

The 7th Alpine Conference on Solid-State NMR
11-15th September 2011 (Chamonix-Mont Blanc, France)

Report submitted by Erika Davies, 26th September 2011

The Alpine Conference is one of only two regularly-scheduled conferences dedicated specifically to the theory and applications of Solid-State Nuclear Magnetic Resonance spectroscopy, and as such was highly relevant to my PhD studies investigating the mineral component of bone. The conference brings together specialists from all over the world and affords attendees an opportunity to gain an overview of the work being done, the progress being made and the difficulties yet to be surmounted in a range of fields.

The conference spanned four and a half days (including the Bruker Users' Meeting) and included around thirty oral presentations, with two afternoons set aside for poster sessions. During the oral presentations, a significant amount of time was set aside for interactive and lively discussion between the speakers and the audience members. This was particularly valuable as there was enough time for anyone with questions or comments to have their say, including the students! Two of the speakers were presenting work directly relevant to my project, and it was an excellent opportunity to speak with them and seek their advice.

Of the hundred and forty or so posters on display, half a dozen were directly relevant to my work, and the poster sessions provided a relaxed forum in which to discuss the results presented therein as well as the experimental setups used to obtain them. My own poster attracted numerous questions, comments and suggestions, some of which have been instrumental in determining the direction that my work has taken since my return.

Throughout the conference there was ample opportunity to make new acquaintances within the community, as well as reconnect with geographically-disperse colleagues and collaborators. The welcoming and congenial atmosphere of this conference provides a fabulous context in which to soak up all that it has to offer, and I am very grateful to Bruker and the UK 850 MHz Solid-State NMR Facility for the generous financial support that they provided.