



# APPLICANT PROCEDURES MANUAL

January 2022

[Abstract](#)

GISCI Online Procedures Manual for applying for and becoming a GISP.

## GISCI Online Procedures Manual 2022

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## I. Applying for a GIS Professional Credential

Thank you for your interest in the GISP Certification. The requirements for obtaining a GISP Certification, as of January 1, 2022, are:

- You must have at least 4 years full time geospatial experience
- You must complete the Portfolio Review Requirements
- You must take and pass the GISCI Geospatial Core Technical Knowledge Exam

You can register on our site and start the process at no cost, paying only when you are ready to submit the Portfolio Review or take the GISCI Exam. Once you start the process, you have up to six (6) years to complete the process before you must start the process over.

The first step in the process is to register on the GISCI web site, [www.gisci.org](http://www.gisci.org), using the 'Register' button on the top right portion of the page. This will allow you to access and start the Portfolio Review portion of the GISP process. Your password-protected log in will allow you to return as often as you like, and all information is automatically saved as soon as it is entered.

### General Procedure

Please keep in mind that it may be wise to use a personal email address rather than a place of employment, although either one can be used as your main contact. Also, this is a professional certification but not dependent on one's current place of employment, so consider that in the choice of a Username, your email can serve that purpose, as well.

Should you as a GISCI applicant or member change jobs, it will be your responsibility to inform GISCI of the change. You can make this change yourself by updating your user profile. If you do not update this information, you may not be reachable and may miss important communications or recertification information.

### Application Submittal

The blue '**Submit**' tab will not appear on top of the page until the site confirms that you have met all the point and documentation requirements of the separate sections. When that happens, the button will appear as an additional tab on the top of the page. After it appears, you may submit at any time, or continue to use the site without submitting.

The web site will track your accumulated points in each section and overall, as you complete the process.

The recommended first step upon receipt of the application is for the applicant to ensure that all of the necessary documents have been provided. A checklist will accompany the materials.

Your online submittal should include these uploaded materials:

- A digital copy of your transcript
- A digital copy of your signed GISCI Code of Ethics Form
- Supervisor Letter

## **II. Preparation for Completing the Application**

Before beginning to fill out the application form, an applicant should gather materials and request necessary external documentation as some of these requests may take considerable time.

### **Gather Materials**

Collect the materials you will need to complete the application.

Primary materials include:

- Supervisor letter
- College transcript(s)

Secondary materials may include:

- Certificates of completion / participation
- Awards
- Publications
- Course catalogs, class syllabi, class reports/projects

### **Request External Official Documentation**

Place requests for external official documents (transcripts and employer/client letters) well in advance of your proposed application submittal date.

- Transcript(s) - Official school transcripts are required from all schools from which you are claiming a degree or coursework. Transcripts must be digital for upload, and copies of transcripts are acceptable. Contact your school registrar to request a copy of your transcripts. Do not mail your transcripts to the GISCI. It is permissible to cross out or otherwise delete a social security or similar identification number if it appears on a transcript.
- Supervisor and Client Letter(s) - Supervisor letters are requested only from your most current immediate supervisor or employer. Letters from employers should have an original signature and should be written using organization letterhead. A template and further instructions are provided in this manual and on the site.

Self-employed applicants can obtain letters from clients, preferably those clients who establish, start, and end or continue contract work. No more than three client letters should be provided. Client letters should contain similar information as the Employer Letters including identifying:

- You as a contractor/consultant
- GIS-related work performed for the client
- The period of performance for the contract

No template is available for client letters.

### III. Completing the Application

#### Removal of Personal Information

All sensitive or personal information (i.e., social security number, driver's license number, maiden name, etc.) may be removed or obscured from any document. Only the GISCI staff and Review Committee Members will view this information. These omissions are the only allowable marks that the applicant may add to an official document.

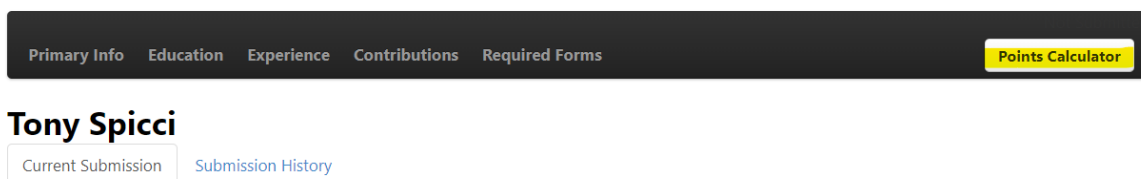
#### Helpful Tips Before You Begin

**There is no benefit to documenting a high point total.** A GISP with 150 points will receive the same approval as one many times higher. The point total is used only during application assessment and is not noted or reflected in your final certificate.

As such, it is unnecessary to expend extensive effort documenting minor achievements unless the point values are needed to meet the minimum. The tendency to 'overachieve' will most likely occur when documenting Contributions to the Profession but should also be avoided by those with extensive Professional Experience. Make the process easy on yourself, and you will make it easy on us, as well!

The web site will add your points as you complete each section and will show your total points in the **'Points Calculator'** tab on the right-hand side of the screen.

[Recertification Procedures Manual](#)



#### Current Submission

#### Recommended Strategy

The objectives of the application are to:

- Achieve the minimum number of required points within each of the three categories:
  - Educational Achievements (30)
  - Professional Experience (60)
  - Contributions to the Profession (8) AND
- Achieve a total minimum point total of 150.

To minimize effort expended locating unnecessary documentation, it is suggested that applicants consider the following strategy, although you can start and continue at any point in the application at any time, completing each Section as you see fit.

**NOTE: Contribution point claims of 2 points or less need no attached documentation.** Although not mandatory, applicants are advised to submit proper documentation for all point claims. Undocumented claims may be scrutinized to a higher degree. GISCI will conduct accuracy checks on certain applications to determine if undocumented claims are factual. If a claim is found to be incorrect or misstated the application will be rejected and a processing fee will be charged to the applicant.

### **Step One: Document Educational Achievements**

- Under *Degrees/Certificates* - list the highest completed educational degree. You may list others, but you will get points only for the highest degree.
- Under *Coursework – Accredited Institution* - list all GIS related course work. A 3-credit hour course will yield 3 Education points using **120** as the Total Student Activity Hours in the drop-down menu online. Prorate for coursework higher or lower than 3 Credit Hours.
- Under *Coursework- Non-Accredited Institution* – list any training or courses not taken at an accredited institution. This is generally software training (Esri, etc.), workshops and the like.
- Under *Conferences & Webinars* – list conferences and webinars attended.

Once you have 30 points or greater, continue to Step Two.

### **Step Two: Document GIS Professional Experience**

NOTE: If you have less than 4 years (48 months) of professional experience you may start the application for GISP Certification, but you will not be awarded GISP status until this is met. Add Employers to your portfolio:

List primary GIS related professional positions held:

- user
- data compilation / educator
- analyst
- manager

The web site will calculate total points for professional experience as you provide information. If you have less than 60 points, continue to document additional professional experience. If you are unable to attain 60 Professional Experience points, certification cannot be attained. If you have 60 points or greater, continue to Step Three.

### **Step Three: Contributions to the Profession**

List primary GIS-related professional contributions using the drop-down menu on the site. Contributions can come from activities such as:

- authoring publications
- professional association involvement/membership
- conference participation
- award receipt

If you have less than 8 Contribution points, you will not be able to submit your application. Documentation must be provided for claimed contribution points (see the Contribution Points Section for examples of proper documentation).

If you have 8 or more points, continue to Step Four.

### **Step Four: Supplemental Points**

The web site will automatically populate this field with any points beyond the minimum point total for each of the categories (Educational Achievement, Professional Experience, and

Contributions to the Profession). If you are unable to attain 150 total points, your application cannot be submitted.

If your compiled point total (Educational Achievement, Professional Experience, and Contributions to the Profession) is 150 or greater, compile your application materials as indicated in Section 8 of this document, The Completed Application.

#### **IV. Educational Achievement Component**

GISCI values education in any form, hence the awarding of points for a non-geospatial degree. However, you do not need a formal degree to qualify for GIS Certification. Individualized coursework and/or study and software training in sufficient quantity will qualify for Education points.

While formal educational experiences may not contribute as much as experience to a GIS professional's qualifications, they certainly do have the potential to be valuable means of acquiring the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that individuals need to be successful in any profession. These guidelines are meant to encourage practitioners to seek out continuing education opportunities while providing incentives to education providers to build substantive GIS programs with quality courses.

The GISCI is not an accrediting body, and therefore will not attempt to evaluate the quality of educational institutions or programs. Instead, it will ensure that individuals who seek certification have successfully participated in a minimum of relevant, formal educational experiences.

#### **Education Point Schedule**

*The minimum number of Education points required for certification is 30 points. Additional Education points will count towards the supplemental points.*

The Education Point Schedule consists of four parts:

- (Degrees/Certificates): points earned through successful completion of a formal degree or GIS Certificate Program offered by accredited educational institutions. GIS Certificates from Esri or other software certifications do not count in this category.
- (Coursework- Accredited Institutions): points earned through successful completion of individual courses, workshops, and other formal, documented educational activities whose subject matter relates directly to geographic information technologies. These are generally earned at a college or university.
- (Coursework- Non-Accredited Institutions): points earned through successful completion of individual software training courses, workshops, and other documented educational activities whose subject matter relates directly to geographic information technologies. These are generally not earned at a college or university.
- (Conferences and Webinars): Conference attendance points are awarded in recognition of the valuable informal learning afforded by participation in meetings, conferences, and webinars sponsored by professional societies and regional and local user groups.

#### **Degree/Certificate Points**

Applicants may claim credential points equal to the value of the highest degree or certificate earned. For example:

- An applicant who has earned an Associate's degree and a Bachelor's degree may claim 20 points (the value of a Bachelor's degree). With dual degrees, credential points may be claimed for one while the others may only be used for Course Points (see below).
- An applicant who has earned no formal degrees, but who has earned a GIS Certificate,

- may claim 5 points.
- An applicant who has earned degrees from non-U.S. institutions may claim points associated with the most comparable degree (justification required).

Degrees in any field of study awarded by accredited institutions may be counted. GIS Certificates are generally 4-5 course degree programs offered at a college or university specific to GIS. An Esri certification will not be counted as a 5- point certification, but the training taken in advance of that certification will count toward Education points.

#### Coursework- Accredited Institution Points

In addition to Credential Points, applicants may claim Course Points for any GIS-related course, workshop, or other formal, documented educational activity. The number of points earned per course or workshop is proportional to the number of Student Activity Hours (the time that a student spends both inside and outside the classroom completing reading or homework assignments, studying, or other preparations) that each course entails. A 3 Credit Hours course generally has 120 Total Student Activity Hours related to it. Qualifying coursework includes GIS, Geography, Higher math (including Stats), Programming, Computer Science, Networking, Databases, and applications. Although peripheral coursework will count for points, GISCI expects the applicant to show a predominance of GIS work to demonstrate professionalism in GIS!

#### Coursework- Non-Accredited Institution Points

Applicants may claim credit for any for any GIS-related software training, like that above. In most cases, transcripts, certificates of completion and other documentation do not disclose the number of activity hours that successful students are expected to invest in a course or workshop.

Workshops and vendor training sessions may or may not offer CEU credits. The applicant will take the number of hours spent in the workshop ÷ 40. For example, a 16-hour workshop would earn 0.4 points. (16 training hours ÷ 40 activity hours per point).

GISCI awards one course point for every 40 documented training hours.

#### Unique Activity Hours Per Credit

Most educational institutions use the standard 3.0 activity hours per credit. Some educational institutions offer a different activity hours per credit formula. Unique credit hours are especially typical from international universities.

In these cases, in the formula:

Student Activity Hours for a 3-credit hour course generally total 120 Total SAH.

The activity hours per credit should be adjusted upwards or downwards from the standard 3.0 activity hours per credit for 1,2, and 4 credit hour courses.

For example, if a university offers every course at 1.0 credits the formula should be adjusted to:

1.0 credits x 9.0 activity hours per credit x 15 weeks = 135 student activity hours.

If a university uses a unique activity hours per credit formula, documentation explaining their credit system must be provided from the university or applicant.

*Note: For non-credit courses and workshops for which neither credits nor CEUs were earned, Student Activity Hours should be documented by the training provider in the course description and/or certificate of completion.*



*Prior to completing a course whose provider has not documented the course's Student Activity Hours, you should request such information from the provider. A letter from the sponsoring agency or instructor is acceptable documentation.*

Formal courses and workshops that focus specifically upon GIS science and related technology, and/or applications, such as programming, higher math (trig, statistics, etc.), geography, computer science, networking, and databases are eligible for Course Points.

Relevant courses may be counted even if they were completed as part of a degree or certificate program for which the applicant has also claimed Credential Points. Course titles should be listed in the schedule as they appear on the supporting transcript, syllabi, or other documentation. Non-specific course titles such as 'Special Issues in Geography' can be augmented with the actual course topic e.g., 'Special Issues in Geography: Error Analysis.' These courses should be entered onto the site or accompanied by formal course descriptions.

#### Explaining Vague Course Titles

Use the notes portion of the site to justify point claims for student activity hours whose relevance may not be apparent from the course or workshop title; be brief! If a course is obviously related to one of the knowledge areas, you do not need to provide a description. Relevant courses and workshops are those whose content appears within one or more of the 10 knowledge areas of the UCGIS Body of Knowledge <http://gistbok.ucgis.org/>

The final decision regarding the validity of all course points lies with the GISCI Executive Director.

#### **Conference and Webinar Points**

Conference attendance points are a result of the number of total days that the applicant has spent at meetings and conferences sponsored by professional societies and regional and local user groups. The applicant should enter the name of the conference, the year, the host organization, the location, and the number of days attended. Conference Attendance Points are determined by the number of days and not hours spent at each event.

*Note: Conference Attendance claims do not need documentation. GISCI will conduct accuracy checks on certain applications to determine if undocumented claims are factual. If a claim is found to be incorrect or misstated the application will be rejected and a processing fee will be charged to the applicant.*

Webinar points are assigned based on the total number of hours spent online.

#### Educational Achievement Documentation

Applicants who claim Credential Points are expected to provide evidence of their degree/certificate with an official transcript that states the credential was earned. If the official transcript(s) does not contain that information, applicants are expected to supplement the transcript with a photocopy of the highest degree, diploma, and/or certificate.

## **IV. The Professional Experience Component**

NOTE: If you have less than 4 years (48 months) of professional experience you may NOT submit your Portfolio Application, but you may take the GISCI Geospatial Core Technical Knowledge Exam.
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## **Minimum Professional Experience Requirement**

The minimum qualification for initial certification is four years of professional experience in the geospatial field. An individual also will need to accrue 60 points in this area to meet the minimum requirement. Therefore, if the applicant has less than four years of professional experience but meets the 60-point minimum the applicant must wait until the 4-year (48 month) employment requirement is met. An applicant who has met the 4-year (48 month) requirement must still earn the minimum of 60 points.

Various positions offer various levels of points. More credit is given for GIS analysis and design experience, for example, than for data compilation or teaching.

### Rationale

Job experience is the key factor contributing to an individual's qualifications as it allows opportunities to become skilled at the application of GIS technology to real world problems. Failures and successes in these contexts provide valuable learning experiences that, in turn, allow growth and expansion of skill sets. In addition, the professional working environment, where one is often working with other GIS professionals who have different skill sets and different experiences, provides opportunities to gain knowledge from one's peers. Successes, failures, and access to mentors all form skill development opportunities in the working experience, and the longer one is exposed to these opportunities, the more one is qualified to address recent problems. *Therefore, four years of experience is the minimum number of years required for GIS Certification.*

### Completing the Professional Experience Section

This section will list all the jobs and professional responsibilities that the applicant had or currently has. The applicant will start by entering an employer and employment duration. Then, for each employer, the applicant will add a specific job title, choosing a Tier description for that job based on the drop-down menu shown. Experience points are automatically determined by the percentage that each geospatial Tier component is present in each job.

## **Professional Experience Point Schedule**

The Experience Points Schedule is broken down into three tiers with one supplemental "bonus" tier:

- Tier I: Points for years in a GIS position of data analysis, system design, programming, or similar GIS position.
- Tier II: Points for years in a GIS position of data compilation, teaching, or similar position.
- Tier III: Points for years in a GIS User position (an individual who employs the use of GIS technology but not in the capacities identified above).
- Supervisory Bonus: This option recognizes the responsibility of a supervisor for the work of subordinates. To achieve the maximum Supervisory Bonus allowed for each job, a second instance of employer and time period will need to be created. Then a Supervisory position of 100% be assigned.

Applicants should be brief when claiming duties. Applicants should put the identified duties on the schedule into the context of their positions.

Years/months of employment should be entered into all categories that apply.

#### Full Time vs. Part Time Work

The Full Time Equivalency Percentage (FTE%) is based on a 40-hour workweek. If the applicant works part time, the FTE% cannot exceed 50% or 0.50. If the applicant works 35 hours per week, the FTE% cannot exceed 88% or 0.88.

#### The Supervisor Letter

A signed letter from the applicant's immediate supervisor or employer is needed. The letter must be on the organization's official letterhead. A sample letter is available below. The text of this letter may be copied verbatim and signed by the employer. Alternative versions of the letter will be accepted but scrutinized more carefully than the letter provided by GISCI.

Additional items may be included to strengthen the application:

- A current copy of the applicant's résumé edited to include only GIS related ~~posts~~
- Formal job descriptions from the applicant's employer.

#### Sample Supervisor Letter

ORGANIZATION LETTERHEAD
Month, Date, Year
GIS Certification Institute 701 Lee St, Suite 680 Des Plaines, IL 60016
Dear GISCI Review Committee:
As the supervisor or employer of [NAME], I am pleased to send this letter in support of his/her application for certification as a Geographic Information Systems Professional (GISP). Having reviewed the applicant's portfolio, I can attest that it is true and correct as to the applicant's current title, duties, experience level, and duration of employment here, and that it is consistent with what I know of the applicant's prior background. (I understand that GISCI does not expect me to be able to vouch for the entire portfolio, and that any errors are solely the responsibility of the applicant.)
Sincerely,
Name
Position

## **VII. Contributions to the Profession Component**

### **Minimum Contributions to the Profession Requirement**

The minimum qualification for initial certification is to accrue points in areas that not only benefit the applicant but also benefit the profession as a whole. There are eight major areas of involvement with points being awarded for a multitude of activities within them. Contribution points may fall into any of the categories or be distributed among all eight.

It must be emphasized, however, that work-related publications and sales presentations are generally elements of work experience. Contributions are intended to recognize documents and activities that relay lessons learned and techniques developed at work beyond the client and employer. They should benefit the profession as a whole.

#### Rationale

The GIS Certification Program is an opportunity to define the profession of GIS. The program should not be used as a personal yardstick for career development. As such, it must be recognized that professional contributions in the form of conference planning, publications, committee/board participation, outreach, and other related efforts are fundamental to the health of any profession.

The ability to contribute can be limited by lack of administrative support and resources; however, the program and the GIS community must not lower expectations to the lowest common denominator. Instead, a case should be made for the value of participation. In this way, GIS staff members can use Certification to convince their management that participation contributes to the education and professional development of their staff.

### **Contribution to the Profession Points Schedule**

In general, it is expected that an active professional can attain a minimum of two Contributions points per year. Contributions are an element of both Certification and Renewal of Certification and the point requirements have been de-emphasized for initial certification and increased for renewal candidates. This places greater pressure for contributions upon established professionals and reduces the pressure on those who are newer to the profession.

The Contribution Point Schedule provided below is broken down into eight categories:

- GIS Publications (writing or reviewing certain GIS related materials). Theses and dissertations are included in the Education section under coursework credit and no additional credit will be given.
- GIS Professional Association Involvement (being a member of an organization with a focus on GIS activities or education)
- GIS Conference Participation (organizing a state, local, or national GIS conference)
- GIS Workshop Instruction (presenting a workshop at a state, local, or national event. Workshops that are presented on behalf of the applicant's employer are not applicable)
- GIS Conference Presentation (presenting at a state, local, or national GIS conference. This includes poster presentations)
- GIS Awards Received (awards for excellence in GIS proficiency that may be bestowed by a variety of sources)

- GIS Volunteer Efforts (Any form of uncompensated GIS-related work performed in agreement with a service-oriented organization)
- Other GIS Contributions (includes GIS Day type event organization or participation and various community contributions)

CONTRIBUTIONS POINT SCHEDULE	
(Refer to Pages 28 – 33 in the Procedures Manual for detailed descriptions of each Contributions to the Profession point category)	
I. GIS Publications (pages 28-30)	
Publication Type:	Points Earned per Publication:
A. Book or Published Atlas Author/Editor	15
B. Book Chapter or Refereed Paper Author	5
C. Published Maps (as author)	3
D. Editorial Board	3
E. Magazine/Journal Article or Column	3
F. Paper in Conference Proceedings	2
G. Magazine/Journal/Newsletter Column Editor	1
H. Newsletter Article or Review (Books, Software, Policy, etc.)	1
II. GIS-Related Professional Association Involvement (page 30)	
Level of Involvement:	Points Earned per Year of Office or Affiliation:
I. President or Board Chair	5
J. Board Membership	4
K. Committee Chairperson	3
L. Committee Member	2
M. Association/Organization Membership	1
III. GIS Conference Participation (page 31)	
Level of Involvement	Points Earned per Conference
N. Conference Chairperson	4
O. Conference Committee Member	2
IV. Workshop Instruction (page 31)	
	Points Earned per Workshop
P. Workshop Instruction	3
V. GIS Conference Presentations (page 31)	
Presentation Type	Points Earned per Event

Q. Conference Presentation	1
R. Conference Poster Display	1

VI. GIS Awards Received (page 32)	
Recognition Type	Points Earned per Award
S. National Award	3
T. Local/Regional/State Award	2
VII. GIS Volunteer Efforts (page 32)	
Nature of Volunteer Work	Points Earned per Activity
V. Volunteer Missions	0.5 points per day deployed
U. Volunteer Work	0.05 points per every hour of volunteer work
VIII. Other GIS Contributions (page 33)	
Participation Type:	Points Earned per Activity
W. Event Organizer	2
X. Event Participation/Moderation	1
Y. Related Community Contributions	1-3

### **Detailed Contributions List**

#### **I. GIS Publications (writing or reviewing certain GIS related materials).**

For any work to be considered published, for purposes of earning contribution points, it must be or have been publicly available in electronic or print form from an independent third party. "Publicly available" means that copies could be downloaded or acquired in hardcopy form. An "independent third party" is defined as a person or business, other than the author, who makes decisions regarding publication and/or content and who is not the author's employer or educator. There is no limitation regarding direct or indirect payment to produce the book, article, or map. Theses and dissertations are included in the Education section under coursework credit and no additional credit will be given. **Authors and co-authors** are the recognized writers of a publication. They are credited within the publication as originating or creating the material.

#### ***A. Book or Published Atlas Author/Editor***

##### **Book or Published Atlas Author**

Writing, originating, and/or creating literary material for a publication.

##### **Book or Published Atlas Editor**

Organizing or assembling a literary work or publication.

**Documentation:** Photocopy of cover and title page is preferred. It should include the ISBN #, year, and title.

### **B. Book Chapter or Refereed Paper Author**

Writing, originating and/or creating a book chapter or paper that was peer-reviewed (as with academic or technical publications) prior to publication.

#### **Documentation:**

**Author** - Photocopy of book cover, table of contents and first page of the chapter. It should include the ISBN #, year, and title.

**Refereed Paper Author** - Photocopy of journal cover, table of contents and title page. It should include the journal's title, ISSN#, Volume and Number.

### **C. Published Maps (as author)**

Published maps are printed in periodicals and books. A series of published maps within one publication counts as one published map. For an atlas or map to be considered as published, for purposes of earning contribution points, it must not have been produced because of a work or academic assignment.

**Documentation:** Photocopy of map(s) with citation.

### **D. Editorial Board**

Serving on a Board for a serial or a publication that is peer-reviewed (as with academic or technical publications) prior to publication.

**Documentation:** Photocopy of editorial board roster is preferred. May include a letter that lists the journal, publication, or serial, the ISSN#, years and capacity served.

### **E. Magazine/Journal Article or Column**

Writing, originating and/or creating an article or column that appear in a magazine or journal.

**Documentation:** Name of the publication in which it appeared, date, year, ISSN#, and a photocopy of the article

### **F. Paper in Conference Proceedings**

Writing, originating and/or creating a paper that appears in an edited volume of conference proceedings. Presentation materials (e.g., PowerPoint presentations, slides) do not count as papers.

**Documentation:** Date and location of the conference, name of the conference, copy of the paper's title page

### **G. Magazine/Journal/Newsletter Column Editor**

Organizing or assembling material for a magazine, journal, or newsletter column.

**Documentation:** Photocopy of editorial board roster is preferred. May include a letter that lists the journal, publication, or serial, the ISSN#, years and capacity served.

### **H. Newsletter Article or Review (Books, Software, Policy, etc.)**

Writing, originating and/or creating an article for a newsletter. Performing a scholarly or technical review of various materials.

**Documentation:** Date and year of the article, Issue # or date, month, year, name of the newsletter, copy of the article or title

Note: Professional writing is credited as Experience. Publication of theses and dissertations is credited as Education.

### **Further Examples of What Constitutes a *Work-related Publication***

(1) An employee of a county GIS organization creates maps of zoning and future land use, then someone else in the county's IT department puts those maps on a county Web site for access by the public. This is **not** a contribution to the profession as the decision to publish was made by the author's employer.

(2) An employee of a city-planning department authors an article for the regional GIS user group's newsletter during normal working hours describing how a zoning map was produced. This is a contribution since the decision to publish was made by the newsletter editor.

(3) A consultant designs a new database for a client and then writes a magazine article describing the project and its results at the request of the firm's marketing department. The database design is **not** a contribution, but the magazine article is.

(4) A student does original research to produce a term paper, and then authors an article for the URISA *Journal* describing the work. The term paper is **not** a publication, but the *Journal* article is. The difference between the term paper and the published article, if any, is not relevant.

## **II. GIS Professional Association Involvement (being a member of an organization with a focus on GIS activities or education)**

A Professional Association is characterized as an organization of persons having a common professional interest. An association can be local or national, dues paying or open, large, or small. A professional association is not the same as one's place of employment. Membership should be voluntary and regular compensation from the association to the member for their involvement should not exist (i.e., salary). An honorarium is acceptable. The association must have GIS or geospatial technology be either a primary or related focus.

Organizations having special interest groups or membership categories related to GIS or geospatial technology are acceptable. The applicant must be affiliated for more than six continuous months to earn credit for a full year of membership. There are no points awarded for partial years (0.5 years, 0.25 years) of affiliation.

### ***I. President or Board Chair***

The chief officer of an organization usually entrusted with the direction and administration of its policies.

### ***J. Board Membership***

A member of a group of persons having managerial, supervisory, investigatory, or advisory powers for an organization.

### ***K. Committee Chairperson***

The presiding officer of a body delegated to consider, investigate, take action on, or report on some matter.

### ***L. Committee Member***

A representative to a body delegated to consider, investigate, take action on, or report on some matter.

### ***M. Association/Organization Membership***



A representative to an organization of persons having a common professional interest.

**Documentation:** Include a copy of a membership card, listing in a Membership Directory or other association publication, dues receipt, certificate, or a verification letter from the association.

### **III. GIS Conference Participation (organizing a state, local, or national GIS conference)**

Conferences are organized events featuring persons discussing common concerns related to GIS or geospatial technology. Conferences are typically more comprehensive than activities such as GIS Day or user group meetings. This category is similar to Association involvement and therefore should be documented in the same manner.

#### ***N. Conference Chairperson***

The presiding officer of an organized event featuring persons discussing common concerns related to GIS.

#### ***O. Conference Committee Member***

A representative to a body dedicated to planning an organized event featuring persons discussing common concerns related to GIS.

**Documentation:** Documentation may include a listing in a Conference Program or other publication or a verification letter from the association/organization.

### **IV. GIS Workshop Instruction (presenting a workshop at a state, local, or national event. Workshops that are presented on behalf of the applicant's employer are not applicable)**

Workshops are brief intensive educational programs for a group of people that focus on the transfer of techniques and skills in GIS or geospatial technology. Workshops do not include presentations at conferences. Workshops are longer in duration and deeper in scope.

#### ***P. Workshop Instruction***

Serving as the primary or supporting teacher of the material covered by the workshop.

**Documentation:** A copy of the relevant pages from the program or an acceptance letter from the organization sponsoring the event is acceptable documentation. If this documentation is not available, a signed letter from the sponsoring organization will suffice. This letter should indicate the date, year, and name of the conference.

### **V. GIS Conference Presentation (presenting at a state, local, or national GIS conference. This includes poster presentations)**

#### ***Q & R. Conference Presentation or Poster Display***

Presenting experiences, work, or material at an organized event featuring persons discussing common concerns related to GIS.

**Documentation:** A copy of the relevant pages from the program or an acceptance letter from the organization sponsoring the event is acceptable documentation. If this documentation is not available, a signed letter from the sponsoring organization will suffice. This letter should indicate the date, year, and name of the conference.

Note: Credit is accrued separately for a conference presentation and publication of same in the conference proceedings (see item 1. GIS Publication).

**VI. GIS Awards Received (awards for excellence in GIS proficiency that may be bestowed by a variety of sources)**

***S. National Award***

Earning an award for excellence in GIS proficiency bestowed by an organization with a national or international focus.

***T. Local/Regional/State Award***

Earning an award for excellence in GIS proficiency bestowed by an organization with a local, regional, state, or provincial focus.

***Documentation:*** A signed letter from the award granting institution or proof of when/where/why the award was bestowed. This can consist of a listing in a conference program, newsletter, magazine, memo, etc. May include a photocopy or digital image of the award.

Note: Awards issued by the applicant's employer do not count as a contribution to the profession.

**VII. GIS Volunteer Efforts (Any form of uncompensated GIS-related work performed in agreement with a service-oriented organization such as GISCorps, clubs, organizations, schools, or other entities)**

***U. Volunteer Missions***

Providing 72 or more consecutive hours of time, including time for food and rest, in active volunteer status.

***V. Volunteer Work***

Providing periodic volunteer work with a duration of less than 72 consecutive hours in active volunteer status.

***Documentation:*** A signed letter from the organization acknowledging the nature and duration of the volunteer effort.

Note: Do not claim credit for both Volunteer Work and Volunteer Missions for the same effort. The categories are either/or.

The volunteer effort must not be subsumed by or be additive to another contribution point category. For example, work done in support of a committee is already recognized in a separate point category and no additional credit will be given.

**VIII. Other GIS Contributions (includes GIS Day type event organization or participation and various community contributions)**

Intended to serve as the panacea for all volunteer activities that fall outside the other categories. A variety of GIS activities may be included as Other GIS Contributions including school presentations, community maps, organizing GIS Day, etc. Contributions cannot be mandatory job requirements.

***W. Event Organizer***

Helping plan an event featuring persons discussing issues related to GIS. These events are not as organized as a national or local conference. Typically, the transfer or demonstration of GIS knowledge is the primary activity.

#### **X. Event Participation/Moderation**

Participating in an event other than as an attendee. Conference/Event attendance should be documented on EDU-3. "Participation" involves contributing to the planning or execution of a meeting outside of a formal committee structure. Events feature persons discussing issues related to GIS. Typically, the transfer or demonstration of GIS knowledge is the primary activity.

#### **Y. Related Community Contributions**

Reserved for GIS contribution point claims that fall outside the other categories. These claims must benefit the applicant and the profession. GISCI makes the final determination on whether points will be awarded.

**Documentation:** Include any materials that would signify your participation in these events. This would include letters, articles, fliers, etc.

The contributions section will be filled out in a similar fashion as the previous two. Points should be included for each instance that the applicant has satisfied the listed contribution. Therefore, if the applicant has satisfied a contribution category more than once, the applicant may receive duplicate points. There is no limit to how many times a category may be used or how many points may be accrued in that category. Also, not all categories need to be filled. If the candidate for example, has not published a book, they should move onto the next category. The candidate will be responsible for completing the calculations and arriving at a total that meets the minimum amount. GISCI will also complete a separate tabulation to verify that the points and totals are correct and satisfactory.

#### **Contribution to the Profession Documentation**

All Contribution Points of three or higher need to be documented.

*Contribution point claims of 2 points or less do not need. GISCI will conduct accuracy checks on certain applications to determine if undocumented claims are factual. If a claim is found to be incorrect or misstated the application will be rejected and a processing fee will be charged to the applicant.*

*If all CON claims are less than 2 points, applicants should at least try to provide documentation for 25% of the claims.*

Please keep in mind that the applicant is not required to document every single contribution point they earned during a 10 or 20-year career, especially in the 1-to-2-point category. We ask you to document what you can, but include what you have done, regardless. The goal of this entire program is to surpass the minimum level of 150 points. Candidates cannot be considered "more certified" by supplying a point total that greatly exceeds the minimum. Also, point totals will not be released so the submission of extra points is not recommended. If a discrepancy or misrepresentation of points is uncovered, the applicant runs the risk of being rejected.

Try to include points where adequate documentation is readily available. Often the applicant may want to start with the most recent points earned and then work backwards until the point total is satisfied. It is the idea that the applicant may have recent materials on hand to

document the claimed points.

### **Contribution Categories and Suggested Documentation**

Documentation can be as specific as a book or publication reference, a copy of a registration for conference, workshop, or presentation. It may be a certification of completion or attendance. It may be an online reference, placed as a link in the application.

## **VIII. Payment**

A GISCI application will not be processed unless full payment is provided. Upon submission of a Portfolio Application, the applicant will be given payment options. The applicant may choose to pay immediately via credit card or request a payment email. If requesting a payment email our Certification Coordinator, Katie Morehead, will be in touch with the applicant to arrange for payment. The email will provide the option to pay over the phone, mail in a form with a check or giving the applicant access back to pay online.

Payment may be in the form of a check for the full amount. The check must be valid and signed by the proper party. Checks with insufficient funds or “bad” checks will result in the removal of the application from consideration along with the applicant being charged a processing fee. Incomplete checks or checks containing incorrect information will be destroyed and the accompanying application will not be considered.

GISCI also accepts 3 major credit cards: Visa, MasterCard, and American Express. The cardholder will need to supply GISCI with card/account number, the expiration date, and the cardholder’s name.

GISCI does not under any circumstances accept the following forms of payment:

- Currency (foreign or domestic)
- Multiple Party Checks
- Credit cards other than the ones listed previously
- Purchase Order Numbers

A receipt will be sent along with the letter that notifies the applicant that the application has been received.

### Wire Transfers

GISCI will add a \$15.00 charge in addition to the regular application fee for applicants who pay with a wire transfer. The applicant will be expected to pay any fees assessed in setting up the wire transfer. GISCI will cover the fees assessed for accepting the transfer.

## IX. Code of Ethics

A signed copy of the GISCI Code of Ethics must be included with your application and must be uploaded to the **Required Documents** section of the online application. The first page of the Code contains an acknowledgement form that must be signed and dated and returned with your application. This form must accompany the completed application to be considered for certification. The Code of Ethics is available for review online at <https://www.gisci.org/Ethics/CodeofEthics.aspx>

No candidate, regardless of points will be considered certified without signing the GISCI Code of Ethics.

## X. Renewal of Certification

To retain certification, the Certified GIS Professional must maintain currency with the profession and document those activities periodically. He or she must earn additional points in renewal categories since initially being certified or previously renewed to remain certified. If the Certified GIS Professional fails to earn the minimum renewal points during that period, then he or she is no longer considered professionally certified by GISCI.

GISCI certification lasts for 3 years. The initial cycle begins on the day the applicant signs the Code of Ethics and is notified by GISCI of their certified status. When the applicant submits his or her materials for renewal of certification, the cycle will begin again and last for another 3-years. Recertification requires the GIS professional to sign the Code of Ethics again. The applicant will be expected to pay a recertification fee in the manner described in the Payment section of the renewal of certification procedure manual.

### Requirements for Recertification

The following is a breakdown of the points that are required for renewal of certification. These points must be earned only in the three years that have passed since initial certification or last recertification.

- Education – Professional Development hours (1 point for each 6 professional development hours)
- Contributions to the Profession – points are earned according to a table of activity values
- Work Experience – 10 points for each 12 months of full-time equivalent (FTE) work.

Educational Achievement minimum	6.0
Contributions to the Profession minimum	6.0
Work Experience minimum – no minimum required	
Additional points to be earned from a combination of Education, Work Experience, and Contributions	12.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>24.0</b>

Please refer to the GIS Certification Institute website, [www.GISCI.org](http://www.GISCI.org) for further details and proper procedures on renewal of certification. Failure to earn the above points will result in the forfeiture of a GIS Professional's certification.

## **XI. GISCI Certification Program Contact Information**

GIS Certification Institute  
701 Lee Street, Suite 960  
Des Plaines, IL 60016  
847-824-7768  
[info@gisci.org](mailto:info@gisci.org)

GISCI Web Page: [www.GISCI.org](http://www.GISCI.org)