

SPEAKER'S BIOGRAPHY

Frances Westall (France)



Present position Since 2002

Director of Research CNRS at the Centre de Biophysique Moléculaire, Orléans, France
Head of the Exobiology group, CBM and Federation STUC
Head of the Department Chimie et Imagerie du Vivant, CBM

PhD

1984 University of Cape Town, South Africa (Marine Geology)

Field of Expertise

Sedimentology; fossil bacteria; early Earth geology and the earliest traces of microbial life on Earth; the search for life on Mars.

Professional career

2000 – 2001 Lunar and Planetary Institute, Houston, USA.
(Early Archaean geology and fossil bacteria)

- 1998 – 2000 Johnson Space Center, Houston, USA. (Early Archaean geology and fossil bacteria)
1991 – 1998 University of Bologna, Italy. (Experimental fossilisation of bacteria and DNA, fossil bacteria)
1989 – 1991 University of Nantes, France. (Fossil bacteria, bacteria-sediment interactions)
1984 – 1989 Alfred Wegener Institute, Bremerhaven, West Germany (palaeo-oceanography)

Committee representation

Director of the French Groupement de Recherche Exobiologie
Groupe de Travail Thématique Exobiologie, Centre National d'Etudes Spatial
ESA – LPSAC (2003-2006)
ESF-ESSC

Some representative publications

Westall, F. de Ronde C.E.J., Southam, G, Grassineau, N, Colas, M., Cockell, C.S., and Lammer, H. 2006. Implications of a 3.472–3.333 Ga-old subaerial microbial mat from the Barberton greenstone belt, South Africa for the UV environmental conditions on the early Earth. *Phil. Trans. R. Soc. B*, v.361, 1857-1875.

Westall, F. ., de Vries, S.T., Nijman, W., Rouchon, V., Orberger, B. Pearson, V., Watson, J., Verchovsky, A., Wright, I., Rouzaud, J.-N., Marchesini, D., & Anne, S. 2006. The 3.466 Ga Kitty's Gap Chert, an Early Archaean microbial ecosystem. In *Processes on the Early Earth* (W.U. Reimold & R. Gibson, Eds.), *Geol. Soc. Amer. Spec. Pub.*, 405, 105-131.

Westall, F. & Southam, G. 2006. Early life on Earth. In *Archean Geodynamics and Environments* (K. Benn, et al. Eds.), pp 283-304. *AGU Geophys. Monogr.*, 164.

Westall, F. 2005, Life on the early Earth: A sedimentary view, *Science*, 434, 366-367.