



James L. Tobias, MS, GISP, Peraton Software Development, Senior Advisor, Atlanta, GA at the CDC.

GISP Certification: 2007-Present

Education:

- Bachelor of Science, Marine Science, University of South Carolina – 1991
- Master of Science, Geographic Information Systems, Univ. of Southampton - 2009
- Executive Education – Consulting Foundations, Yale University - 2008
- Certificate, Design Thinking & Strategic Innovation, Stanford University – 2018

Professional Experience:

- NOAA (1992-2000) – Southeast Fisheries Science Center, Miami, FL
- Georgia Dept of Health (2000-2005) – 2 Peachtree St., Atlanta, GA
- SAIC (2005-2006) – supporting the National Immunization Program at CDC
- BearingPoint (2006-2009) – National Center for Public Health Informatics at CDC
- Northrop Grumman (2009-2021) – Division of Global HIV & Tuberculosis at CDC
- Peraton (2021-Present) – Division of Global HIV & Tuberculosis at CDC

Professional Organizations / Activities:

- American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS Member).
- GISCorps volunteer in Sierra Leone (2012)
- Global Professional Network / URISA poster presentations
- American Association of Geographers (AAG) poster in 2012 in NYC
- **Research:** [Google Scholar](#) [ResearchGate](#) [ORCID](#) [LinkedIn](#) [PHI-Case-Studies](#)

Statement of Interest:

I am honored to express my interest in serving as an elected member of the GIS Certification Institute (GISCI) Board of Directors. Since earning my GISP certification in 2007, GISCI has played a transformative role in my professional journey—serving not only as a credential, but as a catalyst for purpose-driven work, global engagement, and lifelong learning.

Over more than three decades, my career has reflected the evolution of GIS itself—from foundational mapping and spatial analysis to today’s dynamic integration with data science, cloud computing, and artificial intelligence. My work with NOAA, and later with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and global programs such as PEPFAR, has demonstrated how geospatial approaches can inform critical decisions, strengthen health systems, and address complex global challenges.

We are now at a defining moment for the profession. The convergence of GIS, geospatial data science, and GeoAI is reshaping how we understand and respond to the world around us. Advances in machine learning, spatial analytics, and real-time data integration are enabling new insights into public health, climate change, and humanitarian response. As this transformation accelerates, GISCI has a vital role to play in ensuring that GIS professionals are equipped not only with technical skills, but also with the ethical foundation and professional standards needed to responsibly harness these technologies.

My experience developing geospatial data science case studies for public health and global development has reinforced the importance of applied, real-world learning in advancing the field. These efforts demonstrate how open, collaborative resources can empower professionals and students alike to build practical skills, strengthen analytical thinking, and contribute to meaningful outcomes. I see an opportunity for GISCI to further promote and recognize geospatial data science competencies as a core component of the evolving GIS profession.

Equally important is expanding access and opportunity. My volunteer work with GISCorps, including a mission with World Vision in Sierra Leone, underscored the power of a globally connected geospatial community. By strengthening engagement with organizations such as OpenStreetMap, the Humanitarian OpenStreetMap Team, and GISCorps, GISCI can help create clearer pathways for volunteers, students, and early-career professionals to develop their portfolios and pursue GISP certification.

If elected, I would work to advance several key priorities: expanding global outreach for GISP certification; supporting continuing education that reflects emerging fields such as

GeoAI and spatial data science; strengthening connections across the global GIS community; and upholding the ethical standards that define GISCI.

Serving on the GISCI Board represents an opportunity to help shape the future of the geospatial profession at a pivotal time. I am inspired by a vision of GISCI as a global leader—one that not only certifies excellence but also guides the profession through the opportunities and responsibilities of the AI-driven era, empowering GIS professionals to make lasting, positive impacts worldwide.