



Jack Dangermond, President
Esri | 380 New York Street | Redlands, CA 92373
909-369-1420 | twilson@esri.com

Design Workshop, Inc.

Landscape Architecture
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301 N West Street
Suite 109
Raleigh, NC 27603
919.973.6254

designworkshop.com

February 17, 2023

ASLA Medal of Excellence Nominations
c/o Honors and Awards
636 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001-3736

Dear Jury,

It is hard to imagine completing our work each day without the benefit of geographic information systems. This powerful tool is used in our practice on a wide variety of project types from site planning to urban design to large scale city and regional plans. We owe the benefits of this powerful tool to one individual more than any other, Jack Dangermond. Jack who created Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) and its flagship software, ArcGIS. In addition to automating the type of McHargian analysis that once took days or longer to create, ESRI products are continually evolving, now offers tools to not only visualize urban design solutions but to quantify alternative futures. The creation and advancement of this technology is one of the greatest contributions of landscape architecture to society in this century. Jack's creation, firmly grounded in landscape architecture, is now used by countless disciplines providing a common vocabulary to address complex problems and explore new opportunities, with our profession at the center of that discussion.

I have had the chance to work in over forty countries, often where the information infrastructure is almost non-existent. In these situations, one thing I have found to be certain. In Nigeria, Bolivia, or other remote settings, one can see the storehouse of geographic and landscape data growing daily, providing to the world the information it needs to forge a more sustainable and equitable future. No other landscape architect has had such a global impact as Jack Dangermond.

Jack's is more than a successful businessman and a fine landscape architect; he is a thought leader in the truest sense of the term. He has continually challenged our profession and the all concerned with the future of our planet to ask the tough questions and to seek creation solutions. Working with scholars and practitioners globally to advance geodesign, Jack has also provided the conceptual framework to address these wicked problems and to engage a global conversations about our future.

For his remarkable contributions to landscape architecture policy, research, planning, and design and for a career defined by excellence, I nominate, Jack Dangermond, for the American Society of Landscape Architects Medal of Excellence.

Sincerely,



Kurt Culbertson
Chairman Emeritus
Design Workshop

DESIGNWORKSHOP



To The American Society of Landscape Architects Committee on Awards

I am writing in support of the nomination of Jack Dangermond for the ASLA Medal of Excellence.

My letter may seem more personal than most. Others will write more about the enormous global impact of Esri, the company that he founded with his wife Laura. Jack has guided Esri from its inception to the huge global innovator that it is today. His invaluable contribution of free software to schools, his enormous technical and financial support of global conservation and the general health of the world, are unparalleled amongst landscape architects. He occupies the rarefied territory of those who are truly globally influential.

Jack was my student at Harvard GSD in the late 1960s, and we have been friends ever since. I have taught about 1000 students in my academic career. Most are successful. A few have become quite famous, but without a doubt, Jack Dangermond has had the greatest impact -- by far -- on the global landscape. The tools he has created have been key to the design of a large proportion of the world.

Over the years Jack and I have had met and talked a lot. We speak frankly to each other about our work and our mutual interests, and we know each other well. Jack remains rooted in landscape architecture, and is still proud of having planted almost every street tree in Redlands CA when a teenager and working for his nurseryman father. He quietly and modestly continues to improve Redlands, while supporting conservation and environmental responsibility on a global scale.

I have seen Jack in discussions among very serious people, and in contexts where he is presenting his thoughts and sometimes the work of Esri. I have heard him many times, not describing himself as the owner of Esri, but as a member of a professional discipline. He usually says "I'm a landscape architect"....just that....and he is.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carl Steinitz".

Carl Steinitz Harvard University GSD Honorary Fellow ASLA

February 14, 2023

Medal of Excellence Nominations
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American Society of Landscape Architects
636 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001-3736

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Dear ASLA Executive Committee and Board of Trustees,

I am writing to express my wholehearted support of Jack Dangermond's nomination for your organization's Medal of Excellence.

I have had the pleasure of collaborating with Jack since 2017, when The Nature Conservancy (TNC) established the Jack and Laura Dangermond Preserve to protect more than 24,000 acres of uniquely diverse California habitat. Jack's contributions go well beyond the historic gift that enabled us to acquire the land. He has also brought a vision for how geospatial technology could revolutionize conservation science and practice, and equipped TNC with the technological capacity to test and implement such innovations. He inspired us to create a first-of-its-kind working digital model of the preserve that will allow researchers to study how ecosystems evolve due to climate change, ongoing natural processes, and restoration. These commitments are just a few examples of the leadership Jack has embodied since he and his wife Laura joined the Giving Pledge in 2016. In addition, his support of academic institutions has seeded important conservation research partnerships and is fostering the next generation of technologically sophisticated conservationists.

Jack's remarkable trajectory—from worker in his father's nursery, to landscape architect, to progenitor of computerized geospatial planning, to conservation-minded philanthropic leader—speaks to his brilliance, insight, and deep love of place. The best landscape architects connect people to place in a way that heals both—and this is precisely what Jack achieves, on an unprecedented scale.

Sincerely,



Mike Sweeney
Executive Director, California Chapter



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636 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001-3736

Feb. 20, 2023

Re: Jack Dangermond's ASLA Medal of Excellence nomination

Dear ASLA Executive Committee and Board of Trustees,

I write regarding Jack Dangermond's nomination for the ASLA Medal of Excellence. I know Jack and his work through the literature and our participation in various conferences over the years, as well as our mutual interest in landscape planning, design and the use of GIS. He was also instrumental in several methodological advances in alternative futures analysis during his time as a graduate student at Harvard that have been central in my own work over the years. While I don't know Jack well personally, my own ways of thinking and working have been powerfully influenced by his contributions. My comments are based on this perspective.

The Award recognizes *significant contributions to landscape architecture policy, research, education, project planning and design, or a combination of these*. Simply put, Jack Dangermond exceeds all these. And, to my way of thinking, he is among the first in our field to exceed them not primarily through built work, formal instruction or research, but by making standard practice the use of tools which, by their nature, enable people to think and plan both algorithmically and spatially at the same time. As a result of his tireless efforts over four decades through Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) and the series of GIS software ESRI makes available, it is now inconceivable that people would conduct landscape or site-scale work anywhere in the world without the impressive capabilities of GIS at their disposal. Those of us who did our academic work in the 1970s and 1980s remember when this was far from a foregone conclusion. From his seminal time at Harvard with Carl Steinitz, to his founding of ESRI, to the generations of students and practitioners and thousands of colleagues in other disciplines he has influenced, Jack has remained one of the pre-eminent thinkers and doers in Landscape Architecture. Largely through Jack's leadership, ESRI Press has also become one of the mainstays of GIS-related publications, including Hanna's *GIS for Landscape Architects* and Steinitz's recent *A Framework for Geodesign: changing geography by design*. Additionally, the annual ESRI conferences on GIS and Geodesign are, in my opinion, among the most intellectually fertile cross disciplinary learning venues bringing Landscape Architecture's ways of thinking and working to other fields.

The results of his contributions live on in the daily practice of hundreds of thousands of GIS users around the world, and in his truly impressive efforts at ESRI during a career that spans a period I regard as the single most influential era in U.S. landscape planning. Though through very different paths, he is one of the few landscape architects who rivals Olmsted himself in global influence. For me, there is no doubt that Jack Dangermond deserves the ASLA Medal of Excellence. I wish you well in your deliberations.

Sincerely,

David W. Hulse
Professor in Landscape Architecture (Emeritus)

February 3, 2023

The American Society of Landscape Architects
Medal of Excellence Nominations
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636 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001-3736

Dear Honors and Awards Committee,

I write in enthusiastic support of the nomination of Jack Dangermond for the Landscape Architecture Medal of Excellence. Educated as a landscape architect at my institution as well as at Cal Poly Pomona and Harvard, Jack has had an extraordinarily positive impact on the global landscape. Rather than work on one site at a time as a landscape architect, he has developed the dominant set of GIS tools that almost every landscape architect now uses, every day.

Jack has not only given us all great technology with which to do our work, but he has also built an incredible organization – ESRI – that treats its staff and its customers better than any company I know. And he has gone to extraordinary efforts to make ESRI's software available to people around the world, through ArcGIS Online and the Living Atlas. From the many interactions that I have had with him, I can say with great confidence that Jack's goal has never been to make a lot of money, but instead to have a positive and transformative impact on the largest human and environmental challenges that we face on this planet.

Evidence of that goal is the recent gift of 24,000 acres along the California coast to the Nature Conservancy, which he and Laura Dangermond made in order to preserve that landscape's near-wilderness character and to make it available to all. Jack's philanthropic support of so many environmental organizations and conservation efforts shows his deep commitment to landscape preservation and to equipping the rest of us to further that goal.

Jack has never forgotten his landscape architecture roots. At a local level, he has designed a campus at ESRI's headquarters that ranks among the loveliest landscapes in the Los Angeles basin and he has also designed the landscape in and around downtown Redlands, California, in ways that have made it one of the most appealing urban landscapes in the area. At a global level, Jack has also led the development of Geodesign, an emerging subfield that uses GIS tools to design and analyze future scenarios at myriad scales, and he has nurtured the growth of the International Geodesign Collaboration, a network of nearly 250 universities around the world using Geodesign methods to address the most pressing problems in their regions.

There is no landscape architect who has had such a profound an effect on the profession and practice of landscape architecture and on the protection and preservation of the planet's natural landscape. Jack Dangermond represents the very best of what a landscape architect can be: a creative and committed visionary making the world a better place.

Sincerely,



Thomas Fisher
Professor and Director