ISSMGE FOUNDATION

REPORT ON CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE

Your Name: Peerzadi Arzeena Imtiyaz	***Your Organization: Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad***	***Date of report: 24-06-2026***
Conference Title: 21st International Conference on Soil Mechanics and Geotechnical Engineering	***Location of Conference: Vienna, Austria***	***Dates of Conference: 14th – 19th June, 2026***

What you learned:

Attending the 21st International Conference on Soil Mechanics and Geotechnical Engineering (ICSMGE 2026) in Vienna was an enriching experience both technically and professionally. The conference provided valuable insights into recent advances in geotechnical engineering, including soil-structure interaction, sustainability in geotechnics, underground construction, energy geotechnics, geohazards, constitutive modeling, and experimental methods for studying geomaterials. I particularly benefited from discussions on rock and geomaterial behavior, advanced laboratory testing techniques, and the integration of experimental and numerical approaches in geomechanics. Presenting my own research also allowed me to receive constructive feedback from leading researchers, which will help strengthen my ongoing work.

People you met:

The conference provided an excellent opportunity to interact with renowned researchers, industry professionals, and fellow students from around the world. Some of the distinguished researchers I had the privilege to meet and interact with included Dr. Marc Ballouz, Prof. Lyesse Laloui, Prof. Krishna R. Reddy, Prof. Catherine O'Sullivan, Prof. Anand J. Puppala, Prof. Surya S. C. Congress, Prof. Giulia Viggiani, Prof. Depankar Choudhury, Prof. G. Madhavi Latha, and Prof. N. K. Samadhiya, to name a few. I also had the opportunity to meet many early-career researchers and students from leading institutions across India and abroad.

Main features of conference:

- Technical sessions covering a broad spectrum of geotechnical engineering topics.
- Keynote and plenary lectures delivered by internationally recognized experts.
- Opportunities for presenting research through oral and poster sessions.

- Strong participation from academia, industry, and government organizations worldwide.
- Extensive networking opportunities fostering international collaborations.
- Discussions on emerging challenges related to sustainability, resilience, and innovation in geotechnical engineering.
- Exhibition of cutting-edge technologies, testing equipment, and engineering solutions.
- ISSMGE Technical Committees Meetings.
- Young Geotechnical Engineers Meet.

Your comments on the conference:

The conference was exceptionally well organized and provided an outstanding platform for learning, collaboration, and professional growth. The quality of technical presentations, diversity of topics, and opportunities for networking made it a highly rewarding experience. Presenting my research titled *"Deformation and Fracture Studies in Confined Indentation of Porous Rock-Like Materials"* enabled me to share my work with an international audience and receive valuable feedback from experts in the field. I am sincerely grateful to ISSMGE for the financial support that made my participation possible. The experience has broadened my research perspective, strengthened my professional network, and motivated me to continue contributing to the geotechnical engineering community.

Please attach short report (maximum 400 words) suitable for publication in the ISSMGE Bulletin:

I had the privilege of attending the 21st International Conference on Soil Mechanics and Geotechnical Engineering (ICSMGE 2026), held in Vienna, Austria, from 14–19 June 2026, with support from an ISSMGE grant. The conference brought together geotechnical engineers, researchers, practitioners, and students from across the world, creating an exceptional platform for knowledge exchange and professional networking.

As part of the conference, I presented my research entitled "*Deformation and Fracture Studies in Confined Indentation of Porous Rock-Like Materials.*" My work focuses on understanding the deformation and fracture mechanisms of geomaterials under confined indentation conditions, which are relevant to several engineering applications including rock cutting, drilling, excavation, and underground construction. Presenting my research to an international audience provided valuable feedback and stimulated insightful discussions that will help guide the future direction of my work.

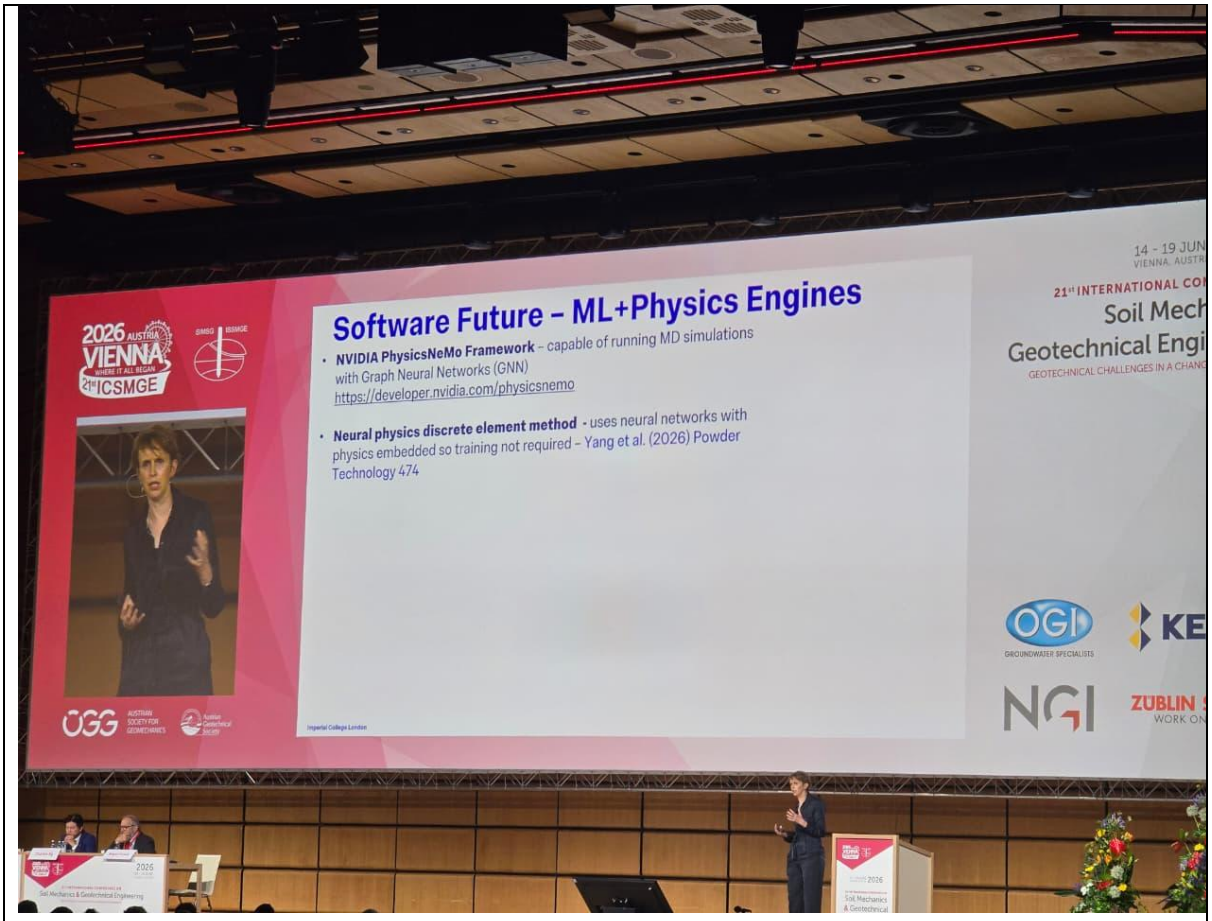
The conference featured a wide range of technical sessions, keynote lectures, and panel discussions covering topics such as geomechanics, underground infrastructure, sustainability, geohazards, energy geotechnics, and advanced experimental and numerical techniques. The breadth and quality of the presentations highlighted the rapid developments taking place within the geotechnical engineering community.

One of the most rewarding aspects of attending ICSMGE 2026 was the opportunity to interact with leading experts in the field. I had the pleasure of meeting and discussing research with distinguished professors including Prof. Lyesse Laloui, Prof. Krishna R. Reddy, Prof. Catherine O'Sullivan, Prof. Anand J. Puppala, Prof. Surya S. C. Congress, Prof. Giulia Viggiani, among many others. These interactions broadened my understanding of current research challenges and potential future collaborations.

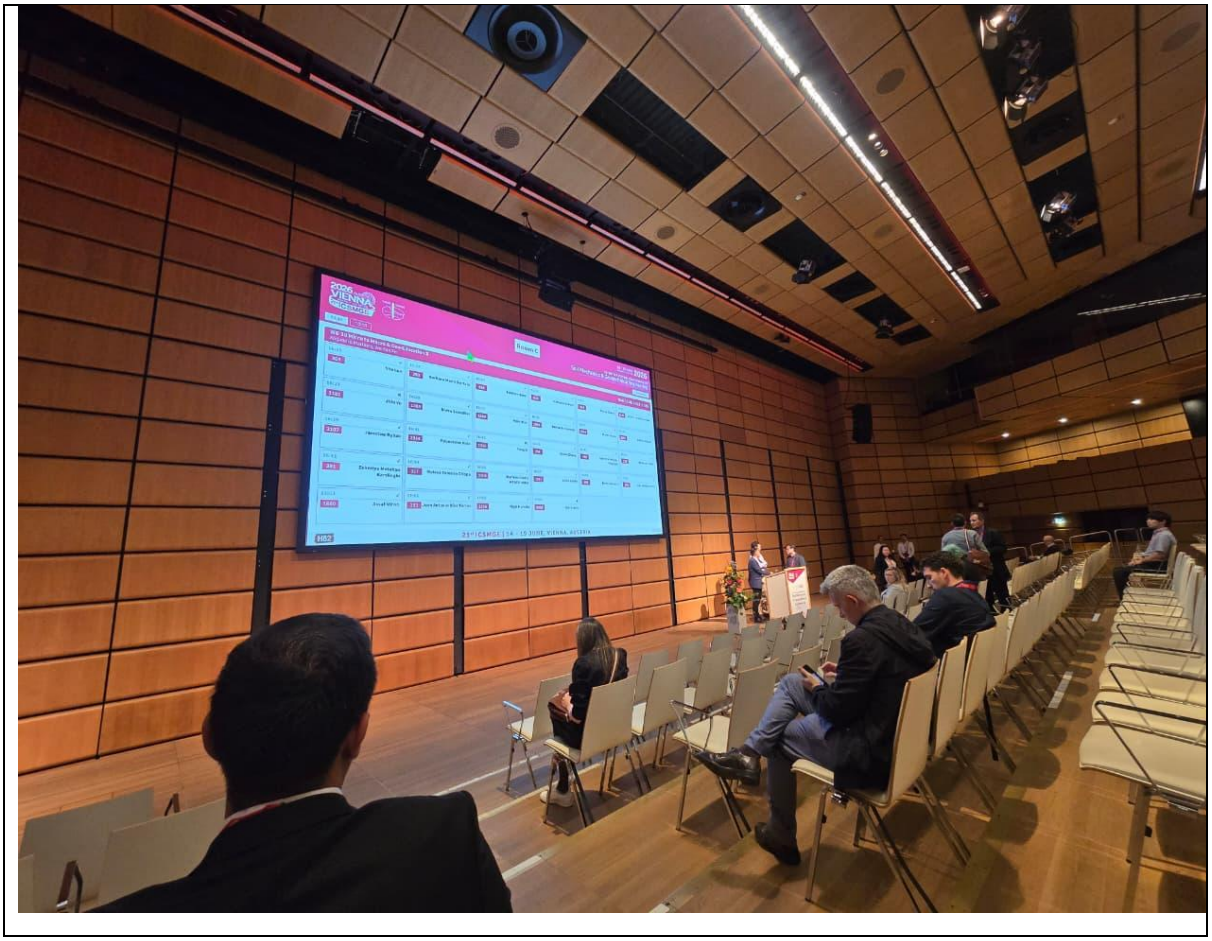
Beyond the technical program, the conference fostered a strong sense of community among geotechnical professionals and young researchers. The event reinforced the importance of international collaboration in addressing complex geotechnical challenges.

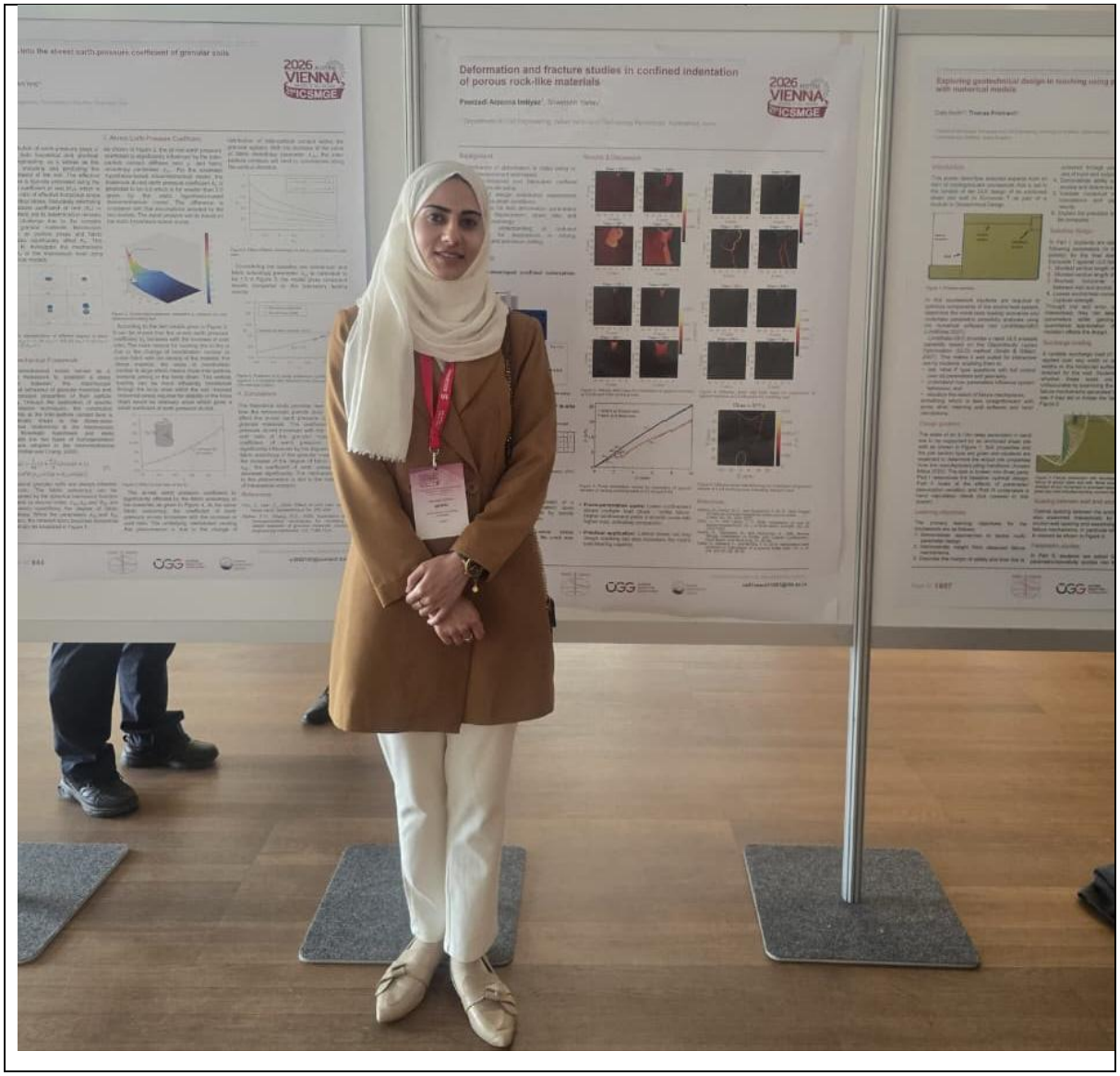
I am sincerely grateful to ISSMGE for providing financial support through the conference grant. This opportunity significantly contributed to my professional development, expanded my international research network, and strengthened my motivation to pursue impactful research in geomechanics and geotechnical engineering.

Photographs from Conference:


2026 AUSTRIA VIENNA
WHERE IT ALL BEGAN
21st ICSMGE
Software Future – ML+Physics Engines
NVIDIA PhysicsNeMo Framework – capable of running MD simulations with Graph Neural Networks (GNN)
https://developer.nvidia.com/physicsnemo
Neural physics discrete element method - uses neural networks with physics embedded so training not required – Yang et al. (2026) Powder Technology 474
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Deformation and fracture studies in confined indentation of porous rock-like materials
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