, Mozambique. At the AAG annual meeting EC members helped to promote IGC 2024 in Dublin. The Dublin LOC and IGU jointly established a booth at the exhibition in AAG meet to promote the Congress and co-hosted a cocktail party to market the event. Several EC members play important roles in establishing strong links between IGU and CIPSH and between CIPSH and UNESCO.



Photos: IGU EC members participation in AAG meeting in Denver, USA. Left: Former IGU President Ron Abler is seated in the centre, accompanied by IGU President Meadows (standing, right), IGU Vice-President Rozenblat and IGU Vice-President and Treasurer Barcus (seated left and right respectively). Right: Rozenblat and former IGU Vice-President dell'Agnese (right) at the IGU booth.

5. Forthcoming Events

5.1 IGU Congress:

- 35th International Geographical Congress (IGC), 24-30 August, 2024, Dublin, Ireland <http://igc2024dublin.org/>
- 36th International Geographical Congress (IGC), 09-14 July, 2028 Melbourne, Australia

5.2 IGU Regional Conference

- The Regional Conference will be held in Istanbul, Turkey between 17 - 21 August 2026. Announcements about the conference will be made after the Dublin IGC.

5.3 IGU Thematic Conferences:-

- **2024:** IGU Thematic Conference is being organized by Latin American Institute of Social Sciences (FLACSO) on “*Connecting Geographies from the Global South*” May 15-17, 2024, Quito, Ecuador. <https://www.flacso.edu.ec/ugiglobalsouth2024/>
- **2025:** Work continues on organizing a Thematic Conference in Cairo for April 2025, hosted by the Egyptian Geographical Society.

5.4 Other IGU Conferences:-

- IGU Commission on Gender and Geography - Pre-meeting Dublin 2024 in collaboration with the School of Geography, University College Dublin “*Feminist and Queer Spatialities: Care, Connection and Change*”, August 21-22, 2024 - University College Dublin, Ireland. <https://igugender.wixsite.com/igugender/feministandqueerspatialitiesconference2024>
- The IGU Tourism Commission - Pre-meeting Galway 2024 The IGU Tourism Commission Pre-Meeting extends a Céad míle fáilte (a very warm welcome) to all geographers working on tourism-related issues. August 22 - 24, 2024 - Galway,

Ireland.

<https://igugender.wixsite.com/igugender/feministandqueerspatialitiesconference2024>

- IGU Commission Geography of Governance - Annual Conference - 2024 Reimagining local governance: just, sustainable and diverse 23 - 24 August, 2024 - Maynooth, Ireland. <https://sites.google.com/view/geogov2024/home>
- 8th International Conference on 'Urban e-Planning' - 2024 Conference endorsed by IGU Commission: Geography of Governance 25 - 26 March 2024 - Virtual / Online, from University of Lisbon, Portugal Convenor: Carlos Nunes Silva, Institute of Geography and Spatial Planning, University of Lisbon, Portugal <https://sites.google.com/view/uep2024conference/home>
- New Zealand Geographical Society Conference 'Fluid Geographies' We invite participants to explore the generative potential of fluid geographies whether engaged as a physical phenomenon, a material metaphor, an analytical tool and / or a political strategy. 20 - 24 November, 2024 - Tauranga Moana, Aotearoa New Zealand <http://www.nzgsconference2024.co.nz/>

6. Financials

IGU Financial summary for 2023

The majority of IGU financials are held at Macalester College, USA with a small balance maintained by President Michael Meadows in the Cape Town accounts. The South Africa accounts remain operational and a proportion of IGU business is still transacted in these accounts. The balance on the South Africa accounts has been substantially reduced as revenue is now directed to the Macalester IGU accounts. The two accounts are presented separately, with an operating balance for 2023 indicating a net income of just over US\$25,000.00. This small surplus, however, reflects increased revenue from a one-time repayment of loans to support the Paris Congress and slightly higher rate of dues payments for countries that paid outstanding balances from previous years. Expenditures for 2023 appear to have returned to pre-COVID levels. Looking forward, annual expenses are likely to exceed revenue if current levels of revenue, derived primarily from national committee dues, are maintained at current levels. Although the IGU currently retains a healthy positive balance and is considered financially sound, increased levels of revenue will be needed to adequately sustain basic operational activities, including adequate support of the Commissions, Congresses, and Thematic and Regional Conferences.

IGU ACCOUNTS	Macalester*	South Africa
OPENING BALANCE	\$246,612.19	69,375.16
EXPENSES	USD	SA RAND
Commission & TF Stipends / Thematic Conf	\$59,500.00	0.00
Dues to Other Orgs	\$7,409.91	0.00
EC Expenses	\$31,800.24	78,172.84
Bank & Wire Fees	\$1,321.00	4,700.06
Social Media / Printing / Internet	\$4,671.23	43,692.84
Publications (Century of Geog)	\$0.00	0.00
Travel Grants	\$0.00	0.00
Other Outreach	\$1,193.35	0.00
Transfer to Solidarity Fund	\$6,900.00	0.00
Transfer to South Africa Accounts	\$10,000.00	0.00
EXPENSES	\$122,795.73	126,565.74
REVENUE	\$147,545.55	184,040.03
CLOSING BALANCE (FY23)	\$271,362.01	126,849.45
Net Revenue / Expenditure	\$24,749.82	57,474.29
Solidarity Fund Closing Value (12/31/23)	\$109,439.16	

Macalester Opening Balance has a \$65.48 accounting adjustment for FY22
