Inclusive Cartography Seminar Series

Seminar series of the Inclusive Cartography Working Group of the International Cartography Association (ICA)

Seminar 1 - Vincent van Altena, senior researcher, Kadaster, the Netherlands, co-chair ICA Working Group on Inclusive Cartography **and Jakub Wabiński**, researcher and lecturer, Institute of Geospatial Engineering and Geodesy, Faculty of Civil Engineering and Geodesy, Military University of Technology, Warsaw, Poland.

Date: 9 October 15:00 CET

Link: https://meet.google.com/dwr-ytbz-cih

Abstract: In the first of a series of bi-monthly seminars hosted by the International Cartographic Association's Inclusive Cartography Working Group, Vincent and Jakub will shortly introduce the aim, activities and achievements of the Working Group.

One of the recent achievements of the group is the publication Tactile Mapping - cartography for people with visual impairments - a collaboration of more than 30 contributors from over the world, sharing insights from academia, practitioners and personal stories from people with visual impairments. Vincent and Jakub will discuss the concepts behind the initiative, the impact they hope the book will have on knowledge sharing, and elaborate on the process in bringing an idea to fruition. As a sneak preview, they will also share some highlights from the book. At the end of the session there will be time for Q&A.

Vincent van Altena

Jakub Wabiński

Speaker bio's:

Vincent van Altena, senior researcher, Kadaster, the Netherlands, co-chair ICA Working Group on Inclusive Cartography, holds a bachelor's degree in theology, an MSc in geographical information science, and a PhD in spatial-temporal interpretation of early Christian literature. At Kadaster, Vincent has worked on topographic mapping, automated generalisation, and tailored customer solutions. He participated in international projects, including the European Location Framework, and has also chaired Esri's User Community for Geospatial Authorities Working Group on Map Automation and Generalization. Currently, he leads the Dutch initiative on tactile mapping. Vincent likes cooking (not cleaning), plays piano and synthesizer, and can spend hours reharmonizing music (with different levels of success).

Jakub Wabiński is assistant professor, Institute of Geospatial Engineering and Geodesy, Faculty of Civil Engineering and Geodesy, Military University of Technology, Warsaw, Poland, and is co-chair ICA Working Group on Inclusive Cartography. He received a BSc degree from the Maritime University of Szczecin in 2015 and an MSc from the Military University of Technology in Warsaw in 2017. He worked as a postgraduate researcher at the Dublin Institute of Technology in Ireland (2017) and a courtesy research assistant at the University of Oregon in the United States (2020). As part of his doctorate, he has been working on the issue of tactile map design and the automation of tactile map production. He is also interested in novel cartographic presentation methods. A board game enthusiast and a wanderer, he enjoys spending time in nature.

Seminar 2 - Brandon Biggs, Software Engineer at The Smith-Kettlewell Eye Research Institute, CEO at XR Navigation, and PhD Candidate at the Georgia Institute of Technology

Date: 11th December 2025 15:00 CET

Link: https://meet.google.com/dvj-qsqu-cbm

Abstract: This presentation will share methods for systematically assessing and designing complex digital spatial diagrams and maps that meet ADA accessibility standards. The strategies apply to a wide range of contexts, including municipal GIS data, campus layouts, building plans, and anatomical charts. Topics will include alternate text, full keyboard navigation, and adequate non-text contrast. In the past, accessibility could often be achieved by identifying a map's "primary purpose" and providing it in text form. However, new research and technological developments have made this approach insufficient for compliance. The session will introduce techniques

such as interactive alt text and comprehensive written descriptions, ensuring that information about distance, direction, shape, size, orientation, and overall layout of points, polygons, and lines is both accessible and easy to create. Participants will also learn how to enable full keyboard control of all features and meet a 3:1 contrast ratio. By the end, attendees will have a practical toolkit for assessing maps for ADA compliance and implementing accessible map design.

Speaker bio: Brandon Biggs is an entrepreneur, researcher, inclusive designer, developer, and life-long learner. He is the CEO of XR Navigation, an Engineer at the Smith-Kettlewell Eye Research Institute, Co-Founder and board treasurer at Sonja Biggs Educational Services Inc., and a PhD student at the Georgia institute of Technology. In 2016, he received his bachelors in music from California State University East Bay, in 2019 he received his masters in Inclusive Design from the Ontario College of Art and Design University, and in 2021, began his PhD in Human Centered Computing from the Georgia Institute of Technology. He is almost completely blind from Lebers Congenital Amaurosis (LCA). His projects and ventures center around building tools to solve some of the most difficult problems in the blindness field. He leverages his lived experience coupled with human centered inclusive design principles to create solutions that create lasting and sustainable impact. To achieve this goal, Brandon is half entrepreneur and half academic.