

UCGIS External Relations Committee Report UCGIS Annual Symposium 2017

This report covers the activities of the Education Committee for the period of May 2016 (UCGIS Symposium in Scottsdale, AZ) to the 2017 UCGIS Symposium in Washington DC.

Recap of Recent Committee Activities

Aaron Addison, Washington University in St. Louis, is completely his first year of a two year term running through the end of the 2018 UCGIS Symposium. The current external relations committee is composed of: Jeff Hamerlinck (Univ. of Wyoming); Helmut Kraenzle (James Madison Univ.); David Tulloch (Rutgers Univ).

In addition to the in-person committee meeting during the 2016 symposium, the committee has used email and a webinar session as vehicles for communication and opportunities for discussion during this past year.

Major activities included the following:

1. Symposium 2016

The symposium in Scottsdale, AZ, provided an opportunity for Jeff Hamerlinck to hand over the External Relations Committee reigns to Aaron Addison. Jeff, Diana and Aaron held a Skype call and follow-up email discussion about accomplishments of the committee in the recent past (including a name change) and new opportunities for the committee moving forward.

2. Fall and Winter 2016

One agreed focus was on building additional relationships between UCGIS and other organizations (especially newer organizations such as the Research Data Alliance) could be mutually beneficial. Aaron Addison attended the "International Data Week" event held in the fall of 2016 as a member of the organizational board for RDA and also had discussions with the secretariat of RDA on becoming an organizational member of that organization. After discussions it was decided that UCGIS could realize the same benefits of the RDA ecosystem without paying to become an organizational member (quite expensive as well). The relationship was expanded as a result of UCGIS inviting Dr. Fran Berman to deliver a keynote address at the 2017 symposium.

In addition to the above Aaron also attended the spring 2017 meeting of the RDA in Barcelona, Spain. In this meeting the Geospatial interest group had excellent attendance and there exist opportunities for UCGIS to become more involved in not only the interest group, but a working group on a specific theme important to UCGIS members. There are additional groups within RDA working on a variety of topics that may be of interest to UCGIS members. These topics include (but are by no means limited to) :

Urban quality of life indicators
Data provenance
Metadata
Data to Knowledge
Biodiversity data
Health data

Humanities
Data fabrics
Big data
Data rescue
Data brokering
Virtual Research Environments

UCGIS also hosted a webinar introducing the National Geospatial Advisory Committee (NGAC) to membership in very early 2017. The event also introduced the “Emerging Technologies for the Geospatial Landscape” document that outlines five overarching trends.

- Real-time spatiotemporal data creation and user interaction
- Miniaturization of technologies
- Proliferation of new mobile geospatial sensor platforms
- Expanding wireless and web networks
- Advances in computing speed and capacity for geospatial research & applications.

The webinar was well attended and moderated in part by Aaron Addison. Many members had excellent questions for the presenters which included Laxmi Ramasubramanian, Ivan DeLoatch, Julie Sweetkind-Singer, John Mahoney, Keith Masback, and Sarah Battersby. The webinar was recorded and now available to membership at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T6rhlyuN1C8>

3. GISCI Board member organization report

UCGIS also continued involvement with GISCI in 2016. External relations committee member Dr. Helmut Kraenzle has provided a report on that organization’s activities in the attached report.

4. Monitoring legislation with potential impacts to GIScience

In addition to the above activities, the external relations chair also monitored numerous bills introduced in Congress that have implications on GIScience research and applications. The chair reported at monthly meetings on bill status. It is clear that it is in the best interest of UCGIS to remain aware of the introduction and status of legislation with possible impacts on the work of our membership. The committee chair will continue to keep the Executive Director and Chair informed on any developments needing attention

5. 2017 Symposium – Washington DC

The committee worked closely with the research committee to develop a joint session on session on barriers for turning geospatial data in to actionable information. The format will be a series of perspectives on the topics given as lighting talks based on the following

prompts:

Please address one (or both) of the following questions: Given the increasing emphasis on Big Data Analytics and Cyberinfrastructure in GIScience, what do you see as the major challenges in 1) turning geospatial data into actionable information that informs decision-making and policy, and/or 2) developing GIScience educational programs that support the skills students need for entry into the geospatial workforce?

The talks will be followed by group discussions on how UCGIS considers these challenges and what the organization might do to move forward if there are common recommendations.

Respectfully submitted,
Aaron Addison
Chair, UCGIS External Relations Committee
May 19, 2017