

New Opportunities for Geospatial



The sun is rising, and spring is very much in the air. The six nations rugby is over (I'll hold back on any commentary) and thoughts are turning towards the summer. Geospatial activity has been constant over the last couple of months with some very big industry issues (such as the scourge of UK instrument theft) being discussed.

RICS has finished the 2018/19 evening lecture series with some very strong lectures on The Red Atlas - the Soviet Union Secretly Mapped the World (www.press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/R/bo24760505.html), soon to be featured in the RICS Land Journal (www.rics.org/uk/news-insight/publications/land-journal), and a final lecture on marine/offshore survey (in collaboration with our colleagues from the Hydrographic Society).

All eyes now turn to the ever wonderful GeoBusiness 2019 (www.geobusinessshow.com, 21-22 May 2019 in Islington, London). As you are all very aware, this event has become the keystone to everything that we are trying to achieve for our growing geospatial industry and profession and for all collaborating societies, institutions and learned bodies. GeoBusiness 2019 (I mentioned the addition of Digital Construction Week www.digitalconstructionweek.com, 16-17 Oct 2019) has also incorporated GeoData (www.geobusinessshow.com/geodata-forum) into this year's event. GeoData will maintain its unique personality and focus of geospatial information use by data specialists and locational information experts. Quite a different group and much more aligned to GIS service providers and clients, but you can see the way this is going. GeoBusiness is bringing all the disparate geo-strands together from what has been an unnecessarily fragmented profession. Surveying, mapping, construction, infrastructure, data capture, usage, intelligence, strategy – it's all coming together for UK Geospatial.

Geospatial Commission

RICS recently hosted the Geospatial Commission, Policy Lab UK and experts from the partner bodies & agencies who spent a full day debating and interrogating the enormous amount of information and commentary submitted during the recent 'call for evidence'. The Geospatial Commission are hoping to formulate their strategy for UK Geospatial during 2019 and RICS, along with our fellow professional bodies, are fully committed to helping the commission realise their objectives. The commission has also recently launched a geodata competition (www.gov.uk/government/news/15-million-geospatial-competition-open-to-improve-public-services) with £1.5 million up for grabs. The Geospatial Commission has partnered with Innovate UK to launch a HM Government competition, where organizations can apply for a share of £1.5 million to fund projects which use data linked to a location. Between £50,000 to £750,000 could be granted to eligible organizations.

The aim of the competition is to explore the benefits and challenges of crowdsourcing data. It will encourage different organizations to work together to identify innovative new ways for crowdsourced data, to either:

- Improve the delivery of public services
- Support the third sector
- Enhance the quality of open public datasets

Applications have already been made (the closing date was January 2019) but I believe the response was good and indeed we at the RICS have been asked to potentially partner with organizations on some projects. More on this as it develops.

RICS Education Trust

Some of you will be aware that the RICS makes quite a substantial sum of funding available for research on a six monthly 'call' basis. The application months are March & October, and for 2019 we are interested in several sectors. The RICS Research Trust is an established grant award entity supporting research in the disciplines of land, real estate and construction across the world.

The Trust, as a charity, has a remit of supporting, delivering and disseminating high quality, independent reliable knowledge and future thinking through research funding right across the world. It's administered by a Board of Trustees, comprising of RICS members and independent appointees. The Board meets to consider awards twice a year in May and December.

The RICS Research Trust is encouraging research in specific areas by means of 'defined calls' and is also considering applications outside specific areas as 'open calls'. Research applications under the defined calls and open calls are considered bi-annually.

In the coming year, the trust is focused on subjects that relate to the RICS Governing Council's strategic themes – urbanisation; housing supply and affordability; resource scarcity; climate mitigation and adaptation; and the next generation. As a priority, the trust is encouraging research in the five specific 'defined call' subjects:

- Resilience against natural and man-made disaster in a changing climate
- Transition to autonomous vehicles
- Social cohesion in rapidly growing cities
- The strategic impact on rural land use if growing urban populations are to have access to sufficient nourishment (food safety)
- Big data and the impact of digitization on professional practice

Proposals should be submitted to researchtrust@rics.org. When making your application please specify whether the application is under one of the defined call subjects or the open call. Further details, the updated guidelines for applicants and the application form can be viewed at www.rics.org/researchtrust.

Leica Anti-theft Campaign

Our colleagues in TSA have been pushing forward with an encouraging initiative on helping to combat the scourge of instrument theft (some of it violent) that we have been suffering the UK and Ireland geospatial profession. Some survey firms have even gone to the lengths of having full-time security personal onsite and/or accompanying surveyors in the field (www.tsa-uk.org.uk/equipment-theft).

Leica have recently launched an inclusive campaign aimed at all security products (such as those highlighted at the SCCS website, www.sccsurvey.co.uk/survey-monitoring/instrument-security-weather-protection.html) and the issue will, again sadly, be a major topic of conversation at GeoBusiness. I know from speaking to surveyors from across the world that this is not a specific UK and Ireland problem but affects all of us on a global scale.

RICS Land and Resources Video – 2018 Highlights

RICS Members (and non-members) can get an insight into all of the wonderful 2018 output from the Land & Resources group by viewing the video at <https://communities.rics.org/connect.ti/Wikigeo/view?objectId=44498725>.

This video is designed to give delegates at events a quick insight into the multi-faceted world of policy, education, journals (including Geomatics World), standards, best practice, collaboration and events that we work within. It's worth a look, just for that next time someone asks you the 'what do you get for your membership fee?' question.

Happy 50th Birthday CICES

My congratulations to our colleagues at CICES on their 50th anniversary year (2019). I know that they have a series of events planned (www.cices.org) and RICS is also delighted to see Chris Preston FRICS FCInstCES take the reins as president for this important milestone year.

And finally, the discovery of HMS Endeavour (Cook's famous ship in 2018) could be followed by the discovery of HMS Endurance (Shackleton's equally famous ship) in the usually ice-bound Wendell sea off the coast of Antarctica - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Endurance_\(1912_ship\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Endurance_(1912_ship)). Sounds like a topic for an evening lecture.

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