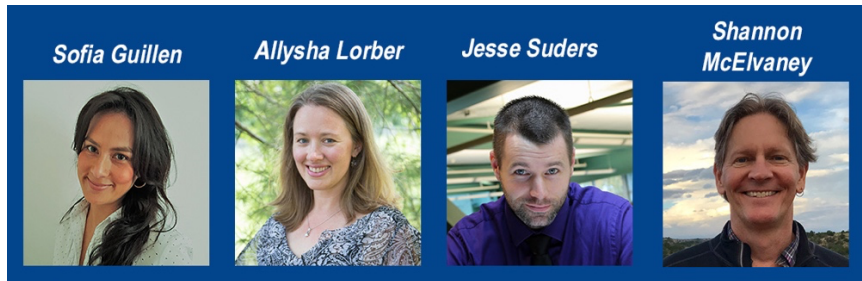


**Penn State Online
Geodesign Graduate
Programs Open House**

Takeaways from the
Sept. 15, 2021 Event



Regarding Professional Development Opportunities and Making a Business Case for Geodesign

“Geodesign as a tool **within business operations is effective at increasing your ability to respond to client needs**, which is effective at **increasing or improving your overall bottom line**. So there is a business case (for using Geodesign).”
~ *Jesse Suders, MPS Geodesign 2018*

“As a practitioner, (Geodesign) is in RFPs – requests for proposals – sometimes it might say ‘Geodesign’ but even if it doesn’t, what is described is a Geodesign process. And RFPs are specifically looking for Geodesign tools. This is what drove me to this program – more and more **this (Geodesign) is what our clients are requiring**.”
~ *Allysha Lorber, MPS Candidate*

“We are working on a huge master plan; they recognized that the old way of doing it, primarily using a ... hodge podge of (software), ... you could not add up anything; if you change one thing ... it can not be (updated) in an automated fashion. He said, **‘we can’t afford to not use Geodesign’**. ... Talking with other Geodesign practitioners, ... O2 Planning and Design **said it saves them 25% on design efficiency**.”
~ *Shannon McElvaney, MPS Geodesign 2018*

“**In grant writing -- response and application, Geodesign is a huge benefit**. Geodesign is about telling a compelling story, getting people to make a decision based on a compelling story that brings people and data to the table. Those are the realms of a successful grant writer.”
~ *Jesse Suders, MPS Geodesign 2018*

“Geodesign and the NEPA* (National Environmental Policy Act) process have a lot of similarities. **I see a good nexus with the NEPA process – and there are a lot of jobs (and RFPs) out there about this**.”
~ *Allysha Lorber, MPS Candidate*
*NEPA requires federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making decisions.

“The bigger picture – the listening and conversations; ... **the (Geodesign) process alone builds very strong relationships** that are personal, ... you can’t put a value on those. So when you go out and compete (for jobs) against companies, it often comes down to relationships. **I see Geodesign as a really huge relationship building tool**.”
~ *Shannon McElvaney, MPS Geodesign 2018*

What Differentiates Geodesign from “Regular” Design

“The Geodesign framework does relate to established planning practices but (using) this framework makes it possible for the team to know where it stands in the overall process (at any time). ... All of this is possible because Geodesign integrates GIS technology and **the expanding ability of digital data; (this enables) the team to preform changes as they arise and adapt to new**

“Geodesign leverages different analytical and design tools together. Those leading the process are facilitators ...(they) collect information and bring (stakeholders) to the table to listen, collaborate and discuss **The Geodesign process starts before the design process**. You need to figure out the goals ... those **goals are what you need to know to**

requirements as they occur and visualize them to inform decisionmakers of the outcomes. This means Geodesign can help address complex issues, such as the effects of climate change ... unsustainable urban sprawl, etc., where factors are continually changing.”

~ Sofia Guillen, Geodesign Certificate 2020

measure the effectiveness of any of the proposed design solutions.”

~ Allysha Lorber, MPS Candidate

Thoughts on Studying Online and Balancing Multiple Commitments

“It wasn’t easy. There are some sacrifices you have to make in terms of time. Making a commitment to yourself, but also to the rest of your classmates ... It is no different than a job where you are working with a team. That being said, ... (since online) I didn’t have to go anywhere, I could take the class wherever I was, when it was convenient for me. You have to find your own rhythm – it is doable. Don’t let the idea of an online degree or certificate turn you off from the opportunities it can provide you.”

~ Jesse Suders, MPS Geodesign 2018

“I think its been great collaborating in class with everyone, who are all over the country. I really appreciate the schedule flexibility – to be able to work on my own time, from home. ... **Nice to collaborate remotely but in-person; we’re still having conversations; we’re using some really cool (collaboration) tools.** I have already made several connections with classmates outside of the coursework, so that’s been great.”

~ Allysha Lorber, MPS Candidate

“I decided to start by saying I am just going to bite off a piece – I started with the Certificate program. You figure it out. Now with **this COVID world we are in – the idea of needing to meet in person is moot. (My online PSU classes) were the best training** – so when COVID hit ... this is how we work. And its not going back. The skills I learned here have served me very well in my job.”

~ Shannon McElvaney, MPS Geodesign 2018

How is GIS Different from Geodesign

“GIS is an important ally in the Geodesign process. It plays a central part when performing the Geodesign study. **GIS provides the digital support of the overall Geodesign process. It facilitates how the information about the place is collected, organized and analyzed. It provides the scientific approach to the process.** The difference between Geodesign and GIS is that Geodesign goes beyond the scientific analysis to (use GIS) to create potential scenarios and design interventions in the built and natural environment.”

~ Sofia Guillen, Geodesign Certificate 2020

“To put it simply, it is approach vs tools – GIS and data science is a tool that is used within Geodesign. ... **Geodesign is place-based, people-driven and data informed. GIS plays a key role in understanding the place, and informing with data, but people-driven is key and that is where the distinction is.** ... You have to build in the human component, and that is what Geodesign allows you to do. ... The approach, which is what Geodesign is vs the tools (GIS) that inform the approach. Geodesign allows you to create a relationship between the two (the data and the people).”

~ Jesse Suders, MPS Geodesign 2018