



World
Geospatial
Industry
Council

Geospatial in Everything
Geospatial for Everyone

Annual Report 2025



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Geospatial Is Fuelling New Ways Of Collaboration And Holistic Problem-solving

JACK DANGERMOND / CHAIR - PATRON BOARD



On Christmas Eve in 1968, while I was deep in my graduate studies, the world paused to watch something extraordinary. Apollo 8—the first human mission to orbit the moon and return safely—was broadcasting live from space. And then came the moment that changed so many of us: the crew shared the now iconic Earthrise photograph. I was captivated.

Jim Lovell, the mission's Command Module Pilot, described what he saw with words that have stayed with me ever since: "The Earth from here is a grand oasis in the vastness of space... You don't see boundaries or people... The Earth looks completely uninhabited, and yet you know that on spaceship Earth, there live over 6 billion astronauts all seeking about the same things from life."

Lovell's reflection revealed something profound—that we are all passengers on the same fragile vessel, sharing the same resources, the same challenges, and the same hopes. Many people look back on that era as the dawn of the environmental movement. For me, it was the moment I realized how essential it is to understand our planet as one interconnected whole.

Today, we find ourselves in another transformational moment. Our collective actions shape the planet more rapidly and visibly than ever before. To navigate this complexity, we need a new way of thinking—one that brings together our knowledge, our science, our technology, and our creativity. We need a framework that helps us see the whole picture, just as those astronauts did when they looked back at Earth and suddenly understood it differently.

Geography and GIS are giving us that framework. They offer the scientific tools to observe, analyze, and make sense of our world. Maps give us a shared language to communicate that understanding. And with today's digital visualizations, we can see Earth as a living, dynamic ecosystem—something those astronauts felt viscerally as they watched our blue planet rise above the lunar horizon.

Your work as WGIC members is expanding this vision. You are making geospatial knowledge accessible and foundational to nearly everything people do. In many ways, geography has become my word for everything—because it integrates everything we know into maps, layers, and systems that help us understand and act. And now, with the power of AI, geospatial data is accelerating scientific discovery and delivering transformational value across industries.

This geographic approach is no longer just about combining datasets or technologies. It's about connecting distributed systems into systems of systems. It's about linking organizations, sectors, and even nations. This is enabling new forms of collaboration and new ways of solving problems—holistically, thoughtfully, and at scale.

Together—large and small companies across WGIC and the broader geospatial community—we are building something remarkable: a nervous system for the planet. A shared geospatial infrastructure. A shared body of knowledge. A shared understanding of how our world works and how we can care for it. We are taking our technology to a new level, geoenabling everything and integrating everything.

We are entering an age where change moves faster than ever. And in this moment, the culture we create as geospatial professionals—one of openness, collaboration, and integrated thinking—will shape the future. Our work has never been more important.



Earthrise captured by Apollo 8 mission in 1968

Guide AI Evolution With Integrity And Purpose

ALAIN DE TAEYE / VICE CHAIR - PATRON BOARD



Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) are no longer abstract concepts; they are reshaping the geospatial industry in profound ways. What began as incremental improvements in automation has evolved into a paradigm shift, where intelligent systems can process vast datasets, detect patterns, and predict outcomes with unprecedented accuracy. This transformation is redefining how we create maps, analyze spatial data, and deliver insights that power decision-making across multiple sectors.

Let me share a couple of examples from my own work environment at TomTom. As an AI-native company, we have been using this technology for many years. AI enables us to move beyond traditional workflows. Highly automated map-making reduces the time and cost of maintaining global maps while, more importantly, improving precision and freshness. In this way, we are able to create and maintain a new type of global map called the lane-level map, which enables functionalities such as lane-level navigation. A second example is predictive modeling, which allows us to anticipate traffic patterns, optimize routes accordingly, and even support urban mobility planning.

There are numerous applications utilizing AI across the entire geospatial industry. Pattern recognition in satellite imagery enables detecting environmental changes, monitoring deforestation, and even predicting the crop yields—applications that were unimaginable a decade ago.

These capabilities are not just technical milestones; they are enablers of societal progress. Smarter mobility solutions reduce congestion and emissions. Enhanced environmental monitoring supports sustainability goals. AI-driven geospatial analytics enable governments, businesses, and communities to make informed decisions more quickly and with greater confidence.

Responsible Innovation

Every technological innovation brings greater responsibility along with it. AI systems in geospatial contexts must address ethical considerations, data privacy, and transparency to ensure their responsible use. The ability to process geospatial and location data at scale raises questions about consent and security. Biases in algorithms can lead to flawed insights. Therefore, responsible AI is not optional—it is a prerequisite for trust

and the provision of reliable and accurate information for informed decision-making. Industry leaders must adopt governance frameworks that ensure fairness, accountability, and explainability.

At the same time, we must ensure we don't suffocate innovation by overregulation. Collaboration among technology providers, regulators, and end-users is critical to achieving this balance.

Pragmatic Middle Ground

The industry is divided between optimism and caution. Some envision an AI-first future where automation dominates every aspect of geospatial workflows. Others warn of an "AI bubble," in which expectations outpace reality. The truth lies in a pragmatic middle ground: AI is a powerful tool, but its success depends on thoughtful integration and continuous validation.

I believe that companies and organisations should embrace this new technology. AI is here to stay, and not becoming AI-native could exclude companies and organisations from future growth and success.

However, I see AI as a major accelerator—not a replacement—for human expertise. I advocate for combining advanced algorithms with domain knowledge to deliver solutions that are both innovative and reliable.

AI is a catalyst for progress, but it is up to us—leaders, innovators, and practitioners—to guide its evolution with integrity and purpose. Together, we can harness the power of AI to build a smarter, more sustainable world.

AI is here to stay, and not becoming AI-native could exclude companies and organisations from future growth and success. However, I see AI as a major accelerator—not a replacement—for human expertise. I advocate for combining advanced algorithms with domain knowledge to deliver solutions that are both innovative and reliable.

Inclusivity, Cross-sector Collaboration To The Forefront

ZUBRAN SOLAIMAN / PRESIDENT - WGIC



Geospatial and Earth observation technologies are quietly becoming part of the fabric of everyday decision-making. Increasingly, they operate in the background - embedded in cloud platforms, digital infrastructure, climate analytics, and AI-driven systems, so fundamental that we often stop noticing them. Like electricity or connectivity, geospatial is becoming a shared utility: essential, pervasive, and relied upon across industries, governments, and communities.

As geospatial becomes more subtle and ubiquitous, a new question emerges. When a technology becomes shared infrastructure, who shapes how it evolves, how it is governed, and how its value is fairly realized? No single company, sector, or geography can answer this alone. The growing engagement of global technology leaders and adjacent industries in geospatial discussions is a clear signal that the center of gravity is shifting and that collaboration, not isolation, will define the next chapter.

This is precisely where the World Geospatial Industry Council (WGIC) finds its purpose today. WGIC is not only a council of companies, but an emerging community of practitioners, leaders, and contributors who recognize that the future of geospatial will be shaped collectively. As geospatial and Earth observation become shared utilities, WGIC provides a trusted forum where members can come together to exchange perspectives, influence direction, and co-create outcomes that extend well beyond individual organizations.

This also brings to the fore the need to evolve WGIC's current operational model and membership structure, while upholding its founding values and mission, and building on its credibility and global influence. This strategic thought entailed WGIC opening its doors to alliance members - companies that actively use geospatial technology but are not primarily geospatial organizations. Amazon Web Services (AWS) became the first alliance member in 2025. This is a significant milestone in expanding the Council's membership framework, reflecting WGIC's forward-looking approach to collaboration and co-creation.

Besides, the Board expressed strong support for broadening WGIC's reach, engaging with adjacent industries, and participating in global platforms such as the COP events on climate and biodiversity. Such an inclusive approach aligns with WGIC's mission of enhancing the industry's visibility across multiple sectors, thereby increasing WGIC's relevance and impact.

Beyond Boundaries with Horizons 2025 and Horizons+ Dinners

The first step in bringing this vision to reality is the inaugural Horizons 2025, hosted by WGIC in Denver. The two-day event themed "Beyond Boundaries", brought together over 135 leaders from across the geospatial ecosystem and offered not just an unbiased industry platform, but a collaborative template—linking geospatial technology with emerging technologies and global business sectors.

Horizons 2025 featured thought leaders from companies such as McKinsey, Accenture, Google, AWS, and Microsoft, offering fresh perspectives on the implementation of geospatial + AI, cloud, and quantum computing at scale across a wide range of sectors. The break-even event earned strong positive feedback from participants.

WGIC introduced Horizons+ Dinners as a new format for focused conversations, bringing CXOs and senior industry leaders to discuss shared priorities over a meal. The model aims to create intimate, high-value networking opportunities, reduce WGIC's financial exposure by leveraging sponsorships, and offer a replicable format adaptable across regions. The first in this series brought together over 35 senior executives in Calgary, Canada. The conversations were inspiring, engaging, and actionable.

Amplifying Thought Leadership

Our members actively contributed to the operations and output of WGIC's six committees. The Project Funding and Sustainability Committee launched a dedicated podcast series that explored diverse funding pathways for geospatial innovation. These episodes translated complex financial and environmental concepts into real-world stories—amplifying the voices of innovators, investors, and policymakers shaping the future of the geospatial industry.

The Data Committee created a dedicated working group to lead the development and execution of its podcast series and released its first episode on the fast-changing geospatial data landscape. The Industry-Academia Committee raised several pertinent workforce themes, amplifying them through WGIC keynotes and conversations at various global forums, highlighting the widening global skills gap, the impact of AI and automation

on geospatial roles, and the need for deeper conceptual understanding rather than procedural training across geospatial education pathways.

Active Event Outreach, Effective Marcom and Social Media

WGIC continued its active global outreach, participating in over 40 events worldwide, both in-person and virtual, representing members and advocating for the larger geospatial industry.

Amplifying its mission to strengthen geospatial impact, WGIC reached out to government agencies, multilateral and global industry bodies, attended user conferences, and represented in new geographies (in Europe and Australia), engaging in and often facilitating dialogue, forging deeper bonds, and creating business opportunities for member companies.

WGIC strengthened its ongoing marketing communication and member engagement initiatives, primarily through the video format, to enhance member visibility and expand their industry presence. Besides the Member Spotlight, WGIC released video conversations with industry stalwarts, strengthening its advocacy and thought leadership efforts.

The launch of the WGIC committee podcast series expanded the thematic scope of outreach and advocacy activities. Consequently, WGIC's YouTube channel transitioned from a low-activity platform into a steadily growing content hub. YouTube views increased by 167%, watch time grew by 138%, and new subscribers rose by 72% over 2024, with the total subscriber base more than doubling YoY.

Furthermore, all published member-driven content received amplified visibility through active engagement on LinkedIn (>9,500 followers) and the Horizons Monthly Newsletter (>10,000 subscribers). While WGIC's LinkedIn channel registered a 27% increase in total followers, the newsletter gained 33% more subscribers during 2024. Our social media growth metrics underscore the effectiveness of our content strategy, steady member engagement efforts, and continued commitment to WGIC and its activities.

Forward Trajectory

Since its inception, WGIC has focused on building a strong global council; grounded in trust, credibility, and advocacy. As geospatial and Earth observation increasingly function as shared utilities across society, that council is naturally evolving into something broader: a community with shared responsibility for shaping how these technologies are applied, governed, and scaled for impact.

The growing engagement of global technology leaders and adjacent industries in geospatial discussions is a clear signal that the center of gravity is shifting and that collaboration, not isolation, will define the next chapter. This is precisely where the World Geospatial Industry Council (WGIC) finds its purpose today. WGIC is not only a council of companies, but an emerging community of practitioners, leaders, and contributors who recognize that the future of geospatial will be shaped collectively.

Drawing from ongoing conversations with members and partners, WGIC is aligning its objectives toward areas where collective action matters most, from policy and partnerships to business co-creation and workforce development. Our committees sit at the heart of this evolution. They are where ideas are tested, perspectives are exchanged, and real influence is created. Participation in WGIC committees is not simply about contributing time; it is about helping shape the norms, priorities, and future direction of a rapidly converging geospatial ecosystem.

Besides community building, the emphasis is now slowly shifting to business co-creation—developing initiatives that foster tangible business opportunities for members and strengthen WGIC's role as a trade organization.

Looking ahead, WGIC will build on the momentum of 2025 with Horizons 2026 in London and an expanded program of Horizons+ Dinners worldwide—creating spaces where dialogue leads to collaboration and collaboration leads to opportunity.

In line with our Board's directive, WGIC will continue to powerfully champion inclusivity while reaffirming the strength of the 'Council' identity, noting that the WGIC brand carries significant recognition and trust in global and institutional forums. Increasingly, the "C" in WGIC represents multiple values of the Council - including Community, Cooperation, and Collaboration. In a world where geospatial is everywhere, WGIC remains the place where the community behind it comes together to shape what comes next.

Re-centering On Business Development And Market Growth

AARON ADDISON / EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



As we conclude 2025 and look ahead to 2026, WGIC is entering a period of renewed commercial energy—one where our global collaboration is not only shaping policy and standards, but actively opening markets, expanding customer demand, and accelerating business development opportunities for our member companies. WGIC has sharpened the global focus on the commercial engine of the geospatial sector - catalyzing new partnerships, unlocking procurement pathways, and positioning our industry as an indispensable driver of economic growth.

Across the world, governments and enterprises are investing in digital public infrastructure, climate resilience, energy transition planning, and AI-enabled decision systems. The connective tissue of all these efforts is geospatial. In 2025, WGIC leaned into this momentum—ensuring that member companies are at the forefront of new public sector opportunities, cross-border investment programs, and large-scale digital transformation initiatives.

The events WGIC launched in 2025 - Horizons and Horizons+ Dinners - have quickly become a key opportunity for our member companies. Through curated conversations, regional workforce development scans, and providing the industry a place to speak with one voice on emerging policy, WGIC is helping companies—large and small—gain additional visibility and involvement in the future of our industry. Whether it is identifying Earth observation use cases in climate finance, PNT modernization programs in emerging markets, natural disaster scenario planning, EMS services, building critical infrastructure, moving goods and services, or implementing national geospatial strategies, we are working to spotlight and facilitate the improbable conversations that fuel member growth. The result is a

business environment that rewards capability, quality, and long-term partnerships.

Innovation remains a core commercial priority. Through our committee whitepapers, reports, podcasts, member case studies, and other outputs, WGIC has showcased and amplified replicable geospatial solutions with clear return on investment—giving public- and private-sector buyers confidence to adopt modern frameworks and tools. By linking these solutions to real-world use cases, WGIC aims to accelerate market adoption and help companies convert innovation into revenue.

Equally important is talent and the future workforce. Our Industry Academia Committee continues to monitor, assess, and report on the trends of the geospatial and Earth observation workforce.

We know that pipelines of skilled workers are directly aligned to industry growth, ensuring that companies can scale teams, expand into new markets, and stand up new service lines with confidence. A growing industry needs a skilled workforce—WGIC will continue to make that possible.

As we look towards 2026, one message is clear: the opportunities for commercial expansion in the geospatial industry have never been stronger. WGIC is committed to helping our members identify and convert them into revenue by providing intelligence, access, advocacy, and a global platform led by WGIC member companies that accelerates business development.

Thank you to our members of geospatial companies, innovators, entrepreneurs, and industry leaders. Together, we are not only shaping the future of geospatial and Earth observation—we are working as the only global trade association focused on expanding the marketplace for it.

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ORGANIZATIONAL REPORT



VISION

To be a collaborative platform to advance the geospatial industry and strengthen its contributions to the world economy and society

MISSION

To be a catalyst for intra- and inter-industry knowledge exchange, create business opportunities for the geospatial industry, and enhance its value impact through policy advocacy, business development, and collaborative programs

Strategic Goals



Geospatial Industry

- Enable collaboration and integrated solution development across the geospatial value chain
- Present a unified industry voice for market visibility and advocacy
- Facilitate innovation, encourage start-ups to support ecosystem growth



User Communities

- Deepen engagement with end user sectors through targeted outreach
- Demonstrate long-term business and operational value of geospatial technologies
- Simplify adoption pathways and showcase scalable implementation use cases



Public Sector and National Governments

- Deepen collaboration with national geospatial and mapping agencies
- Advocate for enabling geospatial policies, standards, and open data ecosystems
- Support digital transformation initiatives that utilize geospatial technologies



Multilateral and Industry Associations

- Partner with global and regional organizations to drive aligned priorities
- Promote interoperability, standards and cross-sector collaboration
- Strengthen connections with engineering, ICT, infrastructure and climate networks

Implementation of Strategic Goals



Highlighting and Demonstrating Value

To accelerate adoption and strengthen the relevance of geospatial technologies, WGIC focuses on showcasing tangible value across sectors and use cases, including:

- Curating workshops, demonstrations, and experience-sharing sessions across user communities.
- Developing and sharing case studies that illustrate impact, ROI, and real-world outcomes.
- Enabling easier understanding of geospatial workflows by simplifying technical complexity and focusing on business outcomes.



Policy Advocacy

WGIC engages with government agencies, national mapping agencies, regulators, and global frameworks to promote enabling environments for geospatial data and technology. Key actions include:

- Advocating for interoperable standards, open geospatial ecosystems, and responsible data governance
- Participate actively in UN-GGIM, Group on Earth Observation (GEO), and other multilateral dialogues to represent the collective industry voice.



Cross-Cutting Efforts

WGIC facilitates collaboration across sectors, technologies, and global networks to amplify shared value-creation through:

- Strategic partnerships with ICT, engineering, infrastructure, climate, and AEC industry associations.
- Joint research, co-authored publications, and shared advocacy platforms.
- Harmonizing best practices and aligning on ethical, inclusive, and future-ready geospatial approaches.
- Strengthen global geospatial workforce development by advancing dialogue, sharing insights, and launching initiatives that highlight and foster the necessary skills required across the sector

Member Companies

PATRON MEMBERS



CORPORATE MEMBERS



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Patrons



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Founder & President
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SVP, Open Applications
Bentley Systems



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Vice General Manager -
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AI-Infrasolutions

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Solutions (MBS)

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OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

2025 was a landmark year for WGIC, marked by the launch of our flagship **Horizons 2025** conference and the debut of the **Horizons+ Dinner** series.

These initiatives strengthened collaboration across and beyond the geospatial community, fostered high-level dialogue, and opened new avenues for members to connect, partner, and pursue business opportunities. Additionally, WGIC participated in over 40 events worldwide – both online and in-person – facilitating and strengthening dialogue, and deepening WGIC's commitment to its mission.

HORIZONS

World Geospatial Industry Event

Horizons 2025 - High-Powered Convergence of Technologies, Innovation and Collaborative Solutions

April 27-29, 2025 / Denver, CO, USA

Horizons 2025, held in Denver, Colorado, brought together leading voices from the geospatial industry and beyond. From AI and digital infrastructure to climate resilience and space tech, Horizons 2025 explored what's Beyond Boundaries with business leaders from Google, NVIDIA, McKinsey, AWS, Microsoft, Accenture, the Global Covenant of Mayors (GCoM), and other organizations.

The two-day event saw several robust discussions. **Sean Young**, Director of AECO, Geospatial, and AI Solutions Industry Marketing of NVIDIA, unveiled a powerful vision of geospatial AI and digital twins, showcasing dramatic performance leaps using GPU-accelerated computing. **José Luis Blanco**, Senior Partner at McKinsey & Company, highlighted the construction sector's push toward digitalization amid pressing labor shortages and infrastructure demands.



Sean Young, NVIDIA



Jose Luis Blanco, McKinsey & Co



Bryn Fosburgh, President - WGIC
Senior Vice President, Trimble

Presenting the expanding role of generative AI in the geospatial realm—from enhancing satellite imagery to supporting urban planning and disaster response, **Kate Zimmerman**, Geoleader at the Generative AI Innovation Center, Amazon Web Services, demonstrated how cloud-native AI tools can scale analytical capacity while democratizing access to advanced geospatial intelligence.

While **Jefferson Wang**, Chief Strategy Officer of Cloud First at Accenture, explored the symbiosis between cloud and geospatial technologies, **Eve Psalti**, Senior Director of Artificial Intelligence at Microsoft, laid out Microsoft's Copilot ecosystem and shared enterprise-ready best practices for AI integration.

In a dedicated breakfast session, **Andy Deacon**, Co-Managing Director of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy (GCoM), introduced how geospatial technologies help cities overcome critical data and capacity gaps in climate action. Along with colleague Benjamin Jance IV, Andy gave away practical applications of geospatial solutions to support emissions reduction, resilience, and energy transitions through stronger collaboration between cities and the geospatial industry.



Kate Zimmerman, AWS



Jefferson Wang, Accenture



Melody Olson, Google



Joe Oddi, EagleView



Eve Psalti, Microsoft



Andy Deacon, GCoM



Dr. Nadine Alameh, Taylor Geospatial Institute



Benjamin Jance IV, GCoM



Aaron Addison, WGIC



Will Sarni, Water Foundry



Jessi Olsen, Elevate Quantum

About **135 professionals** gathered at WGIC Horizons 2025 to connect, gain insights, and explore the future of the geospatial industry over the two-day event. Horizons 2025 was more than an event—it was a declaration that the geospatial sector is ready to lead in an increasingly interconnected, data-rich world. Designed as a single-track experience, the event fostered a focused environment where every attendee participated in the powerful conversations.

Panel discussions brought together diverse voices to address the most pressing issues at the technological, business, policy, and operational levels. These dialogues went beyond presentations—they opened space for deeper conversations, candid insights, and the exchange of bold ideas.

Horizons 2025 also created meaningful opportunities for cross-industry networking. Attendees



engaged directly with peers from across sectors, uncovering shared business opportunities and co-developing solutions for the complex challenges our world faces today. With every session, it became clear:

the boundaries between geospatial, AI, climate science, construction, and quantum are not walls, but bridges. *Watch* Industry leaders share why they participated and what's driving key discussions at WGIC Horizons.

HORIZONS+

World Geospatial Industry Dinner

Horizons+ Calgary Dinner – High-Value Networking Opportunity

November 3, 2025 / Calgary, Canada

To expand the Horizons brand and enable more targeted, scalable engagements, WGIC hosted the first in a series of smaller, thematic gatherings, *Horizons+ Dinner*, on November 3 in Calgary, Canada. The sold-out event brought together about **35 CEOs**, presidents, founders, and senior leaders for an evening of candid, high-level dialogue and meaningful exchange. The event created an intimate setting for discussing opportunities that transcend the traditional boundaries of the geospatial market, providing an opportunity for high-value networking and exploring new pathways for collaboration.

In a thought-provoking keynote, **Gitane De Silva, Founder and Principal of GDStrategic**, shared how geospatial and

Earth observation are transforming the energy sector—from oil and gas to renewables. Gitane detailed on how governments and regulators are harnessing GIS, satellites, and digital twins to manage critical infrastructure, ensure safety, and drive environmental accountability in the global energy transition, along with necessary public policy and accompanying trade agreements.

The event was co-sponsored by WGIC members **SparkGeo** and **PhotoSat**. It was organized in partnership with **GoGeomatics** and supported by **ConnectMii Events**.

Special thanks to **Prashant Shukle, Charlie Trimble**, and **Bryn Fosburgh** for their valuable support throughout the evening.



Dinner Sponsors



In Partnership With



Organiser



Global Outreach

Strengthening and expanding engagement with businesses, policymakers, government agencies, user industries, academia, and multilateral organizations worldwide



**GEOBUIZ
SUMMIT**

**January
13-15, 2025**

Denver, USA

Jack Dangermond, WGIC Patron Chair, delivered an insightful keynote at GeoBUIZ, where he explored the dynamic relationship between geospatial data and geospatial information ecosystems and their pivotal role in shaping decision-making across both public and private sectors globally. WGIC Executive Director Aaron Addison also participated, engaging with existing members, connecting with potential members, and forging valuable new relationships to further strengthen the organization's global footprint.

GEOSPATIAL RISK SUMMIT

**January
30, 2025**
New York City, USA

WGIC participated in the Geospatial Risk Summit, where Aaron Addison engaged in discussions on the relevance and impact of geospatial and Earth observation in the insurance and financial markets, particularly in the context of natural disasters. Aaron highlighted the importance of acknowledging the imperfections in our models and the need for careful consideration of data inputs. The summit offered valuable opportunities for networking, while gaining insights from various sessions.





GEO WEEK

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**February
10-12, 2025**
Denver, CO, USA

WGIC attended Geo Week in Denver, where Aaron Addison participated in the panel discussion titled “Where is our Geospatial Workforce?” During the panel, Aaron shared valuable insights into the future of talent in the geospatial industry. WGIC also had its booth, where the team welcomed and engaged with members and partners, while making new connections and exploring partnership opportunities.



GeoSpatialNext

trends,
insights
& network.

Speakers

20 February 25'
Dubai (Online Conference)

LIVE STREAMING



Helen Gilmartin
Associate Director, World
Geospatial Industry Council
(WGIC)

**GEOSPATIAL
NEXT 2025**

.....

**February
20, 2025**
Dubai, UAE, (Online
Conference)

At Geospatial Next 2025, where WGIC was a knowledge partner, Helen Gilmartin, WGIC Associate Director, contributed to the online session “Women in Geospatial: Driving Change.” The discussion explored gender diversity in the geospatial sector, highlighting the progress so far and the challenges ahead. The session deliberated on the need for diverse teams for better decision-making, leadership opportunities for underrepresented groups, flexible work arrangements, and increased efforts to attract more women into geospatial education and careers.



**MENA
GEOSPATIAL
FORUM**

**February
24-25, 2025**
Dubai, UAE

At the MENA Geospatial Forum in Dubai, UAE, Aaron Addison led a dynamic panel on “Integrating Geospatial Data with AI – Transforming Analysis and Decision-Making.” Industry leaders shared compelling insights on how machine learning is revolutionizing geospatial data processing, enabling predictive modeling for environmental change, and enhancing urban planning strategies to bolster climate resilience.



**ESRI UAE
USER
CONFERENCE**

**February
25-26, 2025**
Dubai, UAE

WGIC participated in the Esri UAE User Conference, joining geospatial professionals and industry leaders to explore the latest advancements in geospatial technology. The conference showcased impactful use cases powered by Esri’s platforms and tools, highlighting their role in solving real-world challenges. The event also offered a valuable opportunity for WGIC to strengthen connections, share insights, and explore new partnership opportunities across the geospatial ecosystem.



Skills highlighted in June 2024 Geospatial job openings

- ☐ Lead Projects
- ☐ EIT Tools
- ☐ Data management
- ☐ Data wrangling
- ☐ Legal challenges to data
- ☐ Enterprise Geospatial skills
- ☐ Data Collection + GPS
- ☐ Systems thinking
- ☐ Problem solving
- ☐ QA \ QC skills
- ☐ Coordinating with others
- ☐ Interdepartmental projects
- ☐ Tolerance for ambiguity
- ☐ Being a trusted member of a team
- ☐ How to operationalise questions
- ☐ Communication skills

Manchester Lecture 2025 4th Feb 2025
 Time for Change
 Building a Better Future
 CICES
 12d
 Bentley

**CICES
 MANCHESTER
 LECTURE**

**February
 27, 2025**
 Manchester, UK

Helen Gilmartin spoke at the Chartered Institution of Civil Engineering Surveyors (CICES) Manchester Lecture, offering insights into the evolving skillsets required to thrive in today's dynamic geospatial landscape. She emphasized the growing importance of data management, enterprise geospatial capabilities, problem-solving, and digital agility—core competencies essential for driving sustainability, accountability, and long-term industry resilience.

**EUROGI
 WOMEN IN
 GEOSPATIAL**

**April
 2, 2025**
 Online

On April 2, 2025, Helen Gilmartin spoke at the Irish Chapter of the EUROGI Women in Geospatial Group's virtual event, sharing valuable insights on building and advancing a career in the geospatial field.

The session covered practical strategies for job searching and interviews, the importance of networking, and honest reflections on overcoming barriers, especially for women in the industry. Helen also explored emerging trends in geoinformatics and how they are shaping the future of the profession.

WGI
 Women In Geospatial
 EUROGI

Panel of Speakers

- Dr Fiona Cawkwell
UCC
- Glen Bambrick
Final Draft Mapping
- Helen Gilmartin
World Geospatial Industry Council
- Marion Murphy
Mallon

**Early Career
 Panel Discussion**

Navigating Jobs, Networking & the Future of Geoinformatics

2nd April, 2025 Start at 13:00



LOCATE & FIG WORKING WEEK

**April
6-10, 2025**
Brisbane, Australia

In Brisbane, Australia, Aaron Addison took part in Locate 2025 and the FIG Working Week, two flagship events that brought together global geospatial professionals and surveyors. On April 9, Aaron moderated the insightful panel discussion, “Is the Future of our Profession a Coherent and Merged Approach?”, where industry voices explored how the profession is evolving through increased collaboration across disciplines, integrated technologies, and a shared vision for the geospatial future.

**GEOSPATIAL
WORLD
FORUM**

**April
22-25, 2025**
Madrid, Spain

Helen Gilmartin attended the Geospatial World Forum (GWF) 2025 in Madrid, Spain—a global stage for innovation, collaboration, and industry leadership. WGIC was proud to be part of this influential gathering, engaging in meaningful conversations around the future of geospatial technologies and fostering new connections across sectors. Events like GWF continue to shape the dialogue on how our industry can create impact at scale.





**BENTLEY URBAN
TECH CHALLENGE
DUBLIN**

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**May
26-28, 2025**
Dublin, Ireland

Helen Gilmartin joined the Urban Tech Challenge in Dublin on the invitation of WGIC President Zubran Solaiman. Hosted by Bentley Systems, in partnership with Google, Dublin City University, and Smart Dublin, the event brought together teams to develop tech-driven solutions to real-world urban challenges. The challenge focused on issues such as flood management, urban mobility, and stakeholder engagement, using tools such as CesiumJS and Google APIs. This participation reflects WGIC's engagement in cross-sector collaboration to advance geospatial innovation.



**GEO
BUSINESS**

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**June
4-5, 2025**
London, UK

WGIC attended GEO Business 2025 in London, where Helen Gilmartin reconnected with members and explored new opportunities for collaboration. Helen also led the session, The Geospatial Profession – A Diversity of Pathways Forward. The session highlighted the evolving career landscape and the growing range of roles in the geospatial sector. The session sparked valuable discussion and strong engagement from the participants.



WGIC joined the EO Summit 2025 in New York, where Helen Gilmartin networked with WGIC members and engaged with industry leaders. The summit offered a valuable opportunity for informal exchanges and staying informed about key developments in the Earth observation sector.



Aaron Addison attended the NSF I-GUIDE Forum 2025 in Chicago, where he participated in the panel AI for Sustainability through Geospatial Innovation and Partnerships. He shared insights on how AI and geospatial technologies can support global sustainability goals—an area of growing relevance for WGIC members.

Dr. Siva Ravada, Vice President of Development at Oracle and Chair of WGIC's Industry-Academia Committee, also spoke at the session Geospatial AI and Innovation for Sustainability Solutions, which was supported by WGIC and other partner organizations.



UCGIS SYMPOSIUM

June
23-27, 2025
 Laramie, USA

In late June, Aaron Addison attended the UCGIS Symposium 2025 in Laramie, Wyoming, where he moderated a panel on workforce development featuring insights from Esri and other industry leaders. WGIC was among the sponsors of this important event, which gathered experts to discuss the future of the geospatial workforce.



**ESRI
EDUCATION
SUMMIT**

**July
12-15, 2025**
San Diego, USA

Aaron Addison spoke at the plenary session of the Esri Education Summit in San Diego on July 12, where he joined fellow geospatial leaders to reflect on how education must evolve to meet the demands of a changing industry. Aaron shared insights on workforce development, the future of talent pipelines, and the deeper meaning of geography in today's world.



**UN-GGIM
15TH
SESSION**

**August
6-8, 2025**
New York City, USA

In New York City, Aaron Addison participated in the 15th Session of UN-GGIM, promoting international cooperation in geospatial information management. UN-GGIM unites member states and organizations to advance the UN Sustainable Development Goals (UN-SDGs), strengthen the UN Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF), and ensure geospatial data is coordinated, accessible, and actionable worldwide.



INTERGEO October, 7-9, 2025 / Frankfurt, Germany

WGIC participated in INTERGEO Expo & Conference in Frankfurt, Germany, bringing together global geospatial leaders to advance innovation, workforce development, and industry collaboration. Over three dynamic days, WGIC hosted panels, meetings, and a networking reception focused on shaping the future of geospatial technologies.

Data to Decisions

On October 7, the panel “Data to Decisions” brought together experts from WGIC member companies RIEGL, Woolpert, DATADEV, PlanBlue, Bluesky, and Esri. Moderated by John Renard, the panel discussed how geospatial data transforms decision-making across sectors.

The session drew an audience of over 100 participants, reflecting the growing interest in how advances in data production and processing workflows are transforming the way we generate, interpret, and apply geospatial information. With faster and more efficient capture

methods—from mobile mapping to satellite and aerial systems—participants discussed how the industry is achieving new levels of scalability and precision across the value chain.

The lively discussion highlighted how AI-driven information extraction and automation are enabling the creation of product stacks that go beyond visualization to deliver true decision intelligence. The session reinforced a shared vision among WGIC members: turning data into trusted, actionable insights is key to realizing the full potential of the geospatial sector.





INTERGEO October, 7-9, 2025 / Frankfurt, Germany (...Contd)

Future of Earth Observation

The final day, October 9, featured two standout sessions: The panel, “The Future of Earth Observation,” where speakers from Sparkgeo, Bentley Systems, EOMAP, Wingtra, GeoSolutions, and Esri, discussed innovations in satellite data integration and ground-based geospatial applications.

A key discussion during this panel was the emergence of fake maps - AI-generated or altered imagery - that challenges how people govern, verify, and trust data. As Earth observation evolves toward operational, real-time decision support, panelists emphasized the critical need for verification frameworks that trace data integrity from pixels to attributes. The session, with an audience of 75+, underscored that transparency and accountability in geospatial data impact every part of our industry.

The panel was followed by a session on Geospatial Workforce, presented by Aaron Addison, who highlighted the evolving skillsets, challenges, and opportunities shaping the next generation of geospatial professionals.

The session drew over 40 engaged participants and featured a dynamic 15-minute Q&A. Questions ranged from the relevance of current university models amid rapid tech change to how AI is reshaping skills and job availability. Participants also explored how upskilling, reskilling, and flexible talent models can meet the growing demand for geospatial expertise. The discussion reflected a shared sense of urgency and optimism about how academia and industry can collaborate to equip the next generation of geospatial professionals.





SCSI - SOCIETY OF CHARTERED SURVEYORS IRELAND GEOSPATIAL CONFERENCE

October 16, 2025
Dublin, Ireland

WGIC attended the SCSI - Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland (SCSI) event in Dublin, engaging with professionals from across the geospatial and surveying sectors. The gathering provided an excellent opportunity to exchange insights, explore new ideas, and build connections that advance collaboration within the industry. WGIC extends its appreciation to SCSI for their continued partnership and support in fostering professional growth and dialogue within the global geospatial community.

WOMEN+ IN GEOSPATIAL WEBINAR

October 22, 2025
Online

Aaron Addison joined leading geospatial professionals at the Women+ in Geospatial webinar, "Thriving as a Geospatial Professional in the Age of AI." The discussion focused on how geospatial experts are navigating and leading in the age of artificial intelligence, fostering innovation, inclusion, and professional growth across the global community. Aaron shared his perspectives on the evolving intersection of AI and geospatial technologies, emphasizing collaboration and shared responsibility in shaping a resilient and forward-looking industry.



Thriving as a geospatial professional in the age of AI
Wed, Oct 22 (16:00 - 17:00 GMT)

Featuring:

MODERATOR



Kristen O'Shea



Julia Wagemann



Aaron Addison



Sam Roy



Charlette N'guessan

Women + in Geospatial is proudly sponsored by





WGIC joined and supported the Hexagon Education Program during the Hexagon Roadshow at Dublin City University. The event brought together educators, students, and professionals from construction and surveying to discuss how emerging technologies are shaping the future of geospatial learning and industry practice. Engagements like this strengthen dialogue on the role of education in the geospatial sector and help build momentum for collaboration and innovation. By connecting academic and industry perspectives, the event highlighted the importance of preparing future professionals for an increasingly technology-driven geospatial landscape.



WGIC participated in the Trimble Dimensions User Conference, held November 10-12, 2025, in Las Vegas, supporting patron member Trimble along with WGIC members and partners TopoDOT, KompassBMS, and NavVis. The conference convened a global community of innovators, practitioners, investors, and technology experts, offering a vibrant platform to exchange ideas, explore advancements, and build connections. For WGIC, it was a valuable opportunity to strengthen relationships, gain insights into emerging trends, explore partnerships, and engage in conversations shaping the future of technology and workflows.

Helen Gilmartin attended the Association for Geographic Information (AGI) Foresight Conference at the Royal Geographical Society in London. The event highlighted six major forces shaping the future of the geospatial sector and encouraged participants to reflect on the industry's trajectory over the coming decade.

A key theme throughout the conference was the need for stronger collaborative innovation and more effective advocacy for the value of geospatial information. A notable session, "The Great Skills Shift: How Geospatial Education Must Evolve for an Embedded Future," examined how education and training must adapt to integrate geospatial knowledge across disciplines and prepare future professionals for an increasingly data-driven world.



**EAASI
PARTNERS
SUMMIT**

November
18-21, 2025
Dubrovnik, Croatia



More than one hundred delegates from leading geospatial organizations and government agencies gathered in Dubrovnik, Croatia, for the EAASI Partners Summit 2025. Helen Gilmartin joined industry leaders for discussions on emerging opportunities in the aerial mapping sector, partnership building, and the evolving needs of the European geospatial community. We appreciate EAASI for organizing this valuable event and look forward to the continued exchange of insights and collaboration.

**BENTLEY
SYSTEMS'
DIGITAL
DELIVERY
SESSION**

November
27, 2025
Dublin, Ireland

WGIC attended Bentley's Digital Delivery Session: Construction Edition in Dublin, a focused session exploring how digital technologies are reshaping the way infrastructure is designed, built, and managed. The session showcased how Bentley's cutting-edge digital twin technology is reshaping urban infrastructure systems, enabling smarter design decisions, streamlined project delivery, and more sustainable operations.



NATIONAL ACADEMIES' WORKSHOP

December
2-3, 2025
Washington DC, USA



Aaron Addison participated in the National Academies' workshop on the Future of Earth observation and Data Stewardship, held at the American Geophysical Union in Washington, DC. The two-day program brought together stakeholders from government, research, and industry to examine leadership, coordination, and long-term stewardship across the Earth observation ecosystem. The discussions highlighted both the complexity of the challenges ahead and the strong momentum created through collaborative dialogue, with WGIC contributing industry perspectives and engaging with partners to help shape the path forward.

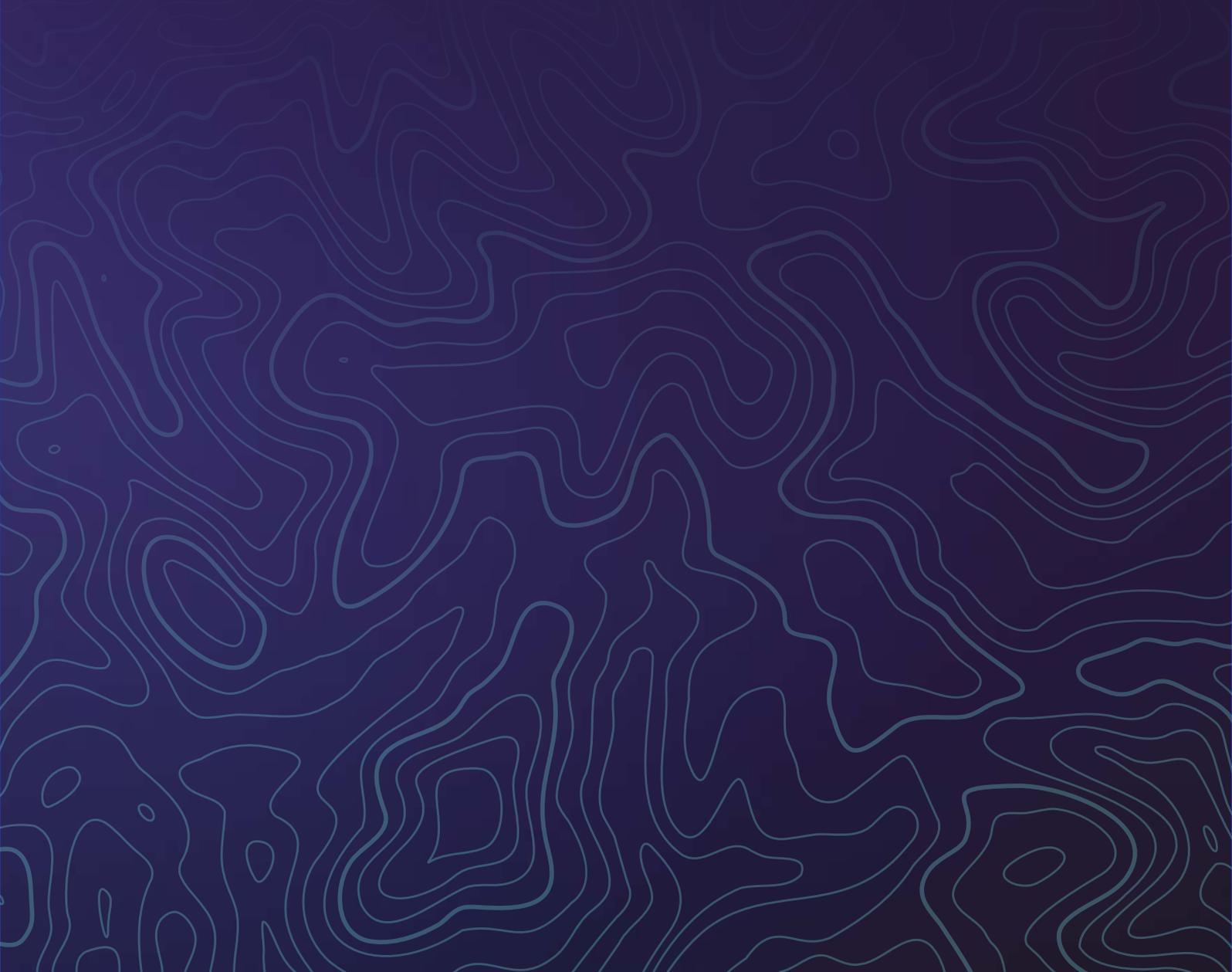
HARNESSING LOCATION INTELLIGENCE WEBINAR SERIES

December
4, 2025
Online



Aaron Addison moderated a session of the Harnessing Location Intelligence webinar series, bringing together expert perspectives on the role of geospatial insights in urban mobility and infrastructure resilience. The discussion explored practical applications of location intelligence in government decision-making, highlighting how data-driven approaches can support more resilient, efficient, and future-ready mobility systems.

DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT & SOCIAL MEDIA



Scaling Reach, Showcasing Member Value, and Strengthening Owned Channels

In 2025, WGIC expanded its digital engagement and social media strategy with a clear focus on delivering visibility, recognition, and thought-leadership opportunities for member companies. Through a structured, value-driven communications program across YouTube, LinkedIn, CRM newsletters, and the WGIC website, WGIC consistently translated member expertise, innovation, and collaboration into high-quality digital content.

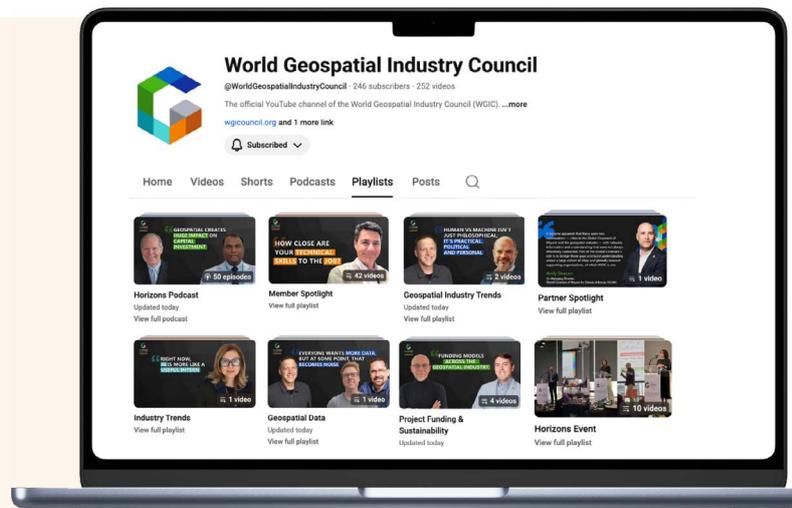
Throughout the year, WGIC developed and published a diverse portfolio of member-driven content formats, ensuring that WGIC's platforms functioned not only as communication channels but as value-creating media assets for members and partners. This approach balanced always-on editorial delivery with high-impact campaign peaks around major initiatives and convenings.

Horizons Podcast (YouTube)

Amplifying Member Voices and Industry Dialogue

The *Horizons Podcast* remained one of WGIC's flagship digital platforms in 2025, serving as a primary vehicle for member storytelling, executive visibility, and industry dialogue. Building on the Member Spotlight format introduced in 2024, WGIC significantly expanded podcast programming in 2025 through new series and structured playlists, including committee-led episodes, executive conversations, and insightful dialogue series on geospatial + AI.

These conversations enabled WGIC members, partners, guests, and committee representatives to share their expertise on emerging technologies, policy priorities, project funding models, workforce challenges, and real-world applications of geospatial solutions. Through thought-provoking long-form interviews and crisp short video bytes, the Horizons Podcast ensured sustained, year-round exposure for member voices across WGIC's owned digital channels.

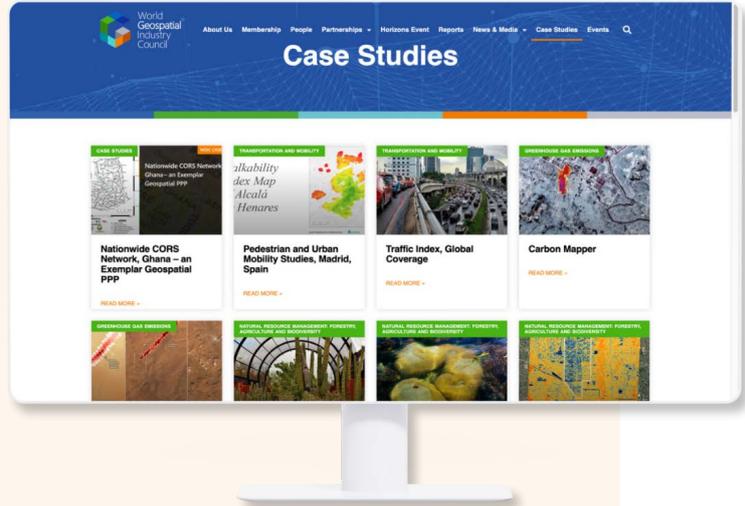


Member Case Studies

Showcasing Real-World Geospatial Impact

In 2025, WGIC introduced a *member case study content* stream, enabling member companies to showcase the power of geospatial technology and real-world applications through impactful storytelling. Each case study highlighted customer challenges, solution approaches, technology deployment, and key results, demonstrating how geospatial innovation delivers tangible value across sectors.

Published on the WGIC website and amplified across WGIC communication channels, these case studies strengthened long-term discoverability, credibility, and market visibility for member achievements, while providing the broader community with concrete examples of applied geospatial solutions.

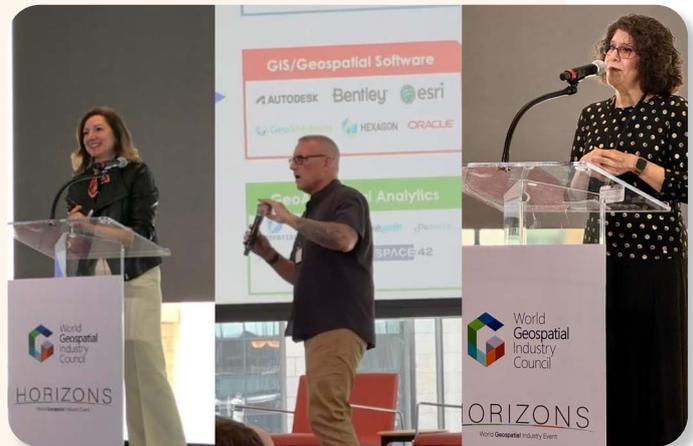


WGIC Events Promotion - Horizons 2025 & Horizons+ Dinner

Inaugural Flagship Event

WGIC Horizons 2025 in Denver marked a defining milestone in 2025 as WGIC's inaugural flagship event and a major driver of digital content production. The team supported the conference with a coordinated digital and print communications plan that spotlighted speakers, partners, and key themes, and through live event posts. The post-event storytelling extended the life and reach of Horizons 2025 well beyond in-person participation.

Through videos, visual highlights, interviews, and recap content, WGIC transformed Horizons Denver into a sustained digital narrative, reinforcing member visibility and strengthening WGIC's position as a global convening platform for the geospatial industry.



Expanding Executive-Level Engagement

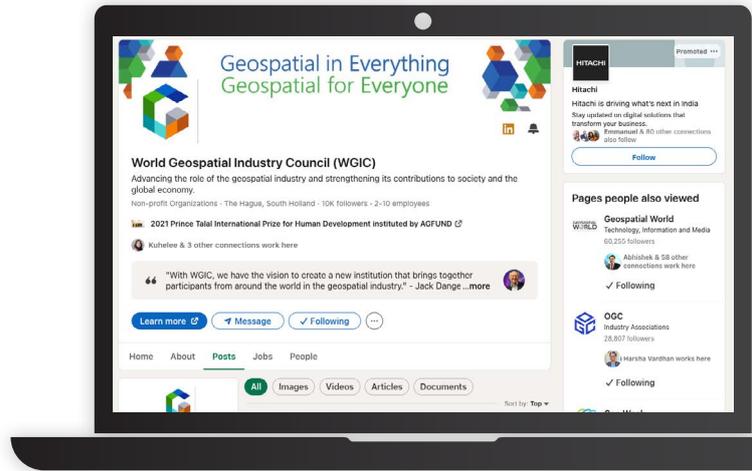
In late 2025, we introduced the *Horizons+ Dinner series*, creating a new format for deeper, executive-level dialogue and relationship building within the WGIC ecosystem. The team supported the launch through targeted communications and cross-platform promotion, strengthening visibility for guests, sponsors, and partners, while expanding our event storytelling beyond large-scale convenings.



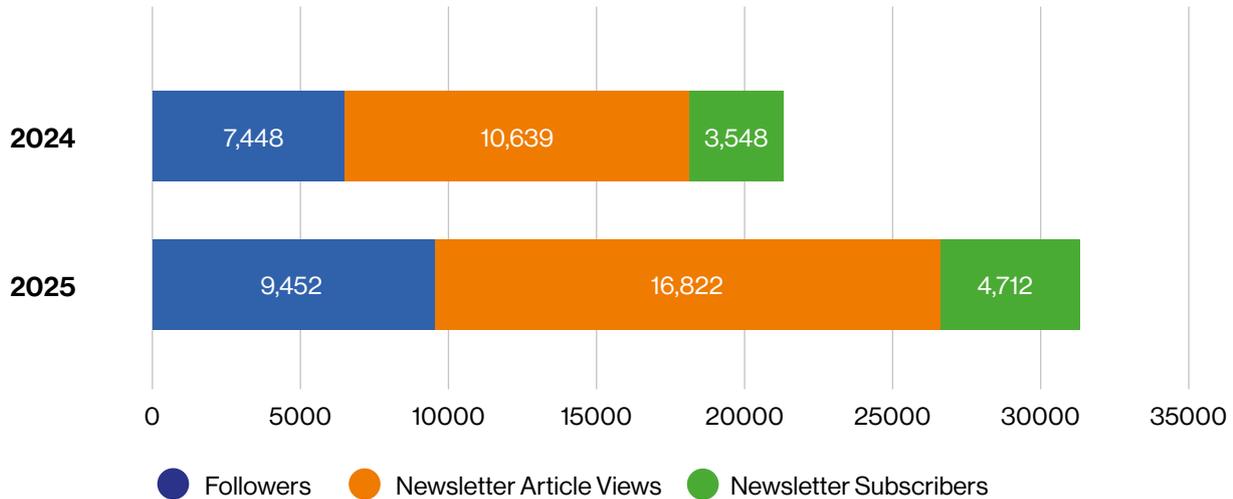
LinkedIn and Newsletter Growth

WGIC's LinkedIn presence continued to expand steadily in 2025, reaching 9,452 total followers, representing a 27% year-on-year increase. While new follower acquisition normalized following the exceptional growth in 2024, overall audience size continued to grow consistently, confirming long-term interest in WGIC content and initiatives.

Newsletter performance strengthened significantly alongside LinkedIn growth. Newsletter article views increased by 58%, and newsletter subscribers grew by 33% year-on-year, demonstrating sustained demand for long-form content and deeper engagement beyond social feeds. These gains positioned the newsletter as one of WGIC's most effective owned communication channels.

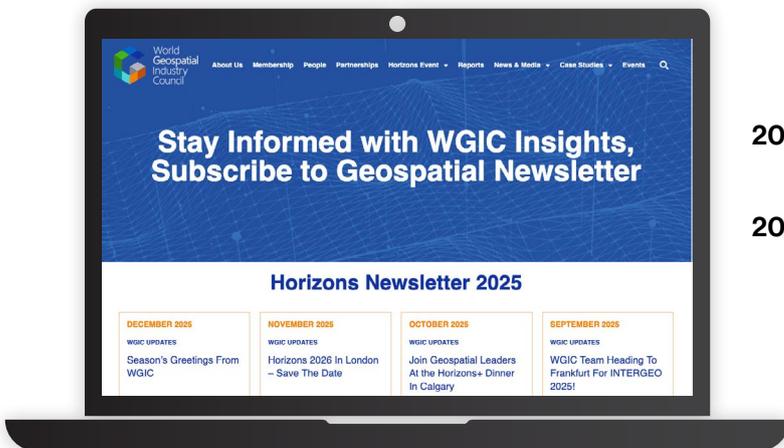


WGIC LinkedIn Analytics



Horizons Newsletter (CRM) Performance

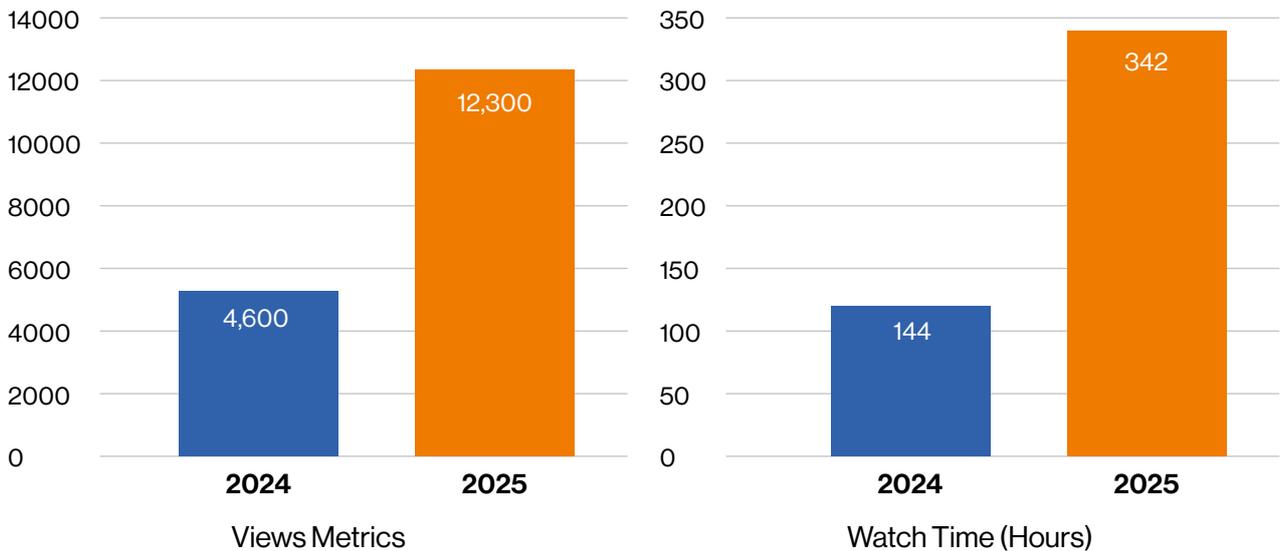
CRM-based Horizons Newsletter activity expanded in parallel with WGIC's growing event portfolio. Year over year, email opens increased by 30%, reflecting broader reach and visibility, while bounces declined by 6.5%, highlighting improved database quality and ongoing CRM hygiene.



YouTube and Video Content Expansion

2025 marked a significant step forward for WGIC's video strategy. Following the expansion of the Horizons Podcast, member and partner spotlight episodes, and committee podcast series, WGIC's YouTube channel transitioned from a low-activity platform into a steadily growing content hub. Compared to 2024, YouTube views increased by 167%, watch time grew by 138%, and new subscribers rose by 72%, with the total subscriber base more than doubling year over year.

WGIC YouTube Channel Metrics

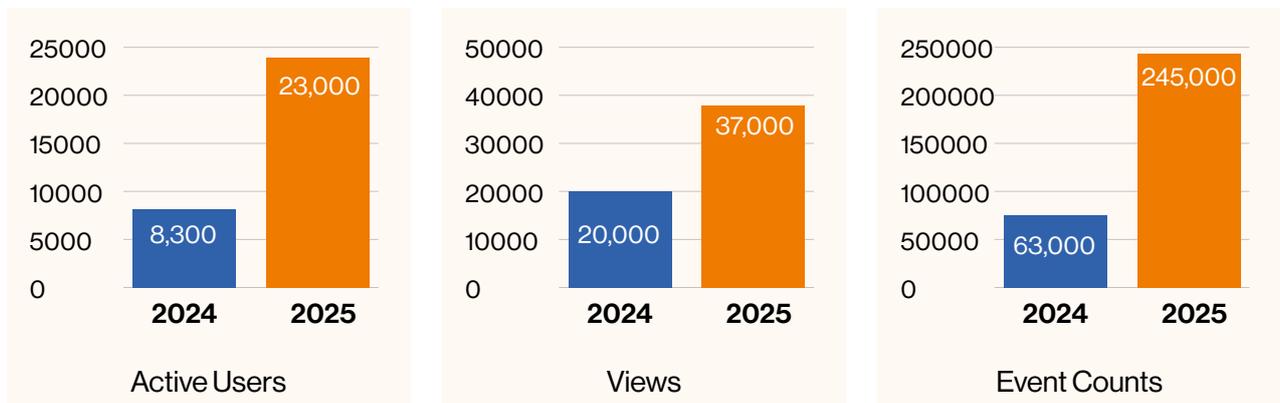


Website Performance and User Experience

WGIC's website experienced substantial growth in 2025, driven by increased content publishing, event promotion, and improved navigation. Active users increased by 177.1%, reaching approximately 23,000, while page views grew by 85.0% year over year. Event interactions rose by 288.9%, reflecting higher user engagement across the site.



WGIC Website Analytics Highlights



COMMITTEE REPORTS



Data Committee

The Data Committee was established to address the challenges and opportunities related to geospatial data - from governance and accessibility to value addition and policy alignment. The Committee serves as a collaborative platform to promote the responsible use and exchange of geospatial data and to advocate for data-driven innovation across user industries.

The Data Committee, the newest among WGIC committees, is chaired by John Renard of Airedale Advisory during 2025 and had representation from WGIC member companies across the data value chain. Throughout the year, Committee saw proactive engagement of members – Dr Ramesh Kajrolkar and Arjen Crince (AI-Infrasolutions), Shelby Coder (Fugro), Ryan Burley (GeoSolutions), Adina Gillespie (Hexagon Geosystems), Steven Sawdon (IIC Technologies), Kathleen Martin (MBS), John Bowers (MDA Space), Dan Rushton (Picterra), Jim Van Rens (RIEGL International), Willy Govender (Vastpoint), Philip Chisholm (TomTom), Paul DiGiacobbe (TopoDOT), Chantal Jorawsky (Trimble) and Brian Nicholls (Woolpert).

Data Dialogues

The Committee initiated strategic dialogues in 2025 on data frameworks, procurement models, and the creation of data value. In Q2 2025, the Committee launched a podcast series

to spotlight key geospatial data topics. It set up a dedicated working group to lead the development and execution of this podcast series and to ensure continuous engagement and knowledge sharing across the community.

The Committee successfully produced its first episode, *[“Geospatial Landscape Changed From ‘Can I Get Data?’ To ‘What Data Should I Use?’”](#)* The episode explored the evolution of geospatial data—from paper maps to native digital platforms. It discussed challenges in data accessibility, licensing, and ownership, as well as the rise of open data initiatives like Overture Maps, and the growing role of AI in making sense of vast data volumes. This episode offered practical insights into navigating today’s data-driven geospatial landscape.

Soon after the successful production and publication of the first episode, the Committee began production of its second episode, focused on “The Vital Role of the USGS 3DEP Program in the Geospatial Industry.” Furthermore, the Committee agreed to focus its upcoming efforts on two interrelated themes - Data Sovereignty and Data Authenticity. The former will explore the legal, policy, and regional dimensions of data ownership, storage, and access, while the latter theme will examine how to ensure data trustworthiness in the face of challenges such as fake imagery and AI-generated distortions.

Data to Decisions Panel Discussion

The Committee convened a high-impact session titled “Data to Decisions” at Intergeo 2025. John Renard moderated the panel discussion that featured experts from RIEGL, Woolpert, DATADEV, PlanBlue, Bluesky, and Esri. Over 100 participants joined the exploration of how geospatial data transforms decision-making across industries.

The thought-provoking discussion highlighted rapid advances in data production, from terrestrial and mobile to aerial and satellite-based systems, enabling greater scalability and precision as well as the growing role of AI-driven information extraction and automation in transforming raw data into actionable intelligence. Further, the panel unveiled the shared vision of WGIC members - turning data into trusted, actionable insights as key to realizing the full potential of the geospatial technology.



2026 Focus Areas

Building on its early achievements, the Data Committee will expand its activities in 2026 through three core areas of action:

Global Data Policy and Governance Alignment

- Continue engagement with international bodies and governments to advocate for harmonized, transparent, and ethical data practices.
- Address evolving policy landscapes, procurement frameworks, and data-sharing mechanisms to ensure effective data access and data management.

Knowledge Sharing and Community Engagement

- Expand the podcast series and related knowledge initiatives to foster greater public awareness of the role of data in shaping the future.
- Support cross-sector collaborations through case studies, events, and working sessions.

The Data Committee will continue to serve as a thought leadership hub for the global geospatial community, driving alignment between data policy, innovation, and value creation. The Committee's work will contribute directly to WGIC's vision of unlocking the full potential of geospatial data as a foundation for sustainable growth and digital transformation.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee continued to anchor WGIC's commitment to fostering an inclusive and representative geospatial sector. In a year marked by heightened global sensitivities around diversity topics, the Committee adopted a measured approach, prioritizing substance and long-term strategy over visibility.

Dr. Valrie Grant (GeoTechVision) continued to spearhead the Committee with support and participation from Andres Abeyta (Bootcamp GIS), Dr. Menghestab Haile (GeoSaS), and Eva Carranza (Hexagon Geosystems).

DEI perspectives were woven into WGIC's broader

workforce development discussions, emphasizing equitable access to skills, opportunities, and career pathways as the industry evolves. This helped ensure that inclusion remained a core consideration within WGIC's thinking on talent readiness and future competencies.

A central effort in 2025 was the development of a report on leadership diversity in the geospatial industry. This work aims to assess representation across senior roles, identify systemic gaps, and outline opportunities to strengthen inclusive leadership pipelines. The findings will serve as a strategic input for WGIC's ongoing policy and advocacy efforts.

2026 Focus Areas

In 2026, the DEI Committee plans to:

- Publish the report on leadership diversity, offering insights and recommendations for the global geospatial industry.
- Develop guidance and best practices to support inclusive leadership pathways across WGIC member organizations.
- Integrate DEI principles further into WGIC's workforce development agenda, including the upcoming white paper.
- Re-engage members and partners through targeted discussions, thought leadership, and collaborative activities as global conditions allow.
- Hold quarterly DEI Committee meetings to ensure steady progress and alignment.



Industry-Academia Collaboration

The Industry-Academia Committee supports WGIC's mission to strengthen the global geospatial workforce development by advancing dialogue, sharing insights, and launching initiatives that highlight and foster the necessary skills across the geospatial sector.

Dr Siva Ravada (Oracle) spearheaded the Committee during 2025. The Committee saw active participation and contributions from members Dr. Nikolas Smilovsky (Bad Elf), Andres Abeyta (Bootcamp GIS), Dr Bushra Zaman (Deepspatial.ai), Elshan Musayev (EKM Global Consulting), Prof. Dr. Michael Gould (Esri), Dr. Valrie Grant (GeoTechVision), Vattem Narendra Babu (iSpatial Techno Solutions), Anthony Paturzo (Leica Geosystems), Stephanie Michaud (Trimble), and Dr. Zaffar Sadiq Mohamed-Ghouse (Woolpert).

Global Workforce Dialogue Through WGIC Leadership

Workforce themes raised by the Committee were amplified throughout 2025 by the contributions of WGIC Executive Director Aaron Addison, particularly at Intergeo, on the Mapping the Conversations podcast, and in Geo Week News. These engagements highlighted the widening global skills gap, the impact of AI and automation on geospatial roles, and the need for deeper conceptual understanding, not just procedural training, across geospatial education pathways.

Engagement with Xploor Program

WGIC supported Deepspatial's (WGIC member) Xploor initiative, an applied learning and mentorship program through which student teams work on real-world challenges across various domains. This engagement reinforced WGIC's commitment to practical workforce development



and to bridging the gap between academic learning and industry needs.

From Classroom to Industry: Closing the Geospatial Skills Gap

WGIC collaborated with Deepspatial on a session that examined the urgent need to prepare students for rapidly evolving geospatial careers. The session, led by WGIC Industry-Academia Advisor Kuhelee Chandel, highlighted global workforce trends, including projected annual demand growth of 11% until 2030 versus a 2% rise in graduate supply, and the resulting shortage of early-career talent.

The discussion underscored shifting employer expectations, with growing emphasis on practical skills such as working with real-world datasets, GeoAI awareness, spatial SQL, web GIS, automation tools, and strong communication capabilities. Guidance on building job-ready portfolios and a structured 12-month readiness pathway provided students with clear steps toward entering the global geospatial talent pool.

Further, WGIC sponsored the UCGIS Symposium 2025 at the University of Wyoming, where Aaron Addison moderated a panel with Esri and engaged with leaders from industry and academia on strengthening the geospatial talent pipeline.

2026 Focus Areas

In 2026, the Industry / Academia Committee plans to:

- Release a white paper on geospatial workforce development and industry-academia collaboration.
- Prepare a detailed follow-up report expanding on the white paper's findings and recommendations.
- Develop stronger partnerships with academic institutions to support industry-aligned training, curriculum insights, and applied learning pathways.
- Advance WGIC's workforce development advocacy, focusing on emerging skill needs and global talent readiness.
- Launch a podcast series highlighting workforce development trends, employer expectations, and academic-industry collaboration.
- Contribute to global workforce dialogues through WGIC and external platforms, emphasizing future competencies and sector-wide priorities.
- Follow a monthly cadence for the committee meetings, scheduled for the second Wednesday of each month, to ensure consistent coordination and progress.

Partnerships and Industry Engagement

The Partnerships & Industry Engagement (P&IE) Committee plays a central role in strengthening WGIC's collaborations with global institutions, industry associations, and public sector organizations. The Committee focuses on building strategic partnerships that advance the geospatial industry's collective voice, promote cross-sector cooperation, and highlight the transformative impact of geospatial technologies for sustainable development priorities.

Dr Pooja Mahapatra (Fugro) concluded her term as the chairperson in early 2025. The Committee extended its appreciation for her outstanding leadership and contributions. The Committee welcomed Patricia Cummins (Esri) and Adina Gillespie (Hexagon Geosystems) as Co-Chairs. Patricia and Adina bring deep expertise in policy, partnerships, and industry engagement. Their combined leadership guides the Committee's next phase of growth and collaboration.

Through 2025, the Committee enjoyed active participation of member company representatives Eric DesRoche (Autodesk), Remko Lugten (AI-Infrasolutions), Larry Fox (Bad Elf), Dr. Louis-Martin Losier (Bentley Systems), Rodrigo Fernandes (Bentley Systems), Francois Martin (CHC Navigation), Richard Budden (Esri), Darlene Magold (Etch), Leonard Sands (Fugro), Dr. Menghestab Haile (GeoSAS), Dr. Valrie Grant (GeoTechVision), Guillermo Gutierrez (IIC Technologies), John Bowers (MDA Space), Monika Lebkowska (Picterra), Dr. Hannah Brocke (PlanBlue), Chris Newlands (Space Aye) and Hervé Clauss (TomTom).

New Initiatives Expanding Advocacy, Outreach

In 2025, the Committee initiated a multi-episode podcast series that explores industry engagement with institutions and organizational partnerships. The series is expected to feature discussions with leaders from across the geospatial ecosystem, highlighting successful collaboration models, the value of partnership-driven innovation, and strategies for aligning industry capabilities with global initiatives. Through these conversations, the Committee aims to share insights



that inspire stronger cooperation across public, private, and multilateral stakeholders.

The Committee is broadening its focus through targeted outreach activities and new initiatives in infrastructure and the blue economy. These efforts aim to demonstrate how geospatial solutions contribute to resilient infrastructure planning, environmental stewardship, and sustainable management of the oceans and coastal areas. By engaging with new sectors and partners, the Committee seeks to position WGIC as a connector between industry innovation and global sustainability goals.

Towards the end of the year, the WGIC Secretariat welcomed Nadine Alameh, a globally recognized geospatial leader, to staff the P&IE Committee. Nadine's experience and coordination will further strengthen the Committee's engagement and ensure alignment with WGIC's strategic goals.

2026 Focus Areas

In 2026, the P&IE Committee will continue to expand its partnership network and promote collaborative initiatives that advance geospatial innovation and have a positive impact. Through podcasts, outreach programs, and engagement with emerging domains such as infrastructure resilience and blue economy, the Committee will continue to champion WGIC's mission of building bridges between industry and global stakeholders.

Policy Development and Advocacy

The Policy Development and Advocacy Committee continues to play a vital role in shaping conversations around the evolving policy landscape of the global geospatial industry. The Committee brings together experts and member representatives to examine emerging policy challenges, advocate for responsible governance frameworks, and strengthen collaboration between the public and private sectors.

The Committee witnessed a leadership transition in 2025, with Dr. Zaffar Sadiq Mohamed-Ghouse (Woolpert) assuming the role of the Committee Chair from Jayant Sharma (Oracle).

Dr. Zaffar brings extensive experience in geospatial governance and international collaboration, and under his stewardship, the Committee continued to advance WGIC's mission of policy advocacy and industry representation.

The Committee had active contributions throughout the year from members Darlene Magold (Etch), Matthew Pennells (Esri), Hans Viehmann (Oracle), James Van Rens (RIEGL International), and Marius Swanepoel (TomTom).

In Tune with the Industry Trends & Needs

The Committee initiated an examination of the role of Generative AI (GenAI) in the geospatial industry, exploring its rapid developments, potential, and associated challenges. This ongoing effort aims to understand how GenAI can accelerate data generation, analysis, and decision-making while addressing policy implications such as ethics, data integrity, and accountability.

The Committee published its first white paper titled "[Strengthening the Role of Private Sector in Proactive Geospatial Policy Development](#)." In the context of data democratization and the associated challenges policymakers face, the paper emphasizes the criticality of industry participation in shaping inclusive, future-ready geospatial policies. Reiterating the importance of private sector participation in ensuring policies are practical, scalable, and innovation-friendly, the paper provides actionable recommendations to encourage stronger public-private dialogue and cooperation.

To broaden outreach and deepen engagement with policy stakeholders, the Committee initiated a podcast series to explore the critical aspects of geospatial policy. The series intends to amplify the voices of subject matter experts and industry leaders, offering diverse perspectives on regulation, innovation, and the evolving intersection of technology and policy.

2026 Focus Areas

In 2026, the Policy Committee will expand its focus on AI governance, open data frameworks, and sustainability policies influencing the geospatial ecosystem. Through continued collaboration, publications, and outreach, the Committee aims to position WGIC as a trusted global voice in promoting balanced, forward-looking, and innovation-driven geospatial policies.

WGIC is mainstreaming policy discussion to global geospatial community, says Dr. Zaffar Mohamed-Ghouse, Policy Committee Chair.

Project Funding and Sustainability

The Project Funding & Sustainability (P&FS) Committee works to advance innovative financing models that enable sustainable growth across the geospatial sector. The Committee's work explores the evolving landscape of business and project funding—bridging traditional mechanisms with emerging investment approaches—to ensure that geospatial innovation continues to deliver both economic and environmental value.

In parallel, the Committee, which meets on the first Thursday of every month, prioritises sustainability as a core pillar of responsible industry practice, recognising that economic progress and environmental stewardship must move forward together.

Throughout the year, the Committee enjoyed the stewardship of Chairperson Willy Govender (Vastpoint) along with the proactive engagement of members Andrew Coote (ConsultingWhere), Matthew Pennells (Esri), Dr. Menghestab Haile (GeoSAS), Adina Gillespie (Hexagon Geosystems), Narendra Babu Vattem (iSpatial Techno Solutions), Kathleen Martin (MBS), and Chris Tanner (Woolpert).

Exploring Diverse Funding Pathways for Geospatial Innovation

As technology advances and new applications emerge, many projects require funding models that go beyond conventional sources. To that end, the Committee examined several complementary funding pathways, including venture capital, public-private partnerships (PPPs), crowdfunding, and green and ESG investing.

Furthermore, the Committee launched a podcast series to raise awareness about the new and novel

funding models and the financial tools available to innovators, researchers, and policymakers driving geospatial progress.

This multi-episode series translated complex financial and environmental concepts into real-world stories—amplifying the voices of innovators, investors, and policymakers shaping the future of the geospatial industry, demonstrating successful examples, and illuminating the challenges and opportunities involved in geospatial project funding.

In a thought-provoking conversation,

[Vattem Narendra Babu and Andy Coote examined how investors assess risks](#) in geospatial projects, stressing the need for clear use cases and operational execution. They showcased how sustainable funding and stakeholder engagement are key to realizing long-term geospatial value.

In another engaging conversation, strategy expert *[Simon Musäus and Matthew Pennells discussed how subscription-based models and innovative funding approaches are redefining](#) the geospatial industry. Their discussion explored trends in private*

equity, defense spending, startups, and PPPs to promote sustainable growth and smarter investment.

Partnerships for Sustainable Innovation: The Geovation Accelerator Program

The Committee has engaged in ongoing discussions and a great podcast conversation with Gareth Sumner, Head of Geovation, an Ordnance Survey (OS) initiative in association with HM Land Registry, to connect industry challenges with startup solutions.

The podcast explored [*how innovation hubs such as Geovation bridge the gap between fast-moving startups and established public sector institutions.*](#)

The episode examined how Geovation supports entrepreneurs in utilizing geospatial and property data to solve real-world problems, why long-term commitment is essential for startup success, and how experimentation, risk-taking, and collaboration help

shape the future direction of the geospatial industry.

Through collaboration with Geovation, the Committee seeks to strengthen the pipeline of sustainable innovation and identify pathways to broader industry adoption.

On a related note, the Committee is following the [*UN-IGIF Funding Guide*](#) with interest, particularly its

insights into the unique valuation challenges of location data and NSDIs. Researchers highlight that many benefits from such investments fall outside traditional market frameworks and that public provision of geospatial data complicates conventional pricing approaches. Economists have developed different approaches to estimate the value of tangible and intangible benefits.

2026 Focus Areas

- The Committee proposes a 2026 work plan centred on strengthening the global geospatial investment landscape through financial innovation, responsible growth, and targeted industry outreach.
- Complementing the podcast, the Committee will roll out a structured investor outreach program, packaging “Investor Notes,” an interactive funding innovation landscape map, and an online roundtable with key experts — based on the series and to build a shared understanding of geospatial business models, revenue mechanisms, ROI expectations, and ESG impacts. These initiatives will position WGIC as a key facilitator of dialogue between the geospatial sector, institutional investors, development banks, and climate-finance actors.
- To ensure responsible and sustainable expansion of the industry, the Committee’s 2026 work plan aims to include the development of responsible funding principles and the incorporation of ESG guidance for geospatial companies. Collectively, these actions aim to create the enabling conditions for balanced growth—where financial innovation, environmental stewardship, and technological advancement reinforce one another—while establishing WGIC as the global voice shaping the future of geospatial funding.

United Nations and Related Entities

W GIC has been actively involved with the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) Private Sector Network (PSN) and its activities. Aaron Addison, along with Dr. Zaffar Mohamed-Ghouse, attended the 15th Session of the UN-GGIM Committee of Experts held in New York City in August.

UN-GGIM and its member states and organizations discussed advancement of the UN-SDGs, strengthening the UN Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF), and ensuring geospatial data is coordinated, accessible, and actionable worldwide.

Just before the 15th session, the WGIC Policy Committee released a white paper titled "Strengthening the Role of the Private Sector in Proactive Geospatial Policy Development". Policy development has been conventionally led by government institutions, with some involvement from the private sector. With technological change outpacing policy frameworks, the need for proactive, co-designed policies involving the private sector at early stages benefits an inclusive policy.

Private sector players are not just implementers or service providers but partners with deep technical expertise and

real-world insights. To fully unlock the benefits of geospatial technologies, it is prudent that governments consider embracing the private sector as a co-developer of policy.

Dr. Zaffar presented the paper at the Third Expert Meeting of the Working Group on Policy and Legal Frameworks for Geospatial Information Management, including addressing issues related to authoritative and reliable geospatial data and emerging technologies. This meeting was hosted by GEOSA - General Authority for Survey and Geospatial Information on 7-9 October in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Dr. Zaffar Mohamed-Ghouse (first row, fifth from right) at the Third Expert Meeting of the Working Group on Policy and Legal Frameworks for Geospatial Information Management in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

2026 Focus Areas

WGIC aims to continue contributing to the discussions on the future geospatial ecosystem and to continue engagement with the UN-GGIM and other UN entities.



UN-GGIM PSN meeting held at the 15th Session in New York City



Dr. Zaffar Mohamed-Ghouse (first row, fifth from right) at the Third Expert Meeting of the Working Group on Policy and Legal Frameworks for Geospatial Information Management in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

WGIC Secretariat



Aaron Addison
Executive Director



Helen Gilmartin
Associate Director



Aarti Iyer
Executive Assistant

Consultants



Bhanu Rekha
Communications
Strategist



Dr. Nadine Alameh
Advisor – Partnerships and
Industry Engagement



Dr. Kuhelee Chandel
Advisor - Industry-Academia and
DEI Committees



Margarita Dadyan
Digital Marketing Specialist



Andre Head
IT Consultant



World
Geospatial
Industry
Council

World Geospatial Industry Council

Fluwelen Burgwal 58,
2511 CJ Hague
The Netherlands

Email: info@WGICouncil.org