

Editorial

In a major step towards modern publishing the GI_Forum proceedings have been transformed into an open access journal represented on Web of Science. For us, the publication that started as hardcopy conference volumes of the *Learning with Geoinformation* and *GI_Forum conferences* in 2006 and 2007 respectively has come a long way. We will continue to strive for a high quality publication of original research and provide an overview of initiatives – both theoretical and applied – on a regular basis.

Papers presented at the GI_Forum conferences will continue to provide the mainstay of the GI_Forum journal. However, submission and publication of research papers will be possible year-round and independent from the conferences.

The 2015 issue of the GI_Forum is mainly based on reviewed submissions presented at the Geoinformatics Forum Salzburg (GI_Forum'15 – www.gi-forum.org). Besides the annual broad review of advances in Geographic Information Science and Learning with Geomedia, a number of special sessions supported the conference motto *Geospatial Minds for Society*. These special sessions were coordinated by section editors. Contributions from all sessions are published in this issue and underwent the quality assurance processes in place for the GI_Forum.

This GI_Forum journal issue consists of the following sections: in the first chapter contributions cover a wide range of *GIScience and Technology* topics. These range from innovation in Geospatial Technologies, Web Services and Cloud Computing, to advances in spatial analysis, modelling and conceptualization of GI. *Learning with Geoinformation and Geomedia* focuses on citizenship and education, empirical research in education, as well as on learning environments in primary and secondary education. The contributions in the section *Earth Observation for Humanitarian Operations* – EO4Hum – focus on the potential of Earth observation data and technologies such as GIS and remote sensing to support humanitarian action in crisis and disaster response. In the section *GI for Public Health* contributions discuss new methods, tools and technologies for geospatial health, spatial epidemiology and health/medical geography. The contributions in the *Transportation Modelling* section address the complexity of modelling of transportation systems in general and explore the required thematic and methodological competences. The *Environmental GIS and Applications* section focuses on hydrological and social applications that assess the causes and consequences of the surplus or lack of water on the environment, looking at numerous spatial monitoring and modelling techniques and decision support systems that exist in order to better understand the implications and dynamics of such changes.

Neither this publication nor the conference 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 efforts, time and, above all, patience. We would like to mention, first of all, the authors who underwent a rigorous review process resulting in quality papers. 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 conducted professional proofreading; Simone Dürr, Anna Karnassioti, Helena Atteneder, Bernhard Bretz, 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 hardcopy production at Wichmann publishers, as well as Georg Lasinger and Herwig Stöger at Austrian Academy of Science Press for their support of the online publication and journal development.

Adrijana Car, Thomas Jekel, Josef Strobl and Gerald Griesebner (Editors)