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## Editorial

### Geospatial Innovation for Society

In 2014, the annual GI\_Forum acknowledges contributions from GIScience that are actively devoted to the development of society. The GI\_Forum bridges the gap between technical development and academic research and their application for society. This clearly indicates a slight shift towards technologies, but with the end-user in mind.

The Geoinformatics Forum ([www.gi-forum.org](http://www.gi-forum.org)) held in Salzburg from July 1-4, 2014, links across research areas. We are pleased to present work by researchers who actively contribute to the creation of the GISociety in theoretical, technical, and educational terms. The conference hosts four prominent keynote speakers who address the main conference topic and encourage further discussion. Andre Skupin, Christoph Schlieder, Diana Sinton and Michael Gould present papers on various research areas that show how GI research and development may support society, linking academic endeavour and societal needs.

The GI\_Forum has become a host platform for national and international projects, to both discuss and disseminate project findings. This year (a) the Comenius project SPACIT, (b) participants of a workshop on linked open data as well as (c) initiatives for use of GIS in health and education share their insights at the GI\_Forum. The current issue of GI\_Forum reflects this development by devoting specific sections to these relevant research areas that are edited by specialists in the field.

Like in 2013, our traditional publisher Wichmann/VDE VERLAG shares publishing duties with the Austrian Academy of Sciences Press. This co-edition allows us to provide a hard-copy volume – which our readers are used to – as well as a professionally edited and fully indexed online edition of the GI\_Forum contributions. The earlier “proceedings” now have evolved into an online journal, and measures have been taken for its indexing in relevant channels.

The GI\_Forum is jointly organized by the University of Salzburg Interfaculty Department for Geoinformatics – Z\_GIS, the Commission for GIScience at the Austrian Academy of Sciences (OeAW-GIScience), and the Department of Sustainable Tourism and Regional Development at the German University of Technology in Muscat, Oman. The interdisciplinary GI\_Forum has become an annual event for a vibrant GI community representing academia, industry, government, and education to advance the dialogue on progress in GIScience and to explore new research directions. The symposium is co-located with the highly regarded annual German language AGIT conference ([www.agit.at](http://www.agit.at)), sharing more than 1000 professional participants.

Neither the conference nor this publication would have been possible without the help of many people quietly working in the background. We are deeply indebted to all those who contributed to the conference and supported us as editors through their work, effort, time and, above all, patience. We would like to mention, first of all, the authors who underwent a rigorous review process resulting in good quality publications. Secondly, we deeply appreciate work done by our Program Committee whose feedback led to significant improvements in quality of this year’s edition. Helena Merschdorf was available for professional

proofreading; Simone Dürr, Anna Karnassioti, Helena Atteneder, Bernhard Bretz, Dagmar Baumgartner and Bernhard Zagel (Salzburg) provided invaluable assistance with their competent handling of general conference affairs (from registration of contributions to public relations). Finally, we thank Gerold Olbrich who coordinated the final print at Wichmann publishers, as well as Herwig Stöger at Austrian Academy of Science Press for his support of the online publication and journal development.

We sincerely hope that the conference as well as the social events give a wider picture of current developments in GIScience and GI-based learning in Europe and beyond, that the ideas presented here encourage further research, and thus foster development of powerful methods and tools as well as effective educational strategies for a spatially enabled society.

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