

In July 2017, I attended the 14th International Conference on Muon Spin Rotation, Relaxation and Resonance in Sapporo, Japan. I work mainly with muon spin rotation, relaxation, and resonance (muSR) experiments in my PhD studies, so I was very excited to learn more about the vast range of systems that can be studied using this experimental technique.

One of the most interesting parts of the conference was listening to a talk by one of the discoverers of iron-based superconductivity: Prof. Hideo Hosono. He spoke about his recent work on semiconductors; a field that I was eager to learn more about. As well as covering a broad range of materials that can be studied with muSR, some talks focussed on more technical aspects and discussed new methods with which muSR can be used to probe physical phenomena. The talks by Dr. Clifford Hicks and Shreenanda Ghosh described a new experimental setup for measuring superconducting properties under uniaxial strain. I had never considered that such measurements may be possible, and I feel this new technique may be useful in my future work.

There were several poster sessions, too, at which I had many enlightening discussions. I presented some work on spin ices, a hot topic in muSR, and it was very valuable to talk to the key figures in this area. I find poster sessions ideal for learning about totally new areas of physics, as it is much easier to ask a lot of questions! One new topic that I learnt about was the application of muSR in battery science, which of course is very useful in an industrial context.

Sapporo is a beautiful city, and I was lucky to have a few spare moments to visit the sights and try the local cuisine. As well as a packed schedule of science, I was fortunate to go on the excursion to a local whiskey distillery. As I will be applying for postdoc positions in the near future, it was hugely beneficial to meet other groups in a more informal atmosphere, to seek out others I might like to work with.

Overall, I think the conference was very successful. I learnt a lot, discovered new areas of interest, and was able to share and discuss ideas with scientists I would otherwise have never had a chance to meet.