GISP FAQ

How do I begin the process to become a GISP?
First, download the application from the website. Review the application to see if you qualify and then begin filling it out. If you have questions, please contact us.

What are the requirements for becoming a GISP?
One must meet benchmarks in education, professional experience, and contributions to the profession as well as sign a Code of Ethics and Rules of Conduct. The application is point-based in which one receives points for different activities in the three categories. After the point minimums are met and one has worked four years in the GIS industry, one can submit their application to become a GISP.

I am new to GIS and don’t yet qualify for the GISP. What recommendations do you have for me?
You are on the precipice of an exciting and rewarding career! We recommend that you look over the application. Find out what it takes to become a GISP and then aim for it. Know what you need and what you need to do so that, when you qualified, you can apply.

What is the easiest way to complete the application? Do you have any tips or tricks that will help?
Yes! When you download the application, you will get about 100 pages. Remember that only about 12 of those pages have to be filled out and most of the pages are very simple. The application is intended to show that you meet the minimum qualifications to become a GISP. It is not an exhaustive review of your entire career. If you have more than enough points in each category, you can stop filling it out. The minimum required points is 150; we recommend that you have about 200 points, which is more than enough. One area that takes people time is getting the documentation. Start requesting college transcripts now. Find the documentation for your contributions to the profession. You can often find information by doing an internet search of your name. Finally, if you have questions, please ask. We would love to help.

I am applying for my GISP but some of my information is 10 years old or more. Can I still use it?
Yes, the original application allows one to use accomplishments from anytime during their career.

How can I prepare for the GISP application?
You can request transcripts from schools and look for documentation for your Contributions to the Profession.
What qualifies as professional experience to become a GISP?
   In the application is a full description of the types of activities that qualify as professional experience to become a GISP.

Is there a way to bypass the publication requirements to become a GISP?
   Yes, publications are not required to become a GISP. The Contributions to the Profession section has many different options including volunteer work, working on a committee, presentations, and much more.

I do not like to present. How can I meet the requirements of the Contributions to the Profession section?
   Presenting is not required. Some people don’t like to present but are comfortable doing poster presentations. Others volunteer to participate on GIS or geospatial committees. Volunteer work is always welcome. Some people like to write newsletter or journal articles. The Contributions to the Profession section is set up with a variety of ways in which one can contribute to the GIS industry.

What if I forget to include something in the application or don’t fill it out correctly? Do I lose my application fee?
   No, we will request that you provide any missing information.

What if you discover that I don’t qualify after I provide missing information?
   Sometimes people provide incorrect information my mistake. When this happens, the person may not qualify. We will place the application on hold, allowing the applicant to correct any problems, or we will provide a partial refund of the application fee at the applicant’s request.

What is required to renew the GISP certification?
   Renewing the GISP certification is also point based. One must obtain a minimum number of points in education and contributions to the profession. A minimum in professional experience is not required; however, one may use points in the professional experience section to meet the total point requirement.

I need to renew. From what time period can I count points?
   For renewing, one should only count points for five years: from the time of certification to the end of the five year certification period. Occasionally, one does not have enough points during the five year period. One can count points earned after the five year period but then cannot count those points at the next renewal period.

The original application took a long time to complete. How long will the renewal take?
The renewal form should take far less time to complete than the original application; sometimes as little as one hour. The key is to make sure you have good records of your continuing education, professional contributions, and volunteer activities at hand for reference before you begin filling out the renewal application. GISCI will soon have a tool on the website to help GISP log and track these activities.

Who reviews the GISP applications?
GISCI has more than 100 GISP who have volunteered to review the applications. Each application is reviewed by at least two people. Everyone on the Applicant Review Committee has signed a Committee rules of conduct. The rules require that one must keep all information confidential and secure. One cannot review the application of someone they know or with whom they are acquainted.

What is the value in having my GISP?
The GISP holds value to the individual and to the GIS industry. GISP have obtained a level of professional maturity and experience that is widely acknowledged in the GIS industry. The Code of Ethics and Rules of Conduct set the GISP apart in that we hold ourselves to a higher standard.

Why should I become a GISP?
Many of us became GISP in order to get better jobs or because our employers required it. Some wanted to meet the qualifications for an RFQ or RFP. All of us recognize the need to help the GIS industry mature and grow. We are committed to meeting the requirements of the Code of Ethics and Rules of Conduct.

By what authority does the GIS Certification Institute have to award the GISP certification?
The GIS Certification Institute (GISCI) operates as an independent industry non-profit organization by the authority of it’s member organizations:
- AAG – Association of American Geographers
- GITA – Geospatial Information & Technology Association
- NSGIC – National States Geographic Information council
- UCGIS – University Consortium of Geographic Information Science
- URISA – Urban and Regional Information Systems Association

I’ve heard a lot about an exam requirement. Do I need to take a test?
A test is not required at this time; however, we expect to have a test in place in the next 2½ years. The test will be in addition to the application.