

BENEFITS OF JOINING THE GSDI ASSOCIATION

GSDI is the premier organization connecting professionals and specialists interested in promoting international cooperation and collaboration in support of compatible local, national and international spatial data infrastructure developments. Such developments will allow nations and organizations to better address social, economic, and environmental issues of pressing importance. Recent successful global conferences in Bonn (Germany), Chapel Hill (USA), Canberra (Australia), Cape Town (South Africa), Cartagena (Colombia), Budapest (Hungary), Bangalore (India), and Cairo (Egypt) attest to the growing influence of the GSDI Association.

Be a part of a Global movement to shrink the Digital Divide

As the GSDI Association's membership numbers increase, we will be in an increasingly better position to make a real difference in conquering the digital divide. In the field of Spatial Data Infrastructures, the digital divide is not limited to just developing countries. By participating in the GSDI Association's activities, individuals and organizations worldwide can benefit from a "multiplier effect" as they inform others about SDI issues, influence the course of SDI-related activities, and implement specific SDI-related projects.

Participate in GSDI Conferences

Participate, network and partner with others as part of global GSDI Conferences. Since 1996, experts in SDI matters have come together to share the experiences in advancing SDI's from local to international levels. Participants serve on working groups, receive training in spatial data infrastructure advancements, and engage in lively technical and policy dialog on SDI topics. As a member of the GSDI Association you will receive discounts on registration for the regular global conferences as well as for other events.

Contribute To and Benefit from a Growing Global SDI Knowledge Network

As a GSDI member, organizations and individuals will help construct and have access to an SDI knowledge network, a web-based portal environment designed to help members collaborate on projects and topics of mutual interest. Through the web-accessible GSDI knowledge network members have access to the committees and working groups of the GSDI, and are able to establish and promote Communities of Interest – groups of GSDI members interested in establishing and maintaining a dialog of GSDI related topics of mutual interest. The GSDI Association also provides members access to the GSDI contact database, as well as capabilities for members to publish, share and update documents of importance to achieving the GSDI vision.

Develop Partnerships

GSDI provides a global venue for networking, communicating and learning among its members. The organization is highly inclusive providing contacts and

communication avenues to diverse parties from across the world. GSDI government, academic and non-profit organizations and agencies and individual members are invited to participate fully in GSDI conferences, seminars, projects and web discussions. This non-profit non-government organization is able to provide administrative support for multinational projects falling within the ambit of the missions and goals of the organization.

Support Developing Nation Initiatives and Markets

The GSDI Association supports the establishment and expansion of local, national, and multi-national spatial data infrastructures that are locally to globally compatible. It has a particular emphasis on helping developing nations to establish such infrastructures and acquire the capacities to maintain them. Interested members are encouraged to participate in GSDI committees to help develop and manage GSDI grant programs and to put in place member-driven processes for prioritization of GSDI resources to address the educational and technological needs of participants from developing nations.

Help build GSDI Recommendations on SDI Best Practices

Help identify and document GSDI best practices including technical, business, and policy practices. Help build practical how-to-do guides for use by government and business worldwide. And, through GSDI's Class-A Liaison status with the ISO TC 211 standardization body and similar liaison arrangements with other standards bodies, you can contribute to the development of GSDI recommendations for standards development, and have the opportunity to review pending standards documents.

Participate in Global SDI Projects

By participating in the GSDI Working Groups you can participate in projects such as the current investigations into Service Registries and Portals being undertaken by the GSDI Technical Working Group.

Grow Professionally and Personally

GSDI offers many opportunities for participation by companies, agencies and individuals. Join a working group, present a paper at a conference, or volunteer for a committee. Participate in training and workshop opportunities with other members of the global community.

Save Money and Time

GSDI offers steep discounts to all of its members for conference registrations and exhibitor fees. Full member organizations of GSDI receive reduced exhibitor fees and people in your organization may be eligible to receive monetary, software or data awards for spatial data infrastructure developments. Gain access to the conference attendee mailing lists. Delegates of organizations from developing nations may qualify for travel grants to attend GSDI conferences.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

If I can join as an individual member, why should my company or agency join GSDI?

It is true, as an individual member, you have access to GSDI benefits including the GSDI email discussion lists, working groups, and conference and related program discounts. To have maximum impact and exposure in affecting the development of spatial data infrastructure developments, an organization of national stature would want to join as a Full Member. Only delegates from full member organizations are allowed to vote on matters before the GSDI Association Council. Only one delegate (or the official alternate) from each full member organization is eligible to be elected to the Board of Directors or serve as an officer. Full member organizations also receive very substantial opportunities and benefits that are not available to the same extent for associate and individual members. Among others, such benefits might include typically priority on exhibitor space, reduced conference, workshop and exhibitor fees, and the right of delegates to serve on most committees as specified in the bylaws. Liaisons from Associate Member organizations and Individual Members are added to committees as room permits.

Why should my specific agency join if my government agency is already a member of an international group that is itself eligible to join GSDI?

You might have fifty national agencies from different countries represented in a regional multi-national organization. Yet, if only the regional organization joins it has only one vote at GSDI Association Council and Board meetings. Only the official delegate (or the official alternate) is eligible to sit on the Board. Thus, if your national agency believes in the goals and missions of the GSDI Association and wants to take full advantage of helping direct and promote spatial data infrastructure developments globally it would probably want to join as a full member.

On what issues is the GSDI Association Council likely to vote?

In addition to electing the president, vice-president and Board of Directors, the delegates from the Full Member organizations (i.e. the Council) may vote on any matter brought before the Council that pertains to the operation or future of the organization, including the development of new programs, and establishment of program priorities for recommendation to the GSDI Board of Directors.

What explicit commercial benefits might our private firm gain from joining GSDI?

The products and services of commercial organizations represent a major pillar of the GSDI. Their products and services are key in establishing

technology and information components necessary for the GSDI to flourish. Through membership in the GSDI, Commercial firms may be able to gain greater global market exposure, help mold the strategic plan of the organization, and assist in implementing some of GSDI's global outreach and educational programs, all of which help to support interoperability and data sharing, and provide additional visibility for your organization.

Our organization is an international non-profit organization with missions and goals related to those of GSDI. Is it possible for our organization to affiliate with GSDI without actually joining as a member?

Yes. GSDI is highly flexible in supporting and engaging participation by all organizations and individuals with common interests. Joining as a member is one option. Another is to consider what our organizations might be able to achieve through formal partnerships – perhaps cooperating on broad SDI related granting programs. Additionally, non-profit organizations may apply to the GSDI Board to have your organization invited to become an ex officio member of the GSDI Council (i.e. non-voting). Ex officio status is an excellent way to keep communication channels open and to promote cooperative ventures among like-minded non-profit service organizations.

My national agency or organization is located in a developing nation. Even though the dues have been scaled back for us, practical considerations beyond our control prevent us from contributing dues to the GSDI Association. Is there another way to become fully engaged?

Yes. Please communicate the desire of your organization or agency to participate. GSDI will assess your situation under its Developing Nation Sponsor Program and seek to support your organizations engagement and full membership in the organization,

To answer further questions or for detailed information on any of the above, see the Bylaws of the GSDI Association that may be found at <http://GSDI.org> or contact Allan Doyle, Business Director at adoyle@gsdi.org