

The GSDI Approach to Outreach and Membership



The GSDI Association was created in 2003 to carry on the tradition of the Global SDI conferences that began in Bonn, Germany, in 1996. Since then, 14 GSDI conferences have been held around the world, the latest in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in November 2013 (GSDI 14). The GSDI individual members division, the International Geospatial Society, currently has over 400 members worldwide, many of them from developing nations where outreach activities, including capacity building, are much needed and appreciated.

The GSDI outreach and membership activities are managed by the Outreach and Membership (O&M) Committee, chaired by Denise McKenzie from our much-valued member, the Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC). OGC also provides technical support for the Association's website and membership management services.

Outreach activities take many forms, including conferences for networking and published proceedings, newsletters, discussion lists, online capacity-building material and opportunities, and the GI Knowledge Network with the GIKnet Spatial Documents Depot.

GSDI Conferences

The GSDI World Conferences focus on spatial data infrastructure issues, including legal and policy topics too seldom discussed in other geo-related conferences. The conferences produce open access proceedings of all papers and presentations, plus peer-reviewed papers and special publications. The conferences are a major component in outreach activities not only to our members, but also to the thousands of academic researchers, students and government and industry practitioners involved in implementing SDIs globally who have attended over the past 18 years.

Communication Activities

The GSDI & IGS Global Newsletter, published monthly since 2011, provides news from our members and partners. It is distributed electronically to the Association mailing list of approximately 4,500 addressees and published on our website.

Several hundred monthly Regional SDI Newsletters have been published since 2002, covering Africa (2002), Asia-Pacific (since 2003, in English and Chinese), and Latin America & Caribbean (since 2004, in English, Spanish and Portuguese). All are downloadable from the GSDI website. From May this year, regional news will be produced under a single Regional GSDI Newsletter encompassing the three regions above, plus Europe and North America.

Outreach to members is also achieved via e-mail discussion lists for the five regions, managed by the relevant GSDI Committees, spanning a wide range of SDI-related topics and issues. Anyone can subscribe to these lists and then access the full archive.

Capacity Building Outreach

Outreach also involves capacity building, a task shared with the GSDI Societal Impacts Committee. The website provides access to numerous videos, publications and webinars offered mainly by members or partners, plus the GI Knowledge Network. Since its launch in 2003, the GSDI Small Grants Program has supported more than 100 projects across the globe. The programme is a partnership between the GSDI Association and the GISCorps of URISA, with financial support from leading government agencies.

Membership

Our current recruitment drive is led by Bruce Westcott, GSDI's new membership recruitment manager, and vice-chair, North America, of the O&M Committee. You can expect Bruce to be calling on you soon for your support!