

GIG-2 Senior Crystallographers
Reported Period: 2023–2024
Report Date: 20 August 2024
Reported by: Bill Clegg

1. Introduction and group activity

During the period since ECM32 in Vienna GIG-2 has had essentially no organized group activity because of the continuing legacy of Covid-19 and the vulnerability of people of this age bracket, which has markedly reduced the number of GIG-2 members taking part in person in conferences. Although a relatively small number of our members attended ECM33 in Versailles and contributed significantly to its programme, only 2 turned up for the scheduled GIG-2 lunchtime meeting. In any case the meeting was not viable because the conference organisers had assigned it to the same room as a crowded and noisy poster session, making any discussion impossible. There was no ECM in 2023 and no GIG-2 meeting was arranged during the IUCr Congress in Melbourne.

2. GIG web site:

<https://ecanews.org/groups/gig-02/> The old website has not been updated for a long time and GIG-2 is currently without a Webmaster. A new website has recently been provided by ECA and a small amount of work has been done on it so far. It is intended to include some basic information on the website in the coming weeks and we hope to have it in reasonable working order by the end of October 2024. Progress will depend on volunteer contributions from GIG-2 members and this will be discussed during our allocated GIG meeting time at ECM34.

3. Number of ECA individual members registered with the GIG-2 according to

<http://www.xrav.cz/eca/im-payment.htm>)

Attempts to obtain this information from the ECA website continue to produce error messages as in previous years, so we do not have the information. This item in the report seems rather pointless.

4. Existence of a GIG-2 mailing list: YES

Address of mailing list: Previously maintained by the interim secretary, Prof. Helen Stoeckli-Evans, who has now resigned. The list, dating from 2020, has been passed to the GIG-2 Chair and, as far as possible, updated with the help of entries in the IUCr World Directory of Crystallographers. Number of members in the GIG-2 mailing list: approximately 80, but a few of these email addresses are bouncing.

GIG-2 aims to maintain communication with its members by irregular updates *via* e-mail and on its website. An e-mail update was circulated in July 2024 and a small number of replies have been received. It was the intention to organize an online meeting for members, so that various matters can be discussed before a formal in-person meeting at ECM34, but the take-up for this has been extremely small and it is unlikely to happen. Future work on the website may include the generation of a new mailing list.

5: Approximate numbers of researchers involved in the GIG-2 (please indicate the basis for the estimate)

It is estimated that more than half of our members, most or all of whom are professionally retired, continue to be involved in research, teaching and engagement, judging from publications, personal websites, and other online presence and activities. We hope to update this estimate as part of a project to regenerate GIG-2 beginning at ECM34

6. List of MS organized by GIG-2 at the last ECM (ECM33 in Versailles, 2022) and this year's ECM34 in Padova

For ECM33 the three General Interest Groups of ECA (GIG-1 Young Crystallographers, GIG-2 Senior Crystallographers, and GIG-3 Crystallographic Education) discussed and jointly submitted a set of proposed Microsymposia. Those that were included in the final programme were: "What is inside the black box?", "New horizons in teaching crystallography in the 21st century",

“Reproducibility in crystallography”, and “What should undergraduate students learn about crystallography?”

In addition, GIG-2 helped to organize the special plenary session “Gold and silver: treasures of European crystallography” to celebrate 50 years of European Crystallographic Meetings and 25 years of the European Crystallographic Association, many of the speakers being also GIG-2 members. The present GIG-2 Chair, Bill Clegg, was awarded the 12th Max Perutz Prize and gave the prize lecture at the beginning of the meeting.

All these sessions proved very popular; one of them was allocated to a room that was far too small for the aspiring audience (as happened also at ECM33 in Vienna); **programme committees need to recognize that general-interest sessions are likely to attract relatively large audiences.**

For Padova (ECM34, 2024) a similar approach has led to the inclusion of microsymbosia on “How to address questions, doubts and struggles of a young crystallographer” (chaired by GIG-1 and GIG-2 representatives), “Things we no longer need to know – or do we?”, “Common mistakes and problems in using black boxes”, “Approaches and tools for learning crystallography efficiently and avoiding misconceptions”, and “ISCoC 50th anniversary: memories from the past, present and views for the future” (a special session marking 50 years of Erice crystallography schools), as well as a Keynote lecture on “The evolution of crystallographic software tools and their efficacy in teaching endeavours” to be given by Tony Linden.

7. Prizes sponsored/coordinated.

None at present.

8. Past activities other than Microsymbosia and other programme elements at ECM

None this year.

9. Future/Programmed Activities

ECM35: Poznan, Poland, 2025

At the time of writing, several Microsymbosia have been proposed, once again jointly with or having support from GIG-1 and/or GIG-3. The final list is shortly to be submitted for consideration by the ECM35 Programme Committee during ECM34.

10. Other Matters

None at present. GIG-2 is hoping to resume in-person activities with a meeting at ECM34, with one or more possible online discussion meetings to follow later.

11. Brief annual activity report

Until March 2020, and particularly at ECM32 in Vienna, GIG-2 continued principally to promote the interests of the members of the group. Greater collaboration and interaction has been sought with GIG-1 and GIG-3, particularly in joint proposals for ECM Microsymbosia and exploring the possibility of other common interests. This was successful in respect of contributions to the programmes of ECM33 and ECM34 Microsymbosia, and is continuing in planning for ECM35. At ECM34 the meetings for the three GIG have been scheduled at different times to allow for joint attendance for those interested in promoting further collaboration.

12. GIG officers, name and e-mail, and specify their main function in the GIG.

Chair: Bill Clegg bill.clegg@ncl.ac.uk

Webmaster: vacant

Other officers:

George Ferguson gf3@st-andrews.ac.uk

Ton Spek a.l.spek@uu.nl

Enrique Gutierrez Puebla egutierrez@icmm.csic.es

one of whom we hope will serve as interim Co-Chair until ECM35 in 2025.