

# University Consortium for Geographic Information Science

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## Press Release

### Urban Planner to Lead University Consortium for Geographic Information Science

Laxmi Ramasubramanian, PhD, AICP, Associate Professor of Planning and Design at Hunter College of the City University of New York, was chosen recently to become the new President-Elect of the University Consortium for Geographic Information Science (UCGIS). Dr. Ramasubramanian, an architect and urban planner, has been active in UCGIS for over a decade in different capacities, most recently, as an elected member of the board of directors.

After completing her undergraduate architectural education in India, Dr. Ramasubramanian moved to the United States where she received her Master in City Planning degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Her PhD research at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee examined how digital technologies influence the work of community-based organizations. She has previously held research and teaching appointments at the University of Illinois-Chicago, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, as well as postdoctoral fellowships in Australia (University of New England) and New Zealand (University of Auckland).

Dr. Ramasubramanian's research examines how the use of digital technologies such as GIS alters social and political processes, particularly the power of individuals and institutions to create and sustain social change. Her research has revealed that technology use by relatively powerless actors (community-based organizations, for example) alters the nature of knowledge creation, and thereby the discursive strategies they can use to solve strategic planning problems. Her book **Geographic Information Science and Public Participation** was published in 2010 by Springer-Verlag.

Dr. Ramasubramanian has received research funding from public and nonprofit sources including the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, US Federal Transit Administration, NOAA, and the Ford Foundation. Her current research, funded by the Federal Transit Administration is focused on developing easy-to-use methodologies for community groups to visualize and document barriers to accessibility using both traditional techniques such as behavior mapping and newer data gathering strategies such as crowd sourcing.

The University Consortium for Geographic Information Science (UCGIS), established in 1995, is a professional hub for the GIS research and education community and serves as a national voice and advocate for its members' interests. As a nonprofit association, UCGIS is governed by a nine member board of directors, with a Council of Delegates that represent more than 60 member universities. Dr. Ramasubramanian was selected as President-Elect by a vote of the Council of Delegates at its Summer Assembly. In addition to convening research meetings, UCGIS sponsors workshops, curriculum-related projects, and other special initiatives designed to benefit the academic community and the field of GIS as a whole.

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