

## Tomaž Podobnikar – Curriculum Vitæ

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*I am fascinated by innovation and science. What could be more satisfying than unravelling a problem that was considered unsolvable? A deep understanding of natural and social phenomena in geospace over time is paramount before discovering viable technical solutions. Taking a wide-ranging perspective, I discovered that art and science make excellent bedfellows.*

Geospatial Information Expert – consultant, civil servant, Scientific Councillor, lecturer and supervisor (PhD, MSc, BSc), recently a **Sustainable Development Officer** with **25+ years of experience** in the areas of geospatial, environmental, natural and social sciences/fields, Earth observation, hazard and risk management, project/programmes evaluation, etc. at 14 academic, governmental, NGO, IGO (UN) and consulting organizations in 9 countries. **Simplifier and constructor** of new algorithms. Able to build every aspect of digital, from the **front end to the back end and everything in between**. Career highlights include **strong leadership** (head of the dept., chief GIS). Fieldwork in ecological, archaeological, anthropological and geomorphological mapping, geodetic survey and humanitarian, in **resource-limited settings**. Designed and delivered courses in GIS/RS, cartography, spatial data and information quality, and digital terrain modelling. Documented innovative methods and technical solutions: [1] spatial data integration/conflation with semantic enrichment to **reduce the cost of digital elevation model (DEM) up to 25-times**, realized for the National DEM and implemented into the EU and Google Earth models; [2] geomorphometry based index for feature detection and recognition, visualization and photography enhancement, used in the Esri World Topographic Map; [3] methodology to pre-process any geospatial data with special tools to make them 'analytics ready', realized for the ESCWA Spatial Data Infrastructure and will be realized with ESA (€150m). Awarded with over 25 competitive grants including Skolkovo Innovation Center and **Fulbright**.

### Core Skills and Qualifications

- A proficient, self-motivated worker, **researcher, officer, teacher** (lecturer, supervisor), **trainer, consultant, communicator**.
- **Team leader** (Head of the dept., Chief GIS and other leaderships) and **team player; cross-disciplinary and multicultural** involvements; governance.
- **Designed and managed** 30+ and contributed to 100+ international projects, of which 20+ with industry.
- **Evaluated** 90+ scientific and industrial international projects.
- **Publications:** [Google Scholar](#), [Semantic Scholar](#), [ORCID](#), [ScopusID](#), [SICRIS](#), [ResearcherID](#), [COBISS](#), [CORES](#), [SciProfiles](#), [CoLab](#); **1800+ citations H-index 21** with the most cited paper being cited 130-times; **editorial board of 7 journals**, edited 9 monographs/special issues, **reviewed 210+ papers**.
- **Fields of interest:** applied sciences (natural, social, environmental, engineering), Geosciences, Geoinformatics, Geomatics, GIScience, GIS, cloud GIS, Earth Observation (EO), geospatial data science, Spatial Data/information/knowledge Infrastructure (SDI), Spatial Data Engineering, geodesign, algorithm design, spatial database design and management, GIS, remote sensing, geomorphometry, photogrammetry, Lidar, cartography, satellite image processing, location-based services, GeoAI and machine learning, spatial generalization, spatial reasoning, cognition and decision making; satellite geodesy (GNSS), surveying and mapping; computer programming, VM, AR and VR, environmental geography, hazard and risk management, spatial modelling for conservation (environment, cultural heritage), climate change issues, space research, landscape archaeology, palaeoenvironmental analysis, social networks.
- **Computer applications:** CAD and database management since 1990, GIS, cartography and RS since 1994, (spatial) statistics since 1996, Lidar since 2003, various visualization software since 1994. Familiar with programming languages like Python and C to bring developed algorithms beyond the limits of common off-the-shelf analytical software.
- **Links:** [ResearchGate](#), [ACADEMIA](#), [Portfolio \(YouTube\)](#), [PDF](#), [SCGIS](#)

## Professional Experience

### Ministry of Natural Resources and Spatial Planning, Slovenia

2023-11-23 – current

#### *Undersecretary*

Directly assist in the management of professional tasks within the scope of the work of the ministry and internal organizational unit. Participation and execution of tasks within the Recovery and Resilience Plan “Green Slovenian Location Framework”. Leading project teams, developing systemic solutions and complex documents, handling demanding tasks, and leading top project teams.

#### Key achievements:

- Supervised outsourced companies and regional specialists in Slovenia in the field of “land use designation”.
- Developed and implemented fully automated, freestanding software for quality assessment and improvement of datasets in Slovenia’s largest enterprise geospatial information system, “Spatial Information System” (including ePlanning and eConstruction; <https://pis.eprstor.gov.si>).

### University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

2020-09 – 2021-09; 2023-04 – current

#### *Associate Professor*

Teaching in the doctoral program ‘Built Environment’, for two courses I developed: “Digital terrain modelling for natural hazards assessment” (mainly for civil engineers); “Management of spatial data quality” (mainly for geodesists).

#### Key achievements:

- Supervised international and national PhD students.
- As an editor of national and international research and scientific journals, exposed my membership in the editorial board of ISPRS Journal of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing and MDPI.

### Faculty of Information Studies in Novo Mesto, Slovenia

2008–2019-05; 2020-09–2020-09; 2023-04–curr.

#### *Assistant/Associate Professor*

Lecturing, mentoring in the undergraduate program, and research. Provide innovative and effective teaching, teaching curricula (courses), and learning materials, attracting students from different disciplines and incorporating GIS into the curricula of new disciplines. Teaching activities, two courses: “Quality of Information”/“Quality of data” (lectures, tutorials, lab work); “Geographic Information Systems” (lectures, tutorials, lab work).

#### Key achievements:

- Managed 1 employee (assistant).
- Developed methods for spatial data quality and information quality assessment.

### United Nations, ESCWA, Lebanon

2021-09 – 2023-03

#### *Sustainable Development Officer, Regional Advisor*

Worked for [1] Information Communication Technology Section (ICTS); [2] Statistics, Information Society and Technology dept., and [3] Climate Change and Natural Resource (Arab Centre for Climate Change Policies) dept. Proposed conceptual frameworks for humanitarian risk models, and spatial data infrastructure. Developed optimized solutions for several projects aimed at providing state-of-the-art enterprise geospatial information systems solutions. Provided technical solutions for organizational GIS and remote sensing software. Prepared and delivered training, lectures, and consultancy on numerous geospatial topics, from the roots of GIS to cartography, geodesy, photogrammetry, remote sensing, image processing, database development, spatial analysis, visual analytics, geovisualization, etc. Promotion of interdisciplinarity and cross-lateral solutions and systematic “geospatial reasoning”. Collaboration with UN-GGIM – Arab States and many other UN agencies, especially in Lebanon in the fields of GIS, EO, cartography and geodesy.

#### Key achievements:

- Managed a team of 3 ICT professionals.
- Elucidated background on geospatial history and contemporary advances to take advantage of geospatial developments.
- Through geodesign developed tools/services and algorithms and procedures to improve performance in ongoing projects.

- Reviewed UN-GGIM documents and implemented them in ESCWA.
- GIS capacity building to member states and in-house training on geospatial issues.
- Proposed and developed a scalable and sustainable Spatial Data/Information Infrastructure (SDI) solution for the enterprise 'ESCWA Geospatial Data Ecosystem' to provide timely 'analytics-ready data'.
- Contributed with the geospatial approach to interdisciplinary projects of geospatial SDGs analysis, 'Human development, poverty and multiple shocks in the Arab region – A geospatial analysis', 'Geospatial approach to Arab Risk Monitor', and others. Coded automated solutions.

**United Nations, MINUSMA, Mali**

2020-01 – 2020-08

*Chief GIS, Geospatial Information Officer*

Leadership and HR Management. As head of the GIS Unit, the FTS (Field Technology Section) took on the responsibility for the integrating gender perspectives into our work. Collaborated across disciplines with MINUSMA colleagues to achieve organizational goals, valued the ideas and expertise of others by actively soliciting input. Supported organizational decisions and shared credit for team accomplishments, while also accepting shared responsibility for team shortcomings. Technological Awareness: Employed an in-depth knowledge of the latest technological developments in enterprise GIS, image processing, the Internet of Things (IoT), GNSS, and web applications. Understand the applicability and limitations of technology in office work and keep abreast of available technology, and proactively seek to apply it to appropriate tasks.

**Key Achievements:**

- Managed a team of 12 geospatial specialists.
- Engaged in the technical and administrative management of the GIS Unit. By learning about the ongoing work of the unit staff members, their dynamics with clients, I managed them and took advantage of higher levels of motivation and participation.
- Proposed and started implementing improvements to the enterprise geoportal (hub) and cartographic techniques.
- This period was also marked by the emergence of the coronavirus, which changed some work priorities. Proactively advised on the design of the COVID-19 geospatial platform and so initiating numerous activities on this important topic within MINUSMA. Several dashboard prototypes and final solutions were created and deployed for various purposes. Advising the Mali WHO Country Office on the COVID-19 platform. Outreach of this work is presented in the publication "Geospatial for Humanity: Prevention, Response and Recovery of the World from the Pandemic COVID-19", [UN-GGIM 2021](#).
- Played a significant role in various project activities, with particular focus on the Unite Aware and Unite Maps (with Maps on Demand (MoD) service; generated on demand as updated Topographic Line Maps (TLMs) at various scale for field operations) Initiatives.

**United Nations Global Service Centre (UNGSC), Italy**

2019-05 – 2020-01

*Geospatial Information Officer*

Managed geospatial databases and provided enterprise geospatial platforms, solutions and services to clients. Outreach, business partnerships and partnership with field missions and UNHQ. Supported NYHQ goals for the "Cloud-first" initiative and managed cloud instances as per guidance from NYHQ and SGITT. Provided efficient project and service management. Complied with organizational security policies. Strengthened the institutionalization of FTS project/program management and associated governance processes.

**Key Achievements:**

- Resolved several outstanding issues related to governance, software code, quality assurance, and project design, e.g. developing and writing a complex SOP.
- Engaged in the support and design of the governance process and documentation for the management and deployment of the enterprise UNGeoPortal ([Unite GeoPortal](#)) in Field Missions.
- Provided valuable input in defining processes and guidelines to streamline management of UNGeoPortal. Led the coordination and deployment of the UNGeoPortal Hubs to four missions according to a plan schedule.
- Created a catalogue of all running UNGeoPortal services for better management and transparency.
- Provided various technical contributions to team efforts and projects assigned to the team.

- Developed an automated ArcPy code to transform data and services from one production environment to another.

**University of Ljubljana, Slovenia**

2009-11 – 2019-06

*Associate Professor*

Worked for the Faculty of Civil and Geodetic Engineering, Research Institute of Geoenvironmental and Hydrological Threats – RIGHT (2014-2019), and Department of Geodetic Engineering (2009-2014). As a researcher, developed advanced methods for spatial modelling, particularly in the fields of geomorphometry, spatial statistics, AI, georadar, and spatial data integration, mainly in the field of degradation of landscapes and climate change hazard management. As a professor, developed courses and taught and supervised students at different levels, such as “Photogrammetry II” (tutorials for graduate students), and many others. Proposed research ideas in the area of flipped and collaborative learning.

**Key Achievements:**

- As a supervisor attracted the best students of the generation from various disciplines. Mentored 15 BSc, 1 MSc, 5 PhD, 1 young researcher.
- Obtained several international research projects and contributed to 10 others, thus attracting experts to develop research areas.
- Developed and improved methods for Digital Elevation Model (DEM) production through data and methods for integration, with applications. Developed geomorphometric methods for natural hazard assessments.
- Published numerous high-level scientific research papers. Member of several editorial boards and editor of special issues.
- Established a database of historical maps for the area of Slovenia and owned many originals.

**Oxford Policy Management Ltd, United Kingdom**

2013 – 2018

*External Consultant*

Consulting in the fields GIS, spatial predictive modelling, spatial statistics, and environmental science for developing countries, e.g. for “Identifying Frontiers of Digital Financial Services in Tanzania”.

**Key Achievements:**

- Contributed to geospatial and governance solutions.

**School of Advanced Social Studies in Nova Gorica, Slovenia**

2008 – 2013

*Assistant Professor*

Provided innovative and effective teaching, teaching curriculum (courses), and learning materials that attract students and integrate GIS into new discipline curricula. Teaching activities: “Quality of Information” (lectures, tutorials, lab work).

**Key achievements:**

- Managed 1 staff member (assistant)
- Trained students with a social science background in methods of spatial data quality and information quality assessment.

**Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Slovenia**

1995-11 – 2013-06

*Scientific Councillor (Research Advisor), Head of the Department*

Through leadership, management, mentoring, lecturing and supervising, led international teams, of researchers, students, technical staff and other stakeholders, and engaged them in projects, programmes, innovative advanced research, studies, applications, conferences, etc. Ensured the development of novel methods in the fields of natural and cultural environment spatial analysis in GIS, geomorphometry, advanced archaeological predictive modelling to optimise fieldwork, integration of geodetic survey and GIS-based mapping techniques for fieldwork, etc. In addition to lectures for students, global public and professional audiences and fellows, provided training for individual postgraduate students for the following subjects: Cartography, GIS and Environment, GIS and Dialectology, GIS and Habitats, at the Faculty of Civil and Geodetic Engineering, Biotechnical Faculty and the Faculty of Philosophy (University of Ljubljana), since 2008.

#### Key achievements:

- Supervised 2 Leonardo da Vinci Programme students, 3 young researchers, since 2001 and number of students. Lecturer and developed courses for GIS and DEM, Erasmus – Socrates Programme, RESPAL (REmote Sensing for PAst Landscapes), 2006.
- Head of the Department of Environmental Studies, 2008–2013 and member of the Science Council of the Institute of Anthropological and Spatial Studies, 2004–2008. HR activities to build teams.
- Successfully organized several national and international conferences, symposia and team meetings, e.g. for ISPRS, and Mars Express project. Acquired numerous projects and business agreements, as well as funds used for the development of research activities in the institution.
- Interdisciplinary research results in various fields of science and business: Developed innovative data **integration method** and produced a highly accurate Digital Elevation Model (DEM) of Slovenia and its surroundings in 2005, which was integrated into both the European model and the Google Earth model. Designed an innovative online **archaeological mapping technique** for Maya settlements in Yucatan, Mexico, 2004-2005. Designed and applied a large number of innovative GIS layers through **palaeo relief simulations and historical map reconstructions**, which were used for the film “Nature and the City”, produced by the City Museum of Ljubljana, 2006. Initiated and set up a web GIS server platform for the **Cultural and Natural Heritage Database**, which was used for national purposes and later on for the Archaeological Cadastre of Slovenia (ARKAS), and the Mayan heritage in Yucatan, Mexico, 2002. Designed an **Archaeological database of Central Dalmatia**, Croatia, 1994. Produced a **special DEM** of Slovenia for mobile communication network planning at the national mobile operator Mobitel, and produced numerous derived maps of Slovenia, Europe and Earth for commercial POP TV 2000/2001. Produced a seamless **DEM and bathymetric model** of Central Dalmatia, Croatia using my data integration techniques for the Adriatic Islands project. Similarly, integrated a global bathymetric model using ETOPO and my datasets, for the commercial TV station.
- My research outreach, animated simulation effects of sea-level rise on the Slovenian coast, was presented for the Nobel Laureate Al Gore’s visit to Slovenia in 2008.
- Research results have been presented to local communities in Albania, Central America, Croatia, North Macedonia, Papua New Guinea, Slovenia and elsewhere.
- Designed a GIS system for the entire organization, based on Esri solutions and the best national topographic data.

#### **Mura Regional Development Agency Ltd, Slovenia**

2012-10 – 2013-09

##### *Project Manager and Consultant*

Leader and consultant for the application of advanced research in regional development within the EU development project “REG-NET, Slovenia – Hungary”. Prepared and led project workshops.

#### Key Achievements:

- Designed and developed a web geostatistical/GIS server.
- Proposed and developed environmental indices for natural/social environment assessment.

#### **University of Nova Gorica, Slovenia**

2008-10 – 2011-08

##### *Assistant Professor*

As a fellow at the School of Environmental Sciences in higher education, developed and lectured two courses: “Environmental Information Systems and GIS” with tutorials for undergraduate students, and “Geographic Information Systems” with tutorials for postgraduate students. In addition, led a team of researchers in an interdisciplinary field after successfully acquiring an international project. Managed this project.

#### Key Achievements:

- Managed a team of 5 staff members and successfully supervised 2 BSc students, one of whom won an award.
- Acquired an EU multidisciplinary project that I acquired to provide advanced research results also used for the local community, especially in the field of historical maps and time series analysis with applications in different disciplines.

*Project Assistant*

Employed to contribute as a researcher, supervisor and project manager in the series of ESA Mars Express projects, as well as in the Christian Doppler Laboratory “Spatial Data from Laser Scanning and Remote Sensing”, at the Institute of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing. The main research topics were: planet Mars exploration, developing algorithms for enhanced digital terrain model (DTM) production and methods for lidar applications development. They included novel methods for quality control, geomorphological extraction of various terrain features, and geovisualization. Other research activities were: remote sensing applications in invasive plants, applications in environmental archaeology, and applications in natural hazards and risks management (launched all 3 projects).

## Key Achievements:

- Developed a multi-applicable generic image processing method “**Multidirectional Visibility Index**”, **MVI**, which is mainly used for analytical shading enhancement. The method has been used to improve topographic maps and enhance photographs. A generic algorithm for the MVI has also been used in mountain peak recognition and applied in ESRI World Topo Map. Methods have also been designed for **automatic recognition of various geomorphological features**, and for **enhanced visual quality assessment**, as well as for **cartographic visualization**, **geovisualization** and **visual analytics**.
- Scientific papers with all specialists in Lidar techniques and applications for the Comprehensive Utilization of Airborne laser Scanning in Natural Hazard Studies in Alpine Areas.

**Ministry of Environment, Slovenia**

1995-08 – 1995-11

*Civil Servant*

At the Surveying and Mapping Authority of the RS, involved in operational work, research and administration in various fields, such as geodesy, GIS, photogrammetry, land surveying, cartography, remote sensing, spatial database design and management, and national coordinate systems transformation.

## Key Achievements:

- Developed and implemented a catalogue of corners for topographic maps of Slovenia at the scale of 1:25,000.
- Developed various applications for geodesy, land surveying, cartography, and land cadastre.

**International mobility (postdocs, research visits)**

Realized **9 research periods** of at least 1 month, altogether 15 months:

- **Fulbright Visiting Scholar Program** (grant); Department of Marine Geosciences - Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science, University of Miami, USA, 2019
- **Quality Researcher** (grant); C.N.R.S., Laboratoire de Chrono-écologie, Université de Franche-Comté, Besançon, France, 2006
- **Research Expeditions** (National Geographic Society CRE grant); South Campeche, Reserva de la Biósfera de Calakmul, Yucatán and Mexico City, Mexico, 2004 and 2005
- **Visiting Researcher** (grants); Institute of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing, Vienna University of Technology, Austria, 1999, 2000 and 2001
- **Visiting Researcher** (grant); Faculty of Geodesy, Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands, 1997
- **Research Expedition** (grant); Island of Brač, Croatia, 1994

**Education****PhD (Doctor of Science)**

University of Ljubljana

1998 to 2001

**MSc in Geodesy**

University of Ljubljana

1995 to 1998

**BSc (Bachelor of Geodetic Engineering)**

University of Ljubljana



1991 to 1995

## Trainings and Certification

**Organizer of 15+ conferences**, trainings and workshops.

Attended training:

- 15+ leadership, situational judgment and ethics trainings, since 2007
- 7 management trainings, since 2010
- 15 pedagogical (didactics) trainings, since 2014
- 7 media and communication trainings, since 2010
- 30+ UN trainings, 2019-2023

Attended other training:

- **The use of patent databases and patent information**, by The Slovenian Intellectual Property Office (SIPO), Slovenia, 2017
- **Introduction to ArcGIS Pro for professionals**, by ESRI, UC Davis, USA, 2015
- **Web GIS: Using the ArcGIS Platform**, by ESRI, UC Davis, USA, 2015
- **SIST/ISO standards**, by Slovenian Institute for Standardization (SIST), Slovenia, 2014
- **Perspectives on Spatial Analysis in the Social Sciences**, by Center for Spatially Integrated Social Science, UC Santa Barbara, USA, 2000
- **Introduction to SPSS**, by University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, 1998
- **User applications of ERS SAR Data**, by ESRIN, Frascati, Italy, 1995

## Professional Membership

- **ELISE** (The European Location Interoperability Solutions for e-Government), since 2020
- **European AI Alliance**, since 2018
- **SCGIS** (Society for Conservation GIS), since 2015
- **IUGG** (Slovenian Association of Geodesy and Geophysics), since 2012
- Geomorphological Society of Slovenia, since 2010
- Section for Cartography at the Association of Surveyors of Slovenia, since 2009
- **ICA Commission on Cartography in Early Warning and Crises Management** (International Cartographic Association), since 2009
- **ICA Commission on Generalisation and Multiple Representation** (International Cartographic Association), since 2009
- **ICA Commission on Mountain Cartography** (International Cartographic Association), since 2007
- **EGU** (European Geosciences Union), since 2007
- **IAHS** (International Association of Hydrology Sciences), 2007-2010
- **AGILE** (Association Geographic Information Laboratories Europe), 1998-2012

## Leadership

- **Chief GIS** of GIS Unit, Field Technology Section (FTS), United Nations, Mali, 2020
- **Co-founder** of Vedomec, Institute for the Spatial Culture, Slovenia (on my initiative), 2011-2015
- **Head of the Department of Environmental Studies** of the Institute of Anthropological and Spatial Studies, Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Slovenia (founded on my initiative), 2007-2013
- **Science Council** member of the Institute of Anthropological and Spatial Studies, Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Slovenia, 2004-2008

## Editor

**Editorial Board** and member of the scientific committees: Remote Sensing journal, MDPI, [Topic Editor](#), since 2021, and Section Editor "[Remote Sensing in Geology, Geomorphology and Hydrology](#)", since 2019; Geoinformatics FCE CTU, since 2016; IJEES, since 2015; ISPRS Journal of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing, 2013–2016; Journal of Geodesy, 2010–2014; Geographical Information Systems in Slovenia, since 1997 (also organized biennial symposiums). **Edited** following monographs and special issues:

- Harmonizing Earth Observation Data for Enhanced Spatial Analysis, Earth Observation series, Elsevier, 2024-2026
- [Geospatial Data Quality: Unraveling the Essentials](#), Revue Internationale de Géomatique, 2023
- [Spatio-Temporal Analysis of Urbanization Using GIS and Remote Sensing](#), Special issue, MDPI, 2022-2025
- [Perspectives on Digital Elevation Model Applications](#), Special issue, MDPI, 2021
- [Advances in Global Digital Elevation Model Processing](#), Special issue, MDPI, 2020
- [Universal Ontology of Geographic Space: Semantic Enrichment for Spatial Data](#), monograph, IGI Global, 2012
- Geographical Information Systems in Slovenia, monographic series, ZRC Publishing, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006 (5 monographs)

### Expert tasks: Reviewer, Evaluator and Board Membership

A **reviewer** of 50 international journals. Reviewed 210+ papers. Refereed 2 monographs, 7 national and 5 international projects. An **evaluator and a referee** (wrote experts' reports) of **55+ national and 15+ international programmes and projects** (basic research, applied science and industry – R&D) since 2003 (Slovenia, Czech Republic, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Montenegro, Netherlands). Registered an active **expert, evaluator or board member** of:

- Technical Assistance to the National Copernicus Capacity Support Action Programme for the Philippines (CoPhil) (Non-Key Expert, NKE), since 2024
- EQA (European Quality Assurance), since 2023
- MCST (Malta Council for Science and Technology), 2021-2025 (evaluator board)
- Fulbright: Fulbright Senior Award, 2019, 2021 (evaluator board)
- IBF International Consulting, since 2018
- Montenegrin Ministry of Science, since 2018 (evaluator board)
- COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology), since 2018 (expert board)
- MSCA-IF (Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowships), 2017 call (evaluator board)
- Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, Slovenia, since 2017 (evaluator board)
- SPIRIT Slovenia (Public Agency for Entrepreneurship, Internationalization, Foreign Investments and Technology), since 2017 (evaluator board)
- Ministry of Science and Education, Croatia, since 2017 (evaluator board)
- CMEPIUS, 2016-2020 (evaluator board)
- REGIO (to support Cohesion Policy, regional and urban development) of the European Commission, since 2016 (experts board)
- Horizon 2020 Advisory Groups (European Commission), since 2014 (evaluator board)
- Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning of the Republic of Slovenia, "Preparation of the starting points for the recording terrain with lidar", 2010-2011 (Independent government consultant for the high-resolution lidar terrain models)
- ARRS (Slovenian Research Agency), 2003-2008 (evaluator board)

### Innovation

**Multi-source spatial data conflation** (merging with enrichment) novel methodology and computer application for digital elevation model (DEM) production with integration. I have built everything from front-end to back-end and everything in between. The derived landform map has been used nationwide in all high schools and integrated into the European model (EuroDEM – EuroGeographics) and Google Earth model. The reduced cost of the final product by up to 25 times has been realized for the [National DEM of Slovenia](#) (32 data sources!) and Central Dalmatia. The improved solution received "Spatial data integration, Space Technologies and Telecommunications" and "Information Technologies" grants with excellent scores from the Skolkovo Innovation Center (2018). This methodology is one of the future trends in geospatial technology.

**Multidirectional Visibility Index (MVI)**. The generic and multimodal solution is based on a novel [geomorphometric technique](#). I developed the MVI for analytical hill shading and adapted it for predictive modelling (alluvial fans/talus cones), feature recognition and description (mountain peaks, karst depressions), geovisualization (visual quality control) and photography (imagery enhancement with image



processing). The solution for the recognition of the geomorphological peaks was used in the Esri World Topographic Map.

**Mapping process with real-time quality control** that employed surveying, GNSS, data sampling and spatial analytics. The [challenges](#) in conducting this method have been in resource-limited settings. I developed that innovative method for ancient Maya settlement models and maps in Yucatan, Mexico, which led to significantly better surveying accuracy and faster mapping.

**Time-series algorithm** for generating GIS layers that involve palaeo relief simulations, automated historical maps analysis and cartographic methods. The results were used for the film “Nature and the City”, produced by the City Museum of Ljubljana.

**Participatory management on the relation between individual and group tasks.** The method is based on spatial statistic pattern research, which was involved in crowdsourced data. The main findings were that individuals had better respond to constructive critical judgement, have a deeper understanding and a more useful approach to creative thinking. Groups are more successful in finding unique differences, where the synergy effect is an important factor. The findings have been used for didactics, mapping purposes, as well as better capacity building.

**Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI)** with properties: [1] high interoperability; [2] Fundamental Data Themes; [3] standard scale levels; [4] solution to avoid edge effect and boundary problem; [5] standard CRSs and map projections; [6] naming convention; [7] traditional and web maps publishing; [8] metadata and catalog of data/services; [9] files operational for an average laptop. Around 7-times reduced cost and considerably better quality of the final product.

**Selected software**, from architecture to the final product: Coordinate Transformer 1.0, Top Topography (last version 2.0), Visibility Shader (last version 2.0), VideoSurveillanceAI (last version 4.0), Peak Mapper (last version: 3.0), GPX Mapper (last version 2.0), [NRPvalid 1.0](#).

## Funding and Research Projects

Very successful in **obtaining research grants** at national, regional, EU and other international levels. Active participation as a major team player, in **100+ national and international cooperation projects** in Slovenia, Croatia, North Macedonia, Italy, Austria, Hungary, France, Russia, Mexico, Mali, Lebanon, as well as in a project covering the entire Earth and the planet Mars. Worked in different types of groups and alone. This has given me access to very good networks of people from EU countries and other parts of the world.

**Successfully designed and raised competitive research funds for 20+ projects, managed and executed them** (e.g. co-financed by the ERDF: FP6, FP7), and participated in **20+ joint cooperation projects with industry**, co-financed by Skolkovo Foundation, Telekom, DARS, etc. The work includes numerous basic research projects co-financed by FFG/ALR, ASAP, ARRS, etc. Highlighted projects with their acronyms: OBSERVE, PARAMount, TransEcoNet, TMIS.plus.II, TMIS.morph, CAENTI, SISTEMaPARC, Alpine Windharvest, AQUADAPT, ArchaeDyn, Adriatic Island Project, National Program of Water Management – in the framework of Interreg programs, Central Europe, Inter-American Development Bank, National Geographic (CRE grant).

Accepted by **9 competitive start-up projects in the industry** on spatial data handling topics with the following acronyms: SmartDEM (UiG, 2021; Future 4.0, 2020; Skolkovo Foundation, 2014, 2017, 2018) and Top Topography (INiTS, 2019). Using project management tools (MS Project, PlantUML, Open Workbench, JIRA, etc.).

## Spatial analysis and survey-related studies

**Quantitative and qualitative spatial data processing** with the development of novel algorithms and methods for spatial data analysis, spatial statistics, geostatistics, visual analytics, spatio-temporal analysis, network analysis; mathematical modelling; processing of various spatial data layers, satellite imagery; Monte Carlo simulations; predictive analytics and spatial data mining; spatial data conflation, integration, fusion and multi-method approaches; spatial feature engineering; digital photography/imagery enhancement; spatial data quality and uncertainty with innovative approaches to data/information management.

**Spatial database** development and management: storage, access, transform, analyse, interpretation, and implementation for massive amounts of data (spatial ETL – e.g., Power BI, RapidMiner, MS Access, ArcGIS); documentation. Good experience in establishing or maintaining a database containing large data sets and a multi-dimensional array of data (OLAP cubes), which is particularly evident in the setting up of a web GIS server platform for the Cultural and Natural Heritage Database in Slovenia (2002-2006), and a Web GIS/Geostatistics portal for the Pomurje region, NE Slovenia (2012-2013), an Archaeological database of Central Dalmatia, Croatia (1994-1998); geospatial metadata bases for ZRC SAZU (2001-2013), UN spatial metadata base (UNGSC 2019, ESCWA 2021-2022); Database for digital elevation models processing (since 1998); Standard fundamental spatial data themes database from various sources for the Arab region (2022), and many others.

**Studies, based on various spatial databases:** geodetic **surveying** and mapping (total stations, levels, etc.) including satellite geodesy (GNSS) (since 1994); transformation of coordinate systems and map projection (since 1993); web design and development – now DNN, WordPress (since 1997); individual house design plans (since 1985); experience in working with AWS cloud-based servers (since 2017). Knowledge of design and implementation of the internet of things (IoT), and video surveillance and protection technology using AI (since 2014). Initiated an idea of a [COVID-19 spatial platform](#) in the UN and realized for MINUSMA on live **survey** data spatial dashboard (2020). Proposal and development of the statistical methods on **survey** data and research methodology for the project “Influence of daily individual meteorological parameters on the incidence of the acute coronary syndrome” (2018-2019). Contribution with a spatial approach to the ESCWA interdisciplinary project ‘Human development, poverty and multiple shocks in the Arab region – A geospatial analysis’ where I manipulate HDX, ACLED, DHS **survey** data, topographic data and highly pre-processed spatio-temporal data like as land cover (2022). From **survey** data in various countries (Croatia, Slovenia, Mexico, Albania, Austria) I modelled mental maps and maps from predictive models based on social and environmental variables (since 1994).

## **Programming, architecture, algorithms, and application development**

**Computer applications:** CAD and database management since 1990, GIS, cartography and RS since 1994, (spatial) statistics since 1996, Lidar since 2003, and various visualization software since 1994. Familiar with programming languages to bring research ideas beyond the limits of common off-the-shelf analytical software. Developing highly optimized code that takes into account spatial partitioning, parallel processing, memory utilization, CPU efficiency, and network demands.

**Programming coding:** Familiar with programming languages to bring developed algorithms beyond the limits of common off-the-shelf analytical software: (Visual) Basic, Fortran, C, C++, Python (including packages, libraries and APIs such as ArcPy, PyQGIS, PyGRASS, OpenCV, PySAL, GeoPandas/Matplotlib, Rasterio, Shapely, Fiona, NumPy, Pyogrio, PyArrow, GDAL, QGIS, SAGA GIS), RPL using RPN (Reverse Polish Notation for HP), MATLAB and Octave, SQL, SQLite, Data Analysis Expressions (DAX), UML, LaTeX, HTML and JavaScript; programming with scripts for AutoCAD, ArcGIS [previously AML – ARC Macro Language] (including ArcGIS Pro, ArcInfo Workstation, FME Workbench, ArcGIS Server, ArcGIS Online, ArcGIS Enterprise portal, ArcSDE), open source GeoServer, eCognition, Google Earth Engine, Idrisi, ERDAS Imagine, Global Mapper, GRASS GIS, SAGA GIS, QGIS; for dashboards (Power BI, ArcGIS Dashboards); TensorFlow; spatial statistical programming in R (including ggplot2), Orange, SPSS, JASP; database programming in dBase, MS Access, MS Excel, PostGIS/PostgreSQL, SQLite; more creative programming scripts for visualization IrfanView, PaintShop Pro, CorelDRAW, Adobe CS now CC (in particular Adobe Acrobat, Photoshop, Illustrator, Bridge), and for video editors Adobe Premiere Pro and DaVinci Resolve, ImageMagick, FFmpeg etc. Microsoft Office 365, LibreOffice and Overleaf (LaTeX) skills. **Operating systems:** MS Windows and Batch Programming (CMD Shell, PowerShell), Linux (Bash), Unix (Unix Shell), Android.

## **Fieldwork and research expeditions**

Having contributed to several fieldwork projects own scientific outputs were improved during the process. The main areas of fieldwork are **ecological, archaeological, anthropological** and **geomorphological mapping**, based on my **geodetic survey**, including various land cadastre, **GNSS** and **lidar measurements**, and other **survey** and **geospatial data**. The archaeological fieldworks (1994–2005) lasted between one and eight weeks

and included geodetic measurements, online mapping using innovative GIS-based quality control, design and creation of databases, archaeological prospection, etc., all of which served as a basis for further spatial analysis. Also, participated in fieldwork (archaeological reconnaissance, anthropological survey, geodetic surveying and advanced mapping, ecological and speleological investigations, etc.): in particular on the island Brač, in Makarska, and Cetina Valley in Croatia (1994 and 1999); at Tonovcov grad in Slovenia (1996); and in South Campeche, Yucatán, Mexico (2004 and 2005). Other experiences with fieldwork included GNSS (GPS) campaigns in Slovenia and (North) Macedonia (1994–1998), which usually lasted 10 days: EUREF'94, Slovenia'95, and EUREF MAK'96 to name a few. The other types of fieldwork included the measurement of trees' position for lidar data calibration and making detailed relief measurements for lidar data control (2004), anthropological surveys in Albania (2007), mapping of invasive plants in Slovenia (*Fallopia japonica* and *Robinia pseudacacia*) (2009–2011), geomorphological survey (2014), and fieldwork for stabilization purposes in Mali (United Nations, 2020).

## Teaching Experience, Supervision

Solid **higher education teaching expertise** in the geoinformatics, geomatics, and GIScience. Allowed to **develop and deliver innovative and effective teaching lectures and curricula**, and learning materials, I attracted students and colleagues **from different disciplines to involve** GIS in the curricula of new disciplines. My well-designed and delivered lectures, tutorials and lab work enabled me to offer courses that are more dynamic, for digital terrain model production and applications; data quality and information; photogrammetry and cartography. Delivered GIS lectures for the Erasmus – Socrates Programme in 2006, as well as on Environmental Information Systems and GIS for undergraduate and postgraduate students at the University of Nova Gorica, Slovenia. Delivering lectures on Quality of Information for postgraduate students at the Faculty of Information Studies in Novo Mesto, Slovenia, and at the School of Advanced Social Studies in Nova Gorica, since 2008.

In addition to lecturing, teaching the **following subjects for individual postgraduates** in the GI and: spatial analysis, DEM/DTM, photogrammetry, cartography, geodesy, spatial data quality, landscape ecology, dialectology, landscape archaeology, habitats, and other environmental topics – at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia (Faculty of Civil and Geodetic Engineering, Biotechnical Faculty and the Faculty of Arts), since 2008. **Responsible for setting the contents of all listed courses**, which have successfully passed accreditations at individual faculties and universities.

Supervised 2 Leonardo da Vinci Programme students and 4 young researchers, as well being as a regular informal mentor. A public examiner of 17 BSc, 1 MSc and 5 PhD theses.

## Significant Publications

Written, participated in, or actively contributed to more than **57 original scientific papers** for journals, 27 monographs, 54 popular science articles, 7 national, and 60 international conferences and meetings. A complete list of publications (currently 615 records) is documented in COBISS, [Personal Bibliographies](#). The representative publications are in chronological order (all references are available upon request):

- **Podobnikar, T.** 2025: Bridging Perceived and Actual Data Quality: Automating the Framework for Governance Reliability. *Geosciences*, 15(117). DOI: [10.3390/geosciences15040117](https://doi.org/10.3390/geosciences15040117) (cited 2 times)
- Palacios-Prado, N., Corominas-Sustach, F., Pérez, A.; Verdugo, D., **Podobnikar, T.** 2024: Encoded Landscapes: A Link between Inka Wall Orientations and Andean Geomorphology. *Land*, 13, 463. DOI: [10.3390/land13040463](https://doi.org/10.3390/land13040463) (cited 1 times)
- **Podobnikar, T.** 2023: ESCWA Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) Governance. *Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)*
- **UN-GGIM** 2021: Geospatial for Humanity: Prevention, Response and Recovery of the World from the Pandemic COVID-19, 44p. (appeared on pages 23-24 with my UN MINUSMA Mali [COVID-19 dashboard](#))
- Šarlah, N., **Podobnikar, T.**, Ambrožič, T., Mušič, B. 2020: Application of Kinematic GPR-TPS Model with High 3D Georeference Accuracy for Underground Utility Infrastructure Mapping: A Case Study from Urban Sites in Celje, Slovenia. *Remote Sens*, 12(8). DOI: [10.3390/rs12081228](https://doi.org/10.3390/rs12081228) (cited 21 times)
- **Podobnikar, T.**, Posavec, I. 2019: UN GeoPortal Governance: managing access, groups and roles. *Standard Operating Procedure (SOP-FSSU-1002)*, UN, Department of Operational Support, 12p.

- **Podobnikar, T.** 2018: Palaeotopography concerning sea level changes to rethink past human activities in Central Dalmatian islands, Adriatic Sea. *Acta hydrotechnica*, 31(55), 143-156. DOI: [10.15292/acta.hydro.2018.09](https://doi.org/10.15292/acta.hydro.2018.09)
- Šturm, T., **Podobnikar, T.** 2017: A probability model for long-term forest fire occurrence in the karst forest management area of Slovenia. *Int J Wildland Fire*, 26(5), 399-412. DOI: [10.1071/WF15192](https://doi.org/10.1071/WF15192) (cited 17 times)
- **Podobnikar, T.**, Székely, B. 2015: Towards the automated geomorphometric extraction of talus slopes in Martian landscapes. *Planet Space Sci*, 105, 148-158. DOI: [10.1016/j.pss.2014.11.019](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pss.2014.11.019) (cited 10 times)
- **Podobnikar, T.** 2012: Detecting Mountain Peaks and Delineating Their Shapes Using Digital Elevation Models, Remote Sensing and Geographic Information Systems Using Autometric Methodological Procedures. *Remote Sens*, 4(3), 784-809. DOI: [10.3390/rs4030784](https://doi.org/10.3390/rs4030784) (cited 54 times)
- **Podobnikar, T.** 2012: Multidirectional Visibility Index for Analytical Shading Enhancement. *Cartogr J*, 49(3), 195-207. DOI: [10.1179/1743277412Y.0000000012](https://doi.org/10.1179/1743277412Y.0000000012) (cited 17 times)
- **Podobnikar, T.**, Vrečko, A. 2012: Digital Elevation Model from the Best Results of Different Filtering of a Lidar Point Cloud. *Trans GIS*, 16(5), 603-617. DOI: [10.1111/j.1467-9671.2012.01335.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9671.2012.01335.x) (cited 52 times)
- Dorigo, W., Lucieer, A., **Podobnikar, T.**, Čarni, A. 2012: Mapping invasive *Fallopia japonica* by combined spectral, spatial, and temporal analysis of digital orthophotos. *Int J Appl Earth Obs*, 19, 185-195. DOI: [10.1016/j.jag.2012.05.004](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jag.2012.05.004) (cited 133 times)
- **Podobnikar, T.** 2009: Methods for visual quality assessment of a digital terrain model. *S.A.P.I.EN.S.*, special Issue 2(2), [15-24](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sapiens.2009.12.004) (cited 135 times)
- **Podobnikar, T.** 2009: Georeferencing and quality assessment of Josephine survey maps for the mountainous region in the Triglav National Park. *Acta geod geophys Hung*, 44(1), 49-66. DOI: [10.1556/AGeod.44.2009.1.6](https://doi.org/10.1556/AGeod.44.2009.1.6) (cited 78 times)
- **Podobnikar, T.**, Schöner, M., Jansa, J., Pfeifer, N. 2009: Spatial analysis of anthropogenic impact on karst geomorphology (Slovenia). *Environ geol*, 58(2), 257-268. DOI: [10.1007/s00254-008-1607-3](https://doi.org/10.1007/s00254-008-1607-3) (cited 32)
- **Podobnikar, T.** 2005: Production of integrated digital terrain model from multiple datasets of different quality. *Int J Geogr Inf Sci*, 19(1), 69-89. DOI: [10.1080/13658810412331280130](https://doi.org/10.1080/13658810412331280130) (cited 100 times)

## Honours and Awards

Awarded with 25+ competitive grants including the **Fulbright** and Skolkovo Innovation Center, as well as:

- Certificate of Outstanding Contribution in Reviewing of the ISPRS Journal of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing, 2014
- Prešeren Prize for Students of the University of Ljubljana (as supervisor of Obu, J.), 2011
- Alumnus Optimus, Award for best student of School of Environmental Sciences, University of Nova Gorica (as supervisor of Jež, E.), 2010/2011
- Gisdata/Esri Award for exceptional students' results in the development and use of the geographical information systems (as supervisor of Obu, J.), 2010/2011
- First prize for the poster; Čeh, M., Smole, D., Podobnikar, T. Geodata: Are they accessible and usable?, 2004; 7th AGILE Conference on Geographic Information Science, Heraklion, Greece. The prize encouraged our team to pursue research on the topic of the universal ontology of geographic space. Proud to be asked to edit a monograph on the topic, which was published in 2012.

## Languages

**English:** fluent speaking, writing and reading

**Slovenian:** mother tongue

**Serbian and Croatian:** conversational

**German:** basic

**Italian:** basic

**Spanish:** basic

**Russian:** basic (I read Cyrillic)

**French:** basic

**Arabic:** basic