

# Mentorship knows no distance:

an online career mentorship  
programme by  
Women in Geospatial+



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# WOMEN IN GEOSPATIAL+

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A PROFESSIONAL NETWORK TO PROMOTE  
GENDER-EQUALITY IN THE GEOSPATIAL  
INDUSTRY AND ACADEMIA



We believe in changing the status quo by creating a **strong network of Women in Geospatial+ leaders and changemakers.**



# What we do



COMMUNITY  
BUILDING



EVENTS



CAREER  
MENTORSHIP



# Creating a vibrant community



Safe space for exchange and sharing experiences

- **Slack channel** and **mailing list** (over 1100 sign-ups)

Advocacy - Information sharing - Profile highlighting

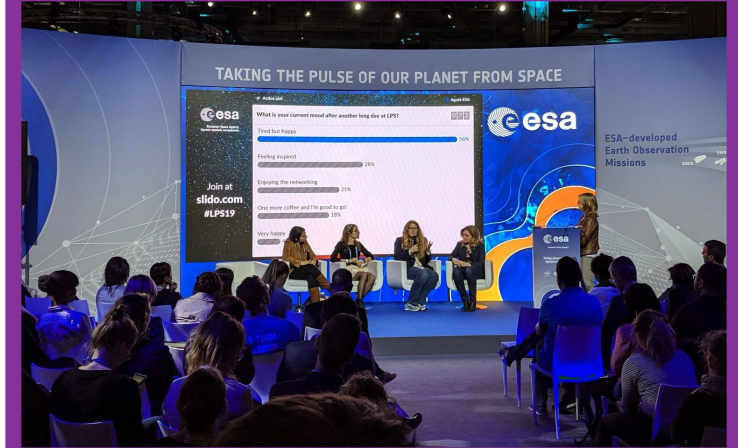
- **Twitter** (> 4000 followers)
- **LinkedIn** (> 2000 followers)

**COMMUNITY  
BUILDING**

**Sign-up: [bit.ly/womeningeospatial\\_signup](https://bit.ly/womeningeospatial_signup)**



# Virtual and in-person Meetups



## EVENTS

Go to <https://womeningeospatial.org/events>  
for upcoming and postponed events



# Women in Geospatial+ Speakers Database

Be part of the Women in Geospatial+ speakers database! Register, speak up and embrace change!

Register and create your speakers profile:

<https://speakers.womeningeospatial.org>



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## Launch in 2 phases



1

**Registration  
phase** (NOW)

2

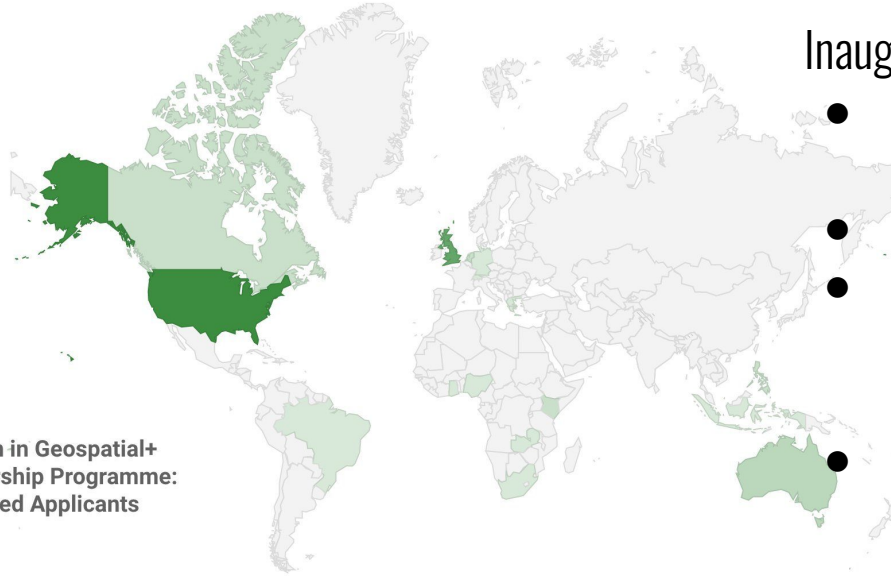
**Launch of full  
platform**  
(end of May)



# Mentoring people across time & space



Women in Geospatial+  
Mentorship Programme:  
Accepted Applicants



## Inaugural cohort

- 42 participants over 17 countries
- 40 women+, 2 men
- Selected from a pool of nearly 190 candidates
- Grouped by topics of interest & time zone

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# Mentoring people across time & space



All are welcome to participate.

- Women and underrepresented genders: mentors & mentees
- Cis men can be mentors

2 models:

- Mentor-mentee pairs: different career stages
- Peer mentorship groups (up to 3 people)

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# Mentorship Participants



Aleen Elisha Prasad  
(Fiji)

"My name is Aleen Elisha Prasad & I'm a Pacific Islander from the islands of [#Fiji](#). I have a passion for sustainable development and improved environmental practices. I am currently enrolled in a Masters of Geospatial Science at the University of the South Pacific where I am investigating the integration of geospatial tools in existing [#climate](#) vulnerability assessments."

"What made me join [Women in Geospatial+](#) was being able to access the diverse platform this program offered for young researchers as myself, being able to tap into a pool of resources and create an international network with like-minded people in the geospatial industry. Thank you for the wonderful opportunity of being part of this." [#womeningeospatial](#)

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# Mentorship Participants



Nasilele Amatende  
Mwiimbwa  
(Zambia)

"I am an enthusiastic GIS Analyst with experience in spatial analysis of local population dynamics using Census and Survey data. I am currently pursuing a Masters in Geo-information Science and Earth Observation and my research is looking at 'The Use of Artificial Intelligence, Remote Sensing and GIS in Crop Yield Estimation.'"

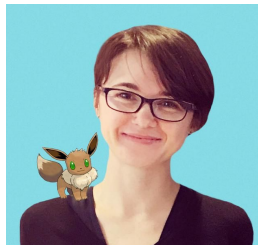
In Zambia, GIS is still a very new field, so I wanted to be part of a network that would expose me to opportunities that are available in the Geospatial world, show me the advanced skills that I need to compete out there and also give me the confidence to apply myself professionally. I wanted a platform that would help me grow my career, give me a focus and provide a support system for any technical challenges I may encounter. The mentorship program has completely changed the way I think, my goals for the future have been sharpened, it's been a support system that I have never had! Thank you so much..."

[#MentorshipMonday](#) [#WomenInGeospatial](#)

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# Mentorship Participants



Adela Nistora  
(UK)

"I'm an ethical geospatialist, a Europe-based global citizen who cares about the Earth as a whole. In this age of multiple emergencies, my mission is to apply my skills where they are needed the most: to act for climate change mitigation and adaptation, food security, biodiversity conservation, to protect and restore forests, oceans and water resources, provide renewable energy for our communities, promote sustainable transport, contribute to emergency/disaster management, and facilitate humanitarian aid."

Adela joined the mentorship program because... "after spending one year looking for meaningful geospatial opportunities in the fields I care about, I felt lost and I needed to connect with other geospatialists who could inspire me."

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# How it works



## Timeline

- 29 August 2019 | Applications open
- 30 September 2019 | Applications close
- 7 October 2019 | Mentorship matches announced
- October to July 2020 | Mentorship programme underway
- 15 July 2020 | Mentorship programme ends
- September 2020 | New applications for Round 2 open!

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# Resources for mentors & mentees



- Mentorship Guidebook
  - Articles and tips on how to be a good mentor or mentee
  - Example timeline for monthly topic discussions
  - Contact information for mentorship committee
- Mentorship Agreement Form
  - Facilitates a shared discussion of goals and expectations
  - All members have to fill this in separately after a discussion and submit individually
- Private Slack channel
- Occasional online meetups

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# Mid-term Feedback



We gathered feedback on progress from January - February 2020:

- All participants were invited to a 30 minute call
- Resulted in 24 respondents participating in a semi-structured interview or completing a survey
- Key themes were identified and qualitatively coded from longer-form responses
- Also collected anecdotes about programme impact

**The following slides share some of our findings!**

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# Q: What tech do you use to communicate?



## Two-thirds of the groups met monthly

Most of the other groups met less regularly or were communicating via WhatsApp or Email in lieu of meetings



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# Q: Why did you join the programme?

Here are the top 5 ranked answers:



1. Networking
2. (Receive) Social Support
3. Help others
4. Provide Social Support
5. Gain Skills and Experiences

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# Q: What do you discuss when you meet?

Here are the top 4 ranked answers:



1. Career Development
2. Goal-Setting
3. Networking & Events
4. Time management & workload

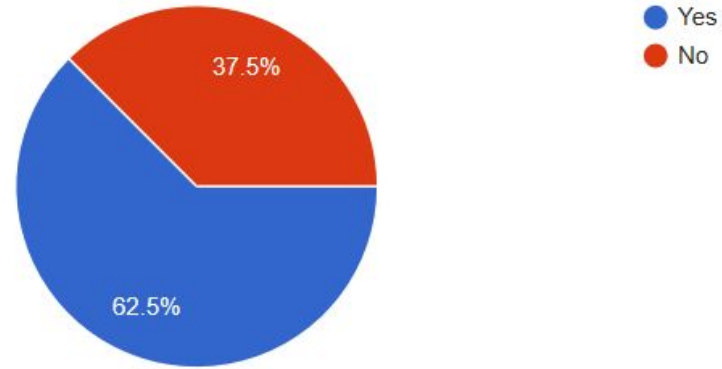
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# 2/3 said the programme impacted them

5a) Has being a part of this program impacted your career or studies?

24 responses



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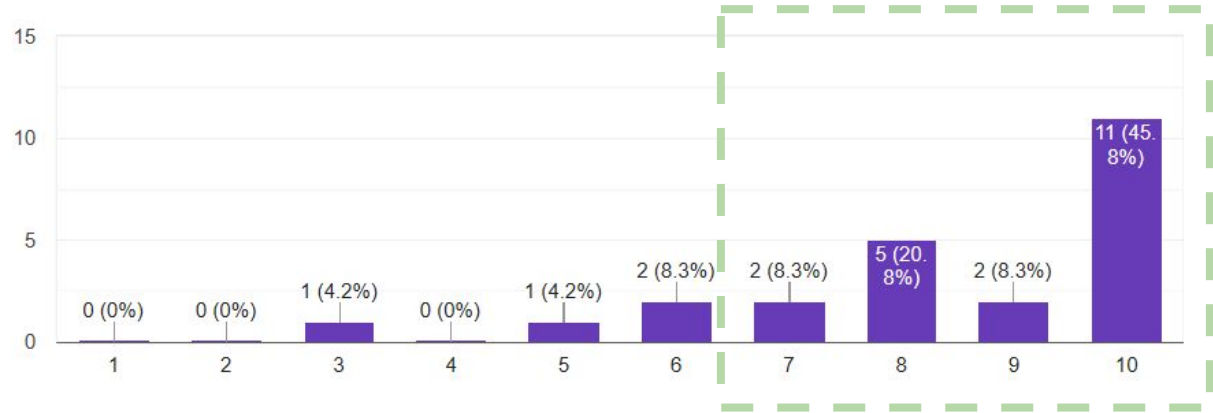
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# 80% will recommend our programme



6) How likely are you to recommend the program to others?

24 responses



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# Q: How did the programme impact you?



Here are a selection of themes:

- Inspiration and Encouragement
- Networking
- Access to resources
- Social support

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# Q: How did the programme impact you?



## Success Stories:

- Found a job or applied to graduate school
- Navigated tricky workplace situations
- Received credit for work that they were doing (that would have otherwise have gone to someone else on their team)
- Encouraged to step up and take on new professional opportunities (negotiate a raise/promotion, make a presentation in front of company stakeholders, claim a seat at the table)

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# Challenges



- Participants prefer face-to-face meetups
  - Some groups or pairs met up during events in person, but this is not possible for everyone.
  - Some mentees also sought out local GIS or geospatial networking groups to fulfill this desire to meet people in person
- Personality or communication style differences
  - We had calls with concerned participants, listened and gave some advice to groups experiencing interpersonal differences

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# Challenges



- Different levels of commitment and participation across the group
  - When alerted of this concern by a peer mentee, we reached out to the participant who was less active
- Flexibility vs Structure: Some participants preferred a more structured programme
  - We hope to add more regular activities in the future

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# Next steps



- We foresee a large increase in demand for virtual mentorship given COVID-19, so we aim to invest in improving our programme:
  - Providing more resources to mentors and mentees (crowdsource from current cohort)
  - Organising more webinars on topics of interest, together with guest panelists sharing their experiences
  - Bringing on summer interns who will improve our current mentorship guidebook and programme offerings
  - Designing an alumni programme

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# Be part of our next mentorship cohort



## Applications open in September 2020

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# JOIN US TODAY!

Sign up: [bit.ly/womeningeospatial\\_signup](https://bit.ly/womeningeospatial_signup)

Twitter: [@geospatialwomen](https://twitter.com/geospatialwomen)

Web: [www.womeningeospatial.org](https://www.womeningeospatial.org)

LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/company/women-in-geospatial/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/women-in-geospatial/)



Be an **active**  
community member



Be a **community**  
builder and shaper



Be a 'Women in  
Geospatial' advocate