Application for a  
College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Enrichment Grant

Kenneth L. Taylor  
Professor, History of Science

Summary of the proposed activity

I plan to participate in the 30th Symposium of the International Commission on the History of Geological Sciences (INHIGEO) to be held in Prague, Czech Republic, in July 2005. I will present a paper within the program of the Symposium (provisional title: “Baron Marivetz and Planet Earth: A Late Enlightenment Geophysical Project”). In addition, as newly-elected Vice President of INHIGEO for North America – one of the Commission’s five vice presidents – I will take part in the business meetings of the INHIGEO Board.

Support requested

$1,000  
(Toward the anticipated total cost of $4,250. See details below)

Relevance to ongoing research

History of geology is my primary research area. I have been an elected member of INHIGEO – one of ten from the U.S., the maximum allowed for any single country – since 1984, and have participated in a number of the Commission’s symposia. (The Commission is organized under the International Union of Geological Sciences and is affiliated with the International Union of the History and Philosophy of Science.) At these symposia, historians of science, and scientists with serious historical interests – the two groups usually represented in about equal numbers – present papers in scientific sessions, and take advantage of opportunities to explore local resources for history of geology. This often includes group tours in the area of the meeting location, with opportunities for first-hand experience of historically-significant sites in geology’s development.

In 2004 I was elected to a term as INHIGEO Vice President for North America. As one of five vice presidents, I am a member of the Commission’s governing board. The board meets at each symposium, to oversee such matters as ongoing projects (including historical papers published in Épisodes, the chief periodical for the IUGS), plans for future symposia, publication of symposium papers, and election of new members.

The theme for the 30th INHIGEO Symposium is the history of geophysics. Scientific sessions are planned for presentations within that theme, as well as on topics in the history of mining in central and eastern Europe. Excursions are planned to visit mining and thermal waters sites in the region, and also to visit classic locations such as the ‘Barrande stratigraphy’ and Moravian karst caves.
College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Enrichment Grant Application: Kenneth L. Taylor

I plan my own symposium contribution as an examination of a multi-volume publication with substantial geophysical content, the *Physique du monde* by the polymathic writer, baron Etienne-Claude de Marivetz (1728-1794). This work was written in collaboration with the artist-savant and encyclopedist Louis-Jacques Goussier. A novel feature of the Marivetz-Goussier project was the extent to which it assimilated planetary and geophysical phenomena within a cosmological perspective. It was noticed by scientific investigators in the earth sciences as an effort at an unusually integrative approach to questions about terrestrial processes. That is, the broad planetary perspective taken by Marivetz was exceptional when compared with the usual range of empirical preoccupations held by most investigators in the incipient geological science of the time. In my opinion Marivetz's project is properly understood as reflecting his inclination toward comprehensive 'systems,' a tendency then becoming less influential within the earth sciences. My paper is provisionally titled "Baron Marivetz and Planet Earth: A Late Enlightenment Geophysical Project."

The activity's outcome

There are plans to publish a selection of approximately six to eight of the symposium's papers in a special volume of *Studia Geophysica et Geodaetica*, an English-language Czech journal published through Kluwer. Even if my paper should be selected, I currently think that I may prefer to offer it for publication in *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, an Oxford-based serial focused on studies of the European Enlightenment. In any case, I expect my symposium paper to be published in a refereed international scholarly publication.

In addition, as noted above, by participating in the Prague symposium I will have met part of my obligations as INHIGEO Vice President for North America.

Budget

Airfare: Oklahoma City to Prague, Czech Republic, and return $1,800
[airfare information from Journey House]

Airport / ground transportation $80

INHIGEO Symposium registration $450
[includes cost of day-excursions while in Prague]

Accommodation in Prague, 7 nights @ $100/night, July 2-12 $700
[Note: U.S. Department of State maximum allowable travel and per diem allowances for Prague indicate this is a very expensive city – setting the lodging maximum at $209 per night, and the meals and incidental expenses maximum at $97 per day.]
College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Enrichment Grant Application: Kenneth L. Taylor

Local transportation $60

Symposium excursion fees $500
July 11-13 – travel, accommodation

Meals, 12 days (July 2-13) @ $55/day $660
[See note above, under accommodation, about U.S. Department of State maximum allowable travel and per diem allowances.]

Total anticipated cost $4,250

[Note: INHIGEO operates on an extremely modest budget. No funds are available from INHIGEO for travel expenses by members of the Board, other than contributions toward travel costs incurred by the President and the Secretary-General.]

Other anticipated funding/application

I intend to apply to the Vice President for Research for a one-third cost share ($1,200 maximum) for my participation in the Prague INHIGEO Symposium. The remaining cost share will be drawn mainly from funds set aside from the stipend accompanying my appointment as a Presidential Professor, with the possibility of some modest support as well from my department’s travel funds.

Kenneth L. Taylor
10-27-09