

Launch of The ASPRS Foundation, Inc.

The American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ASPRS) has launched the ASPRS Foundation, Inc., an independently registered entity that will raise, invest, and grant funds to the ASPRS Awards and Scholarships Program. This brings back to ASPRS the original American Society of Photogrammetry (ASP) Foundation that was initially formed in 1979, and later transformed to become the International Geographic Information Foundation (IGIF).

The ASPRS Foundation, Inc. is headed by a Board of Trustees. Dr. Thomas Lillesand is the president, Roger Crystal is the vice president and secretary, and Mike Renslow is the treasurer. All three are past presidents of ASPRS. ASPRS executive director James Plasker will serve as executive director and ex officio member of the Board and Jesse Winch, ASPRS awards program manager, will serve as assistant executive director. Over time, the Board of Trustees will expand. New Trustees will be appointed by the ASPRS president. The Trustees are responsible for the investment, management, and approval of grants of Foundation funds. Trustees do not receive any salary or other compensation for their services.

In late 2003, the ASPRS board of directors decided to explore the reacquisition and renaming of the original ASP Foundation (most recently known as the International Geographic Information Foundation, or IGIF). If this action was not possible, the ASPRS Board directed the establishment of a new 'ASPRS Foundation' whose primary purpose would be to advance the understanding and use of imaging and geospatial information for the betterment of humankind and the effective operation of public and private organisations.

However, Mr. Plasker was able to negotiate an agreement with the Association of American Geographers (AAG), a sister society and longtime co-sponsor of the IGIF, to enable ASPRS to re-establish stewardship over the organisation. Plasker gave significant credit to his counterpart at AAG, executive director Dr. Doug Richardson, in making this transition possible.

The ASPRS Foundation will establish an extensive and broadly-based program that provides grants, scholarships, loans and other forms of aid to individuals or organisations pursuing knowledge of imaging and geospatial information science and technology, and their applications across the scientific, governmental, and commercial sectors. A key short-term goal of the Foundation is to fully endow all existing ASPRS awards and scholarships.

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