

Editorial

The ISPRS Foundation becomes a reality

The new inter-Congress period for ISPRS is now well underway. Decisions of the General Assembly at the Istanbul Congress in July 2004 are being put into action, the new Council has met several times and the Technical Commission Presidents have their working groups formed and operating. As a demonstration of the strength of the scientific activities of the Society, a number of scientific workshops are planned this year by the working groups in various parts of the world. We can look forward to a very productive 4 year period leading up to the Congress in Beijing in 2008, given the rapid developments and applications of the sciences and technologies with which ISPRS is associated.

Attendance at the Congress in Istanbul in July last year revealed the truly international character of ISPRS, since it represents more than 100 countries and regions around the world. The Statutes and Bylaws describe the diverse activities of ISPRS, which include: facilitation of excellence in research and development; convening international meetings including Congress, symposia and workshops; publishing and circulating journals, newsletters and archives; and the promotion and facilitation of education, training, and technology transfer of the photogrammetry, remote sensing and spatial information sciences. However, many member countries in ISPRS have inadequate finances to enable them to carry out their work or to participate in the worthwhile activities of ISPRS, and ISPRS Council wishes to provide some assistance to these countries.

The funds available to ISPRS to achieve its tasks are limited and hence, Council in 2003 embarked on the ambitious plan to develop an ISPRS Foundation as a means to raise funds to improve its ability to assist worthy applicants, especially those from developing countries and emerging markets. The development of foundations as a means of fund raising is not unique, but the ISPRS Foundation plans to assist those who wish to further their knowledge, skills and experience in the sciences and technologies associated with the disciplines embodied by the ISPRS. Typical activities that will be supported by The ISPRS Foundation are awareness education, distance learning, fellowships, scholarships, exchange programs, international workshops, travel grants, and internships. It is also intended to fund appropriate research initiatives, preservation and

archiving, standards projects, and awards. The financial assistance provided by The ISPRS Foundation will enable recipients to better develop their expertise in the photogrammetry, remote sensing and spatial information sciences. This will impact on their ability to map, document, and hence monitor and manage their land and environment.

The ISPRS Foundation, Inc. is a non-profit group, managed by a Board of eleven Trustees which responds to ISPRS grant needs that are identified by the ISPRS Council. The Board of Trustees, whose backgrounds are on the ISPRS Foundation website [www.isprs.org/foundation/] are responsible for fund raising, investment, management and approval for grants of Foundation funds. Trustees do not receive any salary or other compensation for their services.

The Foundation was launched in October 2003 and an ISPRS Commission VI workshop in Zagreb, Croatia and a kick-off event was held at the ISPRS Congress in Istanbul in July 2004. Some significant funds have been received for the Foundation since its launch. For example, an anonymous grant of \$10,000 was received at the Congress, while a grant of \$25,000 was recently received from Leica Geosystems. In addition, the legal processes are now being completed for the transfer to the ISPRS Foundation, of funds which were generated by the 2000 Amsterdam Congress. Many smaller donations have been received from individuals. The Board of Trustees appreciate the generosity of all donors. Publicity for further donations is continuing by both targeted approaches to corporations and appropriate individuals, as well as general mailing. Once adequate funds are available for providing grants, ISPRS will solicit proposals for grants and collaborate with the Board to provide grants to worthy candidates.

The ISPRS Foundation is an ambitious undertaking by the Society, but one which will provide significant benefits to those individuals from less developed countries. The Board of Trustees hopes that everyone who has an interest in the future of the Society's activities, particularly in the developing countries, will give generously to the ISPRS Foundation.

John Trinder, First Vice President and Chair, Board of Trustees of ISPRS Foundation

