



**GSDI Strategy and Strategic Plan
2015 – 2020**

For Board Approval

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Executive Summary

In a fast changing world GSDI needs to regularly review its purpose, aims, mission and strategic plan to ensure it remains relevant to current and future members, both organisations and individuals.

Our strategy seeks to re-position the Association as a trusted source of reliable global information on SDI and to deliver more membership benefits from the integration of our activities and increased paid resources.

Our strategic plan is to operate within a legal and fiscal jurisdiction that supports efficient, cost-effective and agile management of the Association. We aim to reduce the costs of managing the Association, ensure the Association maintains the highest standards of integrity and transparency, increase the number of members in all membership categories and grow income to a level that supports an active programme of membership benefits.

Increasing income from commercial and government members to support and develop the capability and skills of individual members involved in the implementation of SDI, with support from our academic members, is essential to the Association's mission.

Introduction

Background

The Global Spatial Data Infrastructure Association (GSDI) was formed as a legal entity in 2003, building on a very successful series of Global SDI conferences initiated in 1996 in Bonn, Germany. In all, six GSDI conferences were held prior to formation of the Association.

The Strategic Plan for the period 2009 - 2013 recognised the need to raise the Association's performance and set out objectives to:

- a) provide a GSDI world conference every twelve to eighteen months;
- b) support three monthly regional newsletters (Africa, Asia-Pacific, Latin America & Caribbean);
- c) support an annual Small Grants Program serving the needs of SDI initiatives in developing nations;
- d) stimulate and support standing Committees as primary centres of membership activity and productivity;
- e) institutionalize a new individual membership arm of the organization (the International Geospatial Society);
- f) create and maintain a Geographic Information Knowledge Network (GIKnet) serving the needs of geospatial organizations and individuals in all sectors and at all levels, on a global basis;
- g) expand the Association web site capabilities to better serve the membership;
- h) develop strategic alliances with other international organizations;
- i) support SDI convergence of technical and policy approaches used within and among nations based on identified best practice;
- j) encourage expanded participation by the research and academic communities in the activities of the Association; and
- k) institute an annual online survey to better track the services and products desired by the membership.

It is a testament to the dedication of the many volunteers, officers and employees of the Association that progress has been made or maintained in most of these objectives.

Work started on developing a new strategic plan in quarter 3 of 2013.

Context

Geospatial information is increasingly used to help understand the world in which we live, and its use will continue to grow, as evidenced for example by the rapid expansion of the location-based services industry globally. The location component 'where', complemented with 'who', 'what' and 'when', is an important component of government policy, business decisions and personal choices.

The increasing importance of geospatial information has led to a growth in the number of people and organisations using it, which in turn has resulted in an increase in the number of initiatives and associations established to encourage better management, greater availability and increased exploitation of it, for example: GEO (http://www.earthobservations.org/about_geo.shtml) in 2002 and GGIM (<http://ggim.un.org/about.html>) in 2009.

It is important to recognise that GSDI has a uniquely ‘all encompassing’ scope to its membership and its activities are focused on SDI and not on a particular discipline, as is the case, for example, with FIG (surveying), nor on technology, as is the case with GEO (earth observation) and ISPRS (remote sensing), nor on national public authorities, as is the case of the UN-GGIM initiative.

Rationale

Any Membership Association, which aims to grow and prosper, must have a clear and valid purpose and the ability and resources to deliver measurable benefits that attract and retain members, in our case across different membership categories, organisational and individual. Yet it is important to balance ambition with capability and capacity in order to achieve sustainable progress within the available human and financial resources.

Situation Analysis

A survey of Members, carried out early in 2013, revealed that:

- personal membership, through IGS, is more highly valued than organisational membership;
- IGS Members are also GSDI members (as stated in the Bylaws), but this is not clearly understood;
- clarity of purpose has historically been lacking, and tangible membership benefits are missing;
- the structure of the organisation is ‘top heavy’ (50% of members are on the Board);
- the all-volunteer Committee structure has not delivered sufficient or planned outcomes;
- 50% of income is spent on administration, 50% on delivering benefits to members;
- of the 50% (83,000 US\$) spent on membership benefits, over 75% was spent on publishing monthly newsletters which are of questionable value and do not reflect best practise in modern communications;
- there has been little active recruitment of members for 3 years and little fund-raising activity.

The conclusions drawn from the membership survey are that GSDI needs to:

- restate its purpose clearly;
- increase its visibility;
- focus its activities on delivering tangible benefits to its members in all categories;
- deliver benefits which attract and retain members;
- grow its membership and income;
- more fully integrate IGS members into GSDI;
- simplify its structure and management;
- provide a larger paid resource pool to deliver more tangible outputs;
- reduce the overhead of managing the Association as a percentage of total cost;
- simplify (‘lighten’) the governance structure of the organisation, including rationalisation of the current Bylaws and procedures contained therein.

Considered Options

Before deciding on a new strategy a number of options for change were investigated for the future of the Association. The options investigated while the strategy was being developed include:

1. no change in the organisation or its mode of operation,
2. ceasing operations of GSDI altogether,
3. re-focusing the organisation on individual members, essentially re-branding ‘GSDI’ as ‘IGS’,
4. subsuming the individual members more completely into GSDI by dropping the ‘IGS’ brand,
5. merging the membership with another (larger) existing organisation with similar goals.

The first two options were rejected, as they offer no improvement on functioning of the Association as it is today, while the Board and Council have all agreed (at the meetings in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in November 2013) that ‘radical change’ is needed if the Association is to continue and thrive.

Regarding the third and fourth options above, we propose option 4, where individual members are more fully integrated into the GSDI infrastructure, phasing out the ‘IGS’ brand so that all categories of members feel more inclusively involved in all GSDI activities. This will help to improve communication and reduce administrative and management overheads now incurred by essentially running two organisations.

A survey of the IGS members was completed on 18 August 2014, in which 227 responses were collected from a membership of approximately 440 persons – a very respectable 52% response rate. Of the respondents, 57% indicated that they would prefer to remain known as a 'voting member of IGS', 6% preferred to be known as 'non-voting, ex officio members of GSDI', 27% were happy with either option and 10% offered no answer. What is or was perhaps not so clear to the IGS members responding to the survey is that their 'voting' status in GSDI affairs is restricted to one collective vote on the Board, for the whole Individual membership, via the elected IGS President who sits on the Board – with 1 of 19 votes on all matters relating to operation of the GSDI Association, including IGS operations. There is very little practical difference between being a 'voting member of IGS' and a 'non-voting, ex officio member of GSDI' when virtually all support for IGS comes from the budget and staff of the Association, and/or Association Committee volunteers. [Note: the current 2014 budget, as of August 2014, indicates that IGS member fees amount to only 2.3% of total dues revenue for the Association.]

The final option, of merging with another organisation, might deliver some medium to long-term benefit for members if the following criteria for selecting a suitable merger partner could be met, i.e.:

- access to a financial and legal jurisdiction which permits agile management of the Association's planned activities;
- a complementary purpose and mission;
- some guarantee that specific and valuable activities of the Association could continue under the merger terms, e.g. the Small Grants Program, assistance to developing nations members, capacity building activities, a CPD certification process, etc.; and
- acceptable financial terms could be agreed during the merger.

However, a merger raises considerable practical, legal and financial issues that need to be examined in detail and resolved, almost certainly incurring expenditure on professional advisory services, even after identification of candidate organisations who might be interested in exploring such actions with GSDI. This option has therefore been rejected.

The proposed strategy, and more specifically the strategic plan, whilst not 'radical' in nature, provides a solid basis for exploiting what the association has traditionally done well with greater cohesion between the various parts and increased speed of progress through a greater focus on paid resources.

Our Strategy

Our strategy is to re-position the Association as a trusted source of reliable information on SDI research and implementations globally and to deliver more benefits for all categories of the membership, from the integration of our activities and increased paid resources.

In pursuing our strategy we will adopt the following:

Purpose

Our purpose is to help people to implement and develop spatial data infrastructures.

Aim

Our aim is to further the development of society by helping people to implement and develop spatial data infrastructures which build from local, national and regional to the global level.

Mission

Our mission is to:

- Serve as a point of contact and effective voice for those in the global community involved in developing, implementing and advancing spatial data infrastructure and its concepts.
- Foster spatial data infrastructures that support sustainable social, economic and environmental systems integrated from local to global scales.
- Promote the informed and responsible use of geographic information and geospatial technologies for the benefit of society.

To implement our Strategy we will:

Facilitate international cooperation that advances best practices and encourages knowledge sharing and capacity building to support the implementation and development of local, national and regional spatial data infrastructures (SDIs) which contribute to a globally interconnected SDI.

Our Strategic Plan

Our strategic implementation plan is to:

1. Clearly identify and strongly promote the 'individual' GSDI member category as an integral component of the Association's membership strategy, i.e. without separately branding it as IGS, which now appears to many as a society separate from GSDI.
2. Ensure that members in all categories have adequate representation on the Board of GSDI.
3. Dissolve the current Committees and replace them with:
 - a. time-limited working groups, with named leaders and deliverables, to address specific issues,
 - b. projects advancing progress in addressing SDI-related challenges, executed and jointly funded with other bodies.
4. Deliver a programme of integrated activities comprising:
 - a) a global conference to be held approximately every 2 years;
 - b) regional conferences and/or meetings to be held as opportunities arise;
 - c) Information and knowledge sharing, building on open access publications and further populating the GIKnet resources;
 - d) SDI Assessment and best practice identification and promulgation;
 - e) personal development and capacity building, including continuation of the Small Grants Program, promotion of more webinars and training opportunities provided by and for members;
 - f) promotion of GSDI as a trusted source of reliable global information on SDI implementation and best practice;
 - g) proactive information collection and dissemination via a comprehensive Communications Strategy, encompassing regional, global and member news, web site development and use of modern social media channels.
5. Spend a larger proportion of income on delivering membership benefits.
6. Review our subscriptions structure and levels to grow the number of members and our total income.
7. Pay for a Secretary General, responsible for operational and communications management and a researcher to carry out research, write analytical reports and coordinate contributions from other member expert volunteers.
8. Invest in a sustainable membership recruitment programme.
9. Adjust the size and structure of the Board to encourage responsibility for the agile management of the Association.
10. Use the current reserves to subsidise income from subscriptions and actively pursue arrangements for a global conference delivering a profit to the Association.
11. Review the effectiveness of the strategic plan during 2017.

Membership

Membership is open to anyone who supports the Association's purpose, aims and mission and accepts to pay the relevant membership fee. Member categories are:

1. Organisations (Full Members)
 - Government Agencies (both suppliers and users)
 - NGOs and Non-Profit organisations (environmental, conservation, disaster relief...)
 - Academia
 - Businesses (both suppliers and users of geo-information)
2. Individuals (Individual Members as a category of GSDI membership, not as a separate organisation)

Our Value Proposition

We aim to provide our **organisational members** with:

- enhanced brand value and global recognition, e.g. through a widely distributed periodic 'State of the GSDI' report which carries the logos and names of full members;
- opportunities to leverage corporate responsibility and promotion, e.g. by support for, and association with, the Small Grants Program, capacity building actions, news publication, etc.;
- staff recruitment opportunities, e.g. through awareness of innovative people delivering presentations at the global GSDI World Conferences, regional meetings and GIKnet profiling;
- business opportunities, e.g. by mentoring recipients of small grants and networking;
- a stimulus for innovation through networking and sharing academic research on a global basis.

We aim to provide our **individual members** with:

- knowledge and access to experience in SDI implementation, e.g. identified best practice;
- Continuous Professional Development, for recognition and endorsement of SDI related skills;
- an opportunity to build self-confidence through capacity building, networking with peers and mentors, conferences and meetings;
- an environment in which to explore opportunities for further education and gain work experience.

Our Activities

Our programme of activities will consist of:

1. The GSDI World Conference

GSDI World Conferences are our primary, physical networking activity, from which open access conference publications provide a valuable source of new information and knowledge to be shared with all.

The Conference will be organised approximately every two years to:

- expose best practise, which is then used to update the SDI Cookbook wiki, the latest update to be published within 6 months following each Conference, with hyperlinks to key papers from the Conference proceedings, GIKnet and other open access documents;
- provide opportunity for individuals to build their confidence and gain recognition and endorsement through Conference awards, e.g. 'Best Paper' per topic and a 'development' grant for the best SDI initiative (within available financial resources and/or external funding support);
- expose the activities of those involved in SDI initiatives on a global platform and confirm relevance to others, with opportunities to explore topics in more detail;
- be intellectually stimulating, engaging and relevant to other people's SDI activities through papers and presentations and discussion sessions/workshops;
- identify emerging trends from the papers and presentations, published in a post-Conference report.

2. A Small Grants Program

The Small Grants Program is at the heart of the Associations value proposition for individual members. This will provide financial support to members selected through a competitive selection process with support and mentoring provided from within the membership - linking outcomes and funding to capability and capacity development to assist in delivering SDIs.

3. Information and Knowledge Sharing

Information and knowledge sharing will be achieved through:

- regular updates of the SDI Cookbook wiki under guidance of subject editors, based on member contributions, Conference papers and dedicated sessions at the Conference;
- continuing expansion of the GSDI Geographic Information Knowledge Network (GIKnet) as a primary source for information of value to anyone responsible for implementing SDIs;
- (carrying out) case studies that build government support and understanding of the value of SDI and assist policy development that reflects this;
- managed discussion forums for regions and specific SDI-related themes;

- active information dissemination via a comprehensive and attractive website and social media, e.g. on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, etc.;
- identifying existing reports and studies on SDI implementations at all levels, including technical challenges and solutions, economic implications, societal impact, governance, legal and policy issues, e.g. data sharing (open data and open access), use/re-use, crowd sourcing, privacy, technology trends impacting on geo-information.
- preparing and publishing reports that analyse and integrate SDI implementation information from other programs and initiatives, e.g. World Bank recommendations, OECD reports, regional (transnational) reports such as the pan-European SDI 'State of Play' studies, UN GGIM national SDI reports and reports arising from activities of our MoU partners (e.g. FIG, ICA and ISPRS).

4. SDI Assessment

It is important to measure and report on progress in implementing national and regional SDIs that comprise and underpin a truly global SDI. To facilitate this we will provide:

- An on-line assessment of SDI implementations for members to use confirming effectiveness and conformance to best practice, resulting in a report for the 'applicant' identifying successes and recommending areas for improvements.
- a 'State of the Global SDI' report on the same cycle as the GSDI Conference, published 12 months after the Conference, detailing the status of SDIs across the globe and measuring progress regionally and internationally. This would carry the logos and names of the members who contributed to its production, and which can be used for promotion by those members.

5. Personal Development and Capacity Building

Our focus is on helping to build SDI 'from the bottom up', i.e. through expanding the knowledge, skills and capacities of individuals. All members will have access to:

- workshops held at the GSDI World Conferences (to which members can attend for free);
- workshops held at member-organised regional meetings;
- structured webinar training provided by our staff and members;
- instructional videos from our members and other relevant organisations, via the website,
- Continuous Professional Development and (potential) certification following an agreed 'SDI curriculum' developed jointly by our academic and organisational members.

6. Promoting GSDI as the Global Knowledge Base on SDI

To position the Association amongst the many other global organisations active in the field of geospatial information and technology, and to deliver value to our members, we will promote GSDI as a trusted source of reliable information on SDI developments across the globe, by:

- creating awareness of the value and benefit of SDI in support of member activities;
- offering an annual 'Global SDI Advocate' Award, along with the current GSDI Global Citizen Award;
- providing 'Thought Leadership' via the updated GSDI SDI Cookbook, and bi-annual GSDI 'State of the Global SDI' Status Report and interviews with leaders from the SDI and geomatics world.

Principles and Ethos

Our principles underpin the Association's strategy and guide its implementation. Fundamental to this is our continuing commitment to be inclusive of all our members, in all categories.

We will:

- deliver benefits for each member regardless of the geographical, technical, political, organisational, linguistic and business parameters within which they work;
- ensure the Association's activities are consistent with our purpose and members' needs;
- recognise and mitigate, where possible, the risks and uncertainties for the Association in the prevailing economic climate;
- do our best to balance the needs of our members with the expectations of society;
- be open, honest and transparent whilst respecting confidentiality and personal privacy;
- ensure our representation is fact-based, positive and objective;

- balance ambition with realism in what we can deliver and prioritise our efforts and resources accordingly;
- value our members, our staff and our supporters for their many contributions;
- be accountable and stand by what we have collectively agreed in our strategy;
- be as environmentally sustainable as resources and circumstances permit.

Summary of Implementation Activities

We summarize our key activities under the new Strategic Plan as:

Global Conference Program	Outcome	Resources
a. Development of Conference & Networking Program b. Management of Forum facilitation (planned and impromptu based on emerging needs during conference) c. Development of Workshop program linked to current trends and best practice as defined by GSDI activities	Targeted, relevant, stimulating global conference with focused networking opportunities	Conference Director (paid GSDI role) Conference Organiser (contract) Conference Committee (volunteers)
Small Grants & Awards Program		
a. Sponsorship development b. Program management (call for proposal, proposal review, awarding of grants, review of funding use) c. Mentoring linked to membership capability d. Coordination of awards implementation and management	Tangible support for SDI developments contributing to the GSDI vision	Finance Director (Paid GSDI role) Small Grants & Awards Committee (volunteers)
Resource & Support Program		
1. GIKnet and Cookbook maintenance and management <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Conference paper review & analysis, trends identification SDI Cookbook content review based on above actions with links to relevant leading papers Development of case studies, review of industry practice, SDI implementations and other related organisational activities and reports Link to the existing processes for GSDI's official journals - JSDIR and JOSIS 2. SDI Assessment Tool <ol style="list-style-type: none"> On-line tool for assessing alignment of SDI with best practice, measuring effectiveness and providing standardised report. Development of a periodic 'state-of-the-global-SDI' based on the ongoing assessments 	Practical and accessible resources, guides and tools to assist in the development and improvement of SDIs globally	Communications Director (Paid GSDI role) Resource Review Committee (volunteers)
Promotions and Communications Program		
a. Promotion of all programs b. General web site maintenance c. Updating of the content in the GIKnet and Cookbook d. Recruitment Program	Informed and aware members and SDI practitioners	Communications Director (Paid GSDI role)

Key Resources

To deliver our programme of activities and to make progress with our purpose, aim and mission we need:

- Sufficient income to cover the cost of activities;
- Appropriate people responsible for key on-going activities:
 - Operational management and legal compliance,
 - Communications management,
 - Research and Report writing, to also support capacity building activities,
 - Financial Management,
 - Membership recruitment and retention;
- A Conference Director and Conference Committee (convened only in the period leading up to delivery of a global conference), including the services of a professional Conference Organiser or Event Management company;
- Active volunteers that are properly led to carry out the work required to deliver on specific defined outcomes in time limited projects.

Cost Structure

We see that:

1. A major proportion of cost associated with the four programs is management of the program and coordination of volunteer resources.
2. Greater success will come from dedicated resources, with an expected need to spend approximately US\$100,000 on a number of part-time positions.

3. The remaining costs are driven by:
 - a. on-line presence (Web hosting and content management),
 - b. miscellaneous operational expenses (travel, insurance, banking fees, telephone, audit & accounting, recruitment), and
 - c. conference and other meeting related expenses (venue hire, food, networking activities).
4. Conference costs can be considered separately but the global Conference should be planned to produce a minimum profit of 15% of revenue.
5. Operational costs are estimated at US\$150,000 (excluding costs associated with conference management).

Revenue Streams

Our current subscription, and occasional grant income, does not produce enough income to cover our costs and sustain the activities of the Association.

In the past the Association has been kept financially viable through organising a regular global conference, usually in conjunction with another event, in order to deliver a profit for the Association.

It seems likely that securing sufficient profit from conference activity will in the future become increasingly difficult.

We will therefore review our subscription structure and payment levels with a view to changes which will grow the number of members in all categories and deliver increased income. Within this review we look to provide a minimum or core funding for the Small Grants programme by allocating a percentage of Full Member subscriptions to it.

Our current conference pricing and membership subscription structure is considered to be unnecessarily restrictive and overly complicated (see the summary below). Although it accommodates varying economies and entity types, and presents very few barriers to uptake, the practical membership benefits it sustains are limited. This has a negative impact on both membership retention and recruitment.

Conference Fee Structure (GSDI14)

	Extra Early Registration (Payment received on or before 1 September 2013)	Early Registration (Payment received on or before 15 September 2013)	Regular Registration (Payment received after 15 September 2013)	On-site Registration in Addis
Full Registration (5 days)				
Standard Participant	\$500	\$550	\$650	\$800
Developing Nation Participant**	\$200	\$250	\$275	\$275
Student Registration				
Standard Participant	\$200	\$250	\$300	\$800
Developing Nation Participant**	\$150	\$175	\$175	\$250
Conference Banquet Ticket				
Separate fee -	\$80	\$80	\$80	\$120

**** Developing Nation Participant** - The only persons qualifying for this rate are those persons that have been verified by EIS-Africa or the International Geospatial Society that the person is a current member and resides in a developing nation. For persons who are citizens of and reside in an African nation, an opportunity is provided to pay EIS-Africa membership dues as part of the conference registration and payment process. For persons who are citizens of and reside in developing nations anywhere across the globe, an opportunity is provided to pay IGS membership dues as part of the conference registration and payment process

Membership in the GSDI Association as a "full member" is [ONLY] open to organizations and institutions with programs and missions consistent with the purposes of the GSDI Association.

Membership Fee Structure (GSDI14)

Dues for Private Companies and For-Profit Industry Organizations

Corporate Annual Sales in Previous Year	Amount of Corporate Annual Dues for Full Membership in GSDI Assoc
Greater than \$10 billion	\$15,000
Greater than \$1 billion	\$12,000
Greater than \$500 million	\$10,000
Greater than \$400 million	\$9,000
Greater than \$300 million	\$8,000
Greater than \$200 million	\$7,000
Greater than \$100 million	\$6,000
Greater than \$50 million	\$5,000
Greater than \$10 million	\$4,000
Greater than \$3 million	\$2,500
Greater than \$1 million	\$1,000
Less than \$1 million	\$500

Dues for Government Agencies, Academic Organizations and Non-Profits

Gross National Income Per Capita	Government Agency or Government Organization	Academic Organization	Non-profit Organization
High			
Income per Capita	\$9,000	\$500	\$1,500
Upper Middle			
Income per Capita	\$3,000	\$300	\$800
Lower Middle			
Income per Capita	\$2,000	\$200	\$500
Low			
Income per Capita	\$1,000	\$100	\$300

There is a critical mass of services and value that must be delivered to keep GSDI viable. A value proposition of a suitable level requires greater income than is currently being achieved, therefore a larger fee paying membership is required and/or additional supporting funds or other income, e.g. from project-based work, conference profits, etc. must be secured.

A more inclusive Membership Strategy is required where ‘full’ membership is open to any organization or institution that supports the purpose of the GSDI Association and where individual membership is fully integrated into GSDI, dropping the ‘IGS’ brand.

We propose to introduce a simpler fee structure where organisations are defined by type and by turnover or income per capita, while keeping these in line with fees now charged by similar organisations at national, regional or global levels, with whom there will always be some competition for new members’ financial commitments to membership in organisations such as GSDI.

Membership Recruitment & Channels

To grow the membership in all categories we need to proactively promote the benefits of membership, using our Web presence, Social Media, Mailings, Press Releases and face-to-face presentations at Forums, Workshops, Conferences and in one-on-one meetings. It will be necessary to recruit a suitable individual as Membership Recruitment Manager with reimbursement based on a small retainer and a percentage of fees collected from new members secured through their actions.

Delivering Membership Benefits

To deliver benefits to members we will need to make good use of:

- our web and media presence, including new social media outlets and established contacts with the major geo press, for promoting GSDI activities and membership involvement in those activities,
- physical networking actions, e.g. face-to-face conversations and presentations at conferences and workshops for member engagement and feedback,
- support to specific capacity building actions (short courses, structured webinars, small grants, etc.) that benefit members,
- our access to a broad range of organisations (academic, commercial and government agencies) in providing meaningful research and analysis into SDI-related implementation and maintenance issues.

Growing the Membership

To compete for people’s time, attention and finances we need to:

- demonstrate the value and benefit that SDI delivers to society and our role in helping to further implementation of SDIs globally;
- provide personal development and rewards for individual members, and recognition for individual and organisation members;
- create career opportunities for individual members;
- help grow the population of skilled workers with SDI-related implementation skills for the benefit of organisational members,
- provide brand value to organisational members;
- create business opportunities for members in all categories;
- be recognised as the global authority on SDI;
- make greater use of ‘social media, and
- provide members with the resources to facilitate the delivery and improvement of SDIs.

Key Partners

In an increasingly connected world and as members of a global community, we need to leverage benefit from a network of strategic partners such as:

- UN agencies, i.e. UNGIWG/UNSDI, UN GGIM, other UN agencies where use of geospatial information is key part of their operations, e.g. OCHA, UNEP, etc.,
- other international organisations or associations, e.g. OGC, ICA, ISPRS, FIG, GEO, IHO (for marine SDI), the World Bank, regional development banks, OECD, etc.
- regional (trans-national) associations directly involved in SDI issues (who are not already members of GSDI), e.g. AGILE (European GI Laboratories), EuroSDR, EARSC (remote sensing companies) and their counterparts in other regions of the world,
- selected Universities and research institutes offering GI Science or geomatics curricula that include coverage of important SDI issues, and
- a small range of relevant scholarly journals and geo-related media partners.

Organisational Structure

The Board

To manage the Association well, we need a Board where each member understands the importance of their personal contribution to the Association's goals, work plans, discussion of issues and decision taking. A large Board (we currently have 20 Board members) encourages people to 'opt out' of these responsibilities safe in the knowledge that other members will take part and take decisions. We propose a Board of 11 voting members, comprising six regional representatives, a representative for the individual members (elected by the individual members), one representative each for industry and academic members, the Secretary General, and current President. Board appointments would rotate periodically, as now.

Although the President may choose to consult with the past and future Presidents, acting as an Executive Committee, and this is considered desirable when appropriate, neither will be voting members of the Board.

The Organisation

The President's primary role is leadership and representation, acting as the public face and voice of the Association, assisted by the Secretary-General when requested.

Clear lines of responsibility and levels of authority for operational actions need to be agreed and documented for individuals working for the Association and adequate authority must be given to them to avoid unnecessary management of operational issues requiring frequent intervention by the President.

Note: Today the roles of Operations Manager and Communications Manager are combined and the role of Executive Director is filled by the President, to comply with the current Bylaws. In the jurisdiction where GSDI is now incorporated, the concept of an Executive Director creates some difficulties and as a consequence the post of Secretary-General was created in 2014. In the future, as Bylaw changes will be needed to implement the Strategy, day-to-day management functions of GSDI will be entrusted to a Secretary General who is appointed by the Board and the post of Executive Director will be abolished.

The current Bylaws http://portal.gsd.org/files/?artifact_id=505, which need complete review and re-drafting with the view to reducing them in size and complexity, and removing the many specific operational matters included in them, gives authority to an Executive made up of the Current, past and future Presidents to make decisions, on behalf of the Board between meetings. In future it is proposed that the Secretary General in consultation when appropriate with the President will take responsibility for delivering the agreed programme of work. Matters of principle will always be referred to the Board with whom consultation and decision making can be done electronically.

END.