Learn ArcGIS Contributor Program
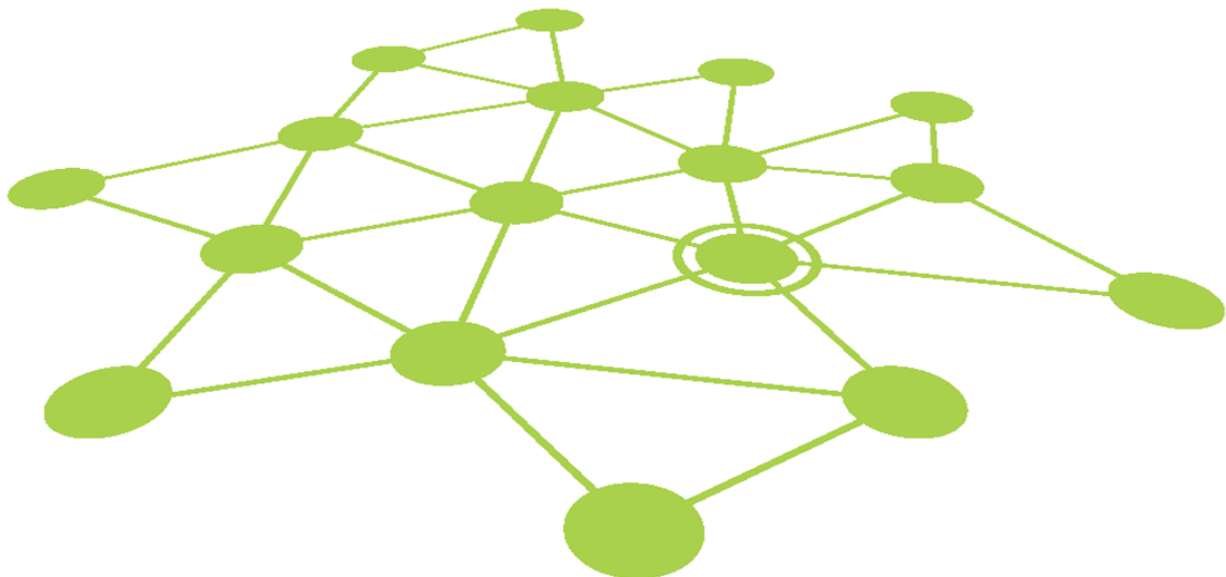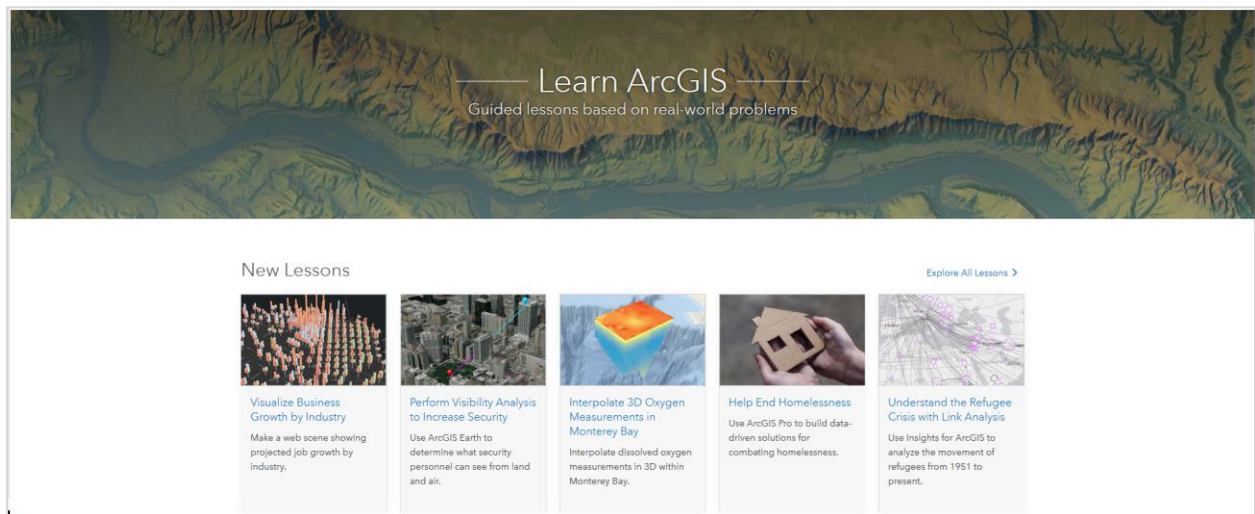
Contributor Success Guide

1. Welcome!

Welcome to the Learn ArcGIS Contributor Success Guide. Join a global community of creative and experienced teachers and GIS professionals who contribute their lessons and other educational resources to the Learn ArcGIS and Teach with GIS websites. Educators can share their own experiences in GIS education and browse content from their peers around the world and integrate with their curriculum or technical workshops. The program provides educators with tools and resources to help their students learn with GIS and get engaged to learn skills essential to becoming a marketable professional of the future (regardless of discipline).

This guide provides details to help you become a successful Learn ArcGIS contributor. If at any point you need assistance from us, we are here to help you through the process. We thank you for your interest in the Learn ArcGIS Contributor Program.

2. What is Learn ArcGIS?

The Learn ArcGIS website provides free story-driven lessons, how-to blogs, videos, story maps, articles, and other educational content. All lessons, data, and web maps on Learn ArcGIS are free and publicly available. These resources support STEM and STEAM learning and are accessed in the Lesson Gallery. They are hands-on, real-world scenarios that solve problems to engage and educate our user community. Learners are free to learn at their own pace based on their individual needs and interests.

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3. What is Teach with GIS?

Teach with GIS is another free website intended to support K -12 teachers, school administrators, and school districts that would like to integrate GIS concepts through making maps and doing real-world, scenario-driven exercises in the classroom. This site contains implementation guides and hundreds of lessons accessible through the Curriculum Builder. The Curriculum Builder enables you to search for engaging and classroom-tested content from around the world that you can incorporate into a wide range of multidisciplinary classes.

Explore the Curriculum Builder

Select exercises that fit the experience-level and subject matter of your class. All of the lessons are free to download and share.

Search:

🔍 Enter a product name or keyword like 'Get started'

Filter by:

| All levels ⇕ | All capabilities ⇕ | All subjects ⇕ | Any account requirement ⇕ | | Reset |

China in Layers
This lesson introduces GIS users to the geography of China using regional layers.

Featured Lessons
New and relevant GIS exercises, analyzing problems using real-world current events at the local, national, and global scale.

Getting Started Path for Teachers
Most educators ask: "Where do I begin?" Follow this beginner path to build your confidence with online mapping tools.

Assess Student Work in a Portfolio
Build a GIS Portfolio of maps and web applications to assess student work in online, printed, or PDF maps.

Unit 1: GIS Provides a Common Visual Language
Introductory activities and questions for reading comprehension, reflection, and discussion.

4. What are the goals of the Learn ArcGIS Contributor Program?

Learn ArcGIS has evolved from a free website with content to a community, and we are seeking creative and experienced educators to make this community even stronger. The following are the goals of the program:

- To engage with educators to write and share lessons that solve interesting problems
- To empower educators with tools and resources they need to build or supplement a curriculum
- To acknowledge our best educators and use their experiences to build up and support those new to teaching GIS
- To develop and build a rich collection of global resources for educators to share with their peers.

5. How can the program help us mutually?

Contributing can be a rewarding way to learn, teach, and collaborate with your global professional peers to implement GIS in the classroom, workshops, or extracurricular activities. All content shared is intended to help our academic community of students, teachers, and schools to foster spatial awareness in GIS technology and build a curriculum around your needs. We welcome high-quality, authentic, and compelling content from educators from around the world, and we are always on the lookout for fresh content that promotes peer-to-peer collaboration and a global network of support.

What are the benefits of becoming a Learn ArcGIS contributor?

- Create content you can be proud of. Whether you create lessons, write blogs, or script videos, you have contributed to the community. It's great getting published, but it is even better when you have a platform that is curated and reviewed to share with your peers. Your work will reside alongside resources from fellow experts and highly qualified professionals.

- Get certified and compensated for your contribution. Once your contribution is approved, you can earn a certificate of contribution and be compensated for your work by Esri. The stipend depends on the length and level of effort of the project. You can be nominated for teacher recognition awards and get a chance to have your work showcased at our conferences and workshops.

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- Participate in Esri's Early Adopter community. You can try the latest Esri technology before its public release and provide ongoing feedback to help shape the product roadmap.

- Access ArcGIS software and associated tools as a member of the Learn organization for training and professional growth.

- A Learn path is a curated collection of related content items. Work with us to create a Learn path that suits your needs using the content you create, and the curated content authored by your peers globally. You can build sequential and scaffolded learning pathways or assorted cards focusing on defined skillsets.

- Be a part of Esri's educator community. Contributing allows you to be a part of an amazing community of creative content providers. You can also be a part of the Customer Advocacy team and join a community of educators on Esri Community to interact with your peers as well as customers, partners, Esri staff, and experts in the GIS and geospatial professional community. We are constantly evolving in response to your efforts and input and are building more ways for you to be involved.

What are the benefits to Learn ArcGIS in collaborating with our educators?

- A more robust and global gallery of resources - Our goal is to engage with educators from around the world and encourage them to share their own exercises and experiences with their peers to address international and regional real-world problems.

- Expand subject-matter coverage – A more diverse collection of content and topics can cater to a wider audience and reflect real people in real situations doing real things.

- More exercises that study different parts of the world help to better serve the global community.

6. What does it take to be a contributor?

You don't have to be a professional writer or an expert ArcGIS user to be a Learn ArcGIS contributor. The requirements for contributing to Learn ArcGIS are as follows:

- You must be a primary, secondary, or post secondary teacher or higher education faculty member, teacher trainer, educational consultant, or academician (administrator, superintendent, or technology specialist) in an accredited educational institution.
- You must complete the registration form.
- You must be at least 18 years old.
- All content must be original and authored by the registered contributor. Intellectual property rules apply.
- If you are new to GIS or ArcGIS, we recommend that you build your foundation of skills by taking the Getting started path for teachers Learn path.

If you would like to try ArcGIS, you can become a member of Learn ArcGIS for 60 days. Once you are a member, you can immediately begin to use maps, explore data, and share maps to the web. A Learn account is a quick and easy way to experience web GIS through real-world problem-solving scenarios.

7. What is the process?

When you have a good scenario or interesting analytical problem, complete and submit your proposal. Our curators will review your proposal and respond with feedback and whether the proposal has been accepted. If approved, we will work with you to establish an authorship agreement. At this time, we will gather details on the data and images you are planning to use and determine if permissions are required from a third party. We will also request an estimate of the word count and the number of images you plan to use in the lesson.

1. Propose
- Submit the form with details
- We do the initial review
- You receive confirmation
- You acquire data and images
- We set up contract with you

2. Submit
- You author the content
- You submit the content

3. Review
- We do the technical, instructional, cartographic reviews
- We test the content

4. Publish
- We publish the content
- We close the project

Once the authorship agreement is in place, you will be put in touch with a Learn ArcGIS team member to provide you with a lesson template and authoring guidelines. At this point, you can start authoring your lesson in the template and, when comp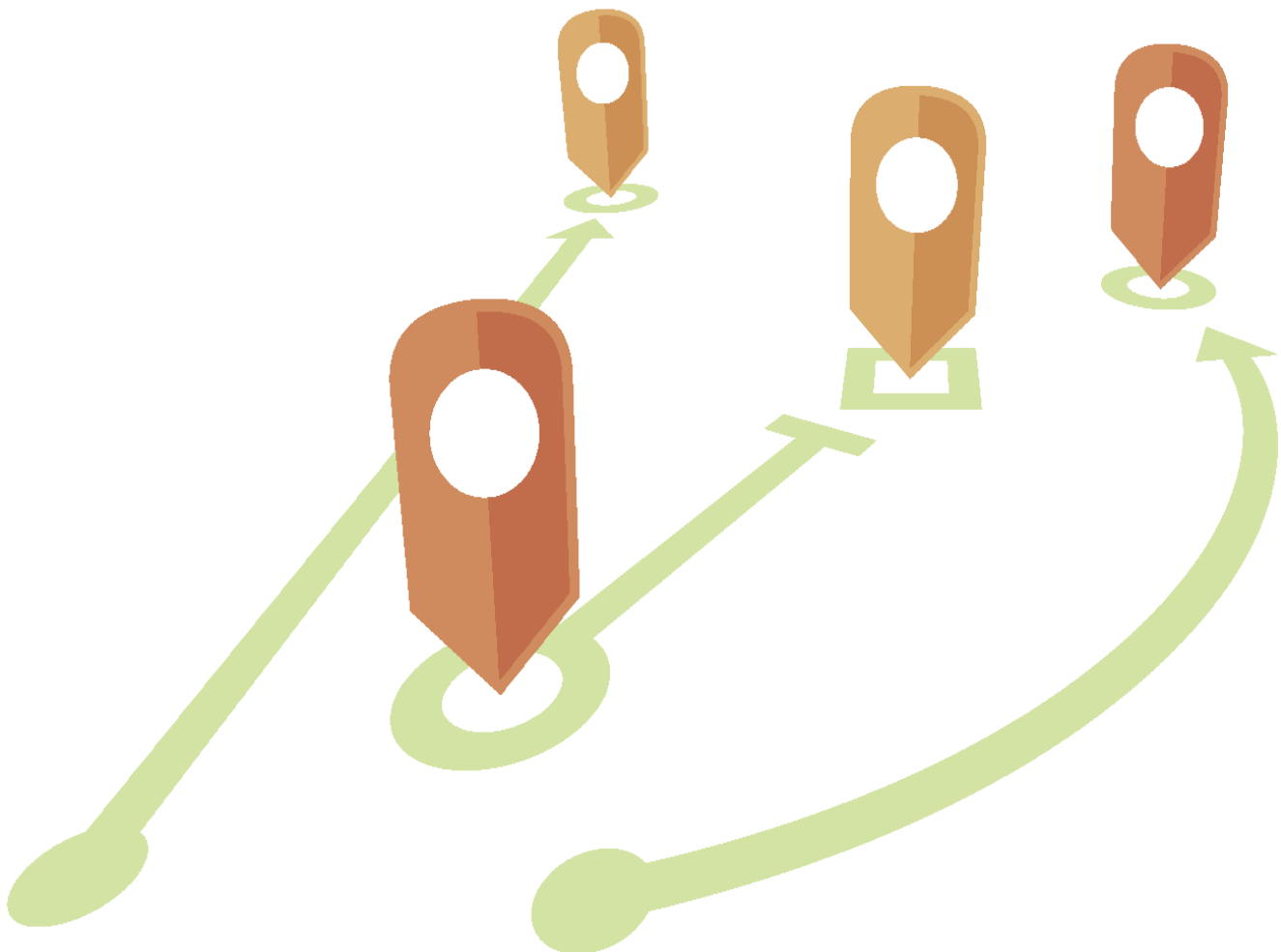lete, submit it along with the packaged data. A Learn team member can provide assistance if necessary. Once the lesson has been handed off, your part of the work is done. The last step is for the Learn team to review, test, and publish your exercise.

Our Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) review the content to reflect the proper implementation of relevant methodologies, workflows, best practices, and tools. Our cartographers will verify that the maps used in the content deliver a clear message

and provide striking visual appeal. The content may be pedagogically restructured by our instructional reviewers to support the learning process and ensure the following:
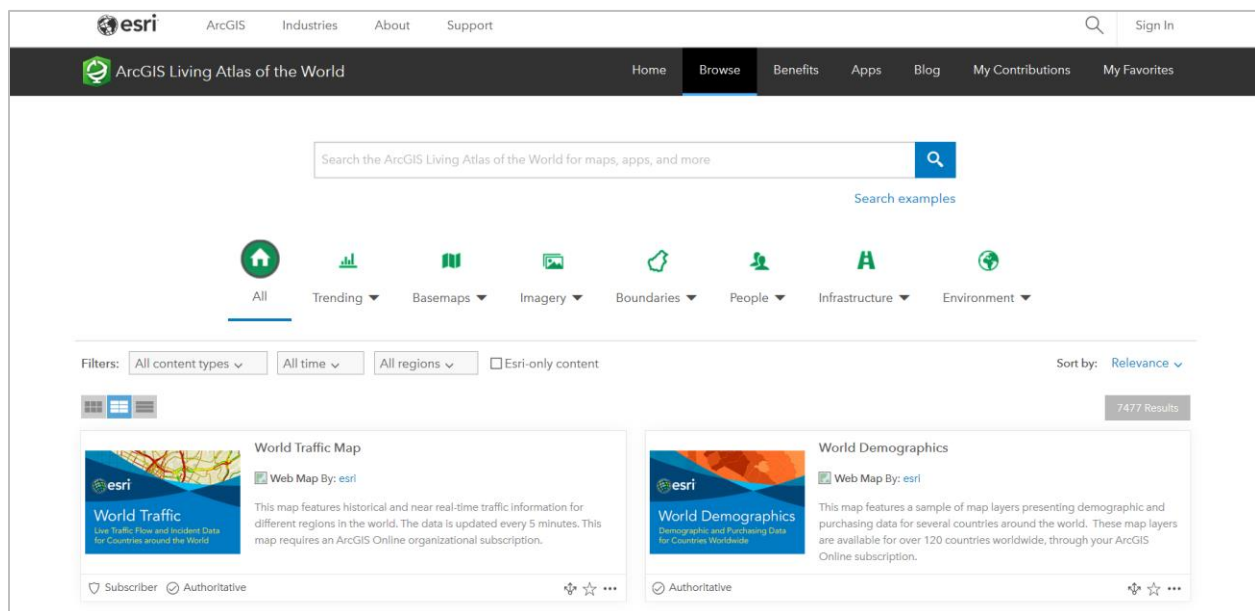
- Content is delineated properly.
- Visuals are used effectively communicate the story.

Our testers and tutors will test the lesson as written and facilitate the content in their classrooms for the level of audience identified to ensure the flow of information and motivate participation. Once the peer review and test stage are complete, we publish the content live. You will also be compensated for your contribution.

8. How do you take care of the data permissions and image release?

The GIS community, including Esri, shares thousands of ready-to- use authoritative datasets in the ArcGIS Living Atlas of the World. The Living Atlas covers everything from historical census data to environmental conditions derived from live sensor networks and earth observations. We encourage you to use the Living Atlas data for the content.
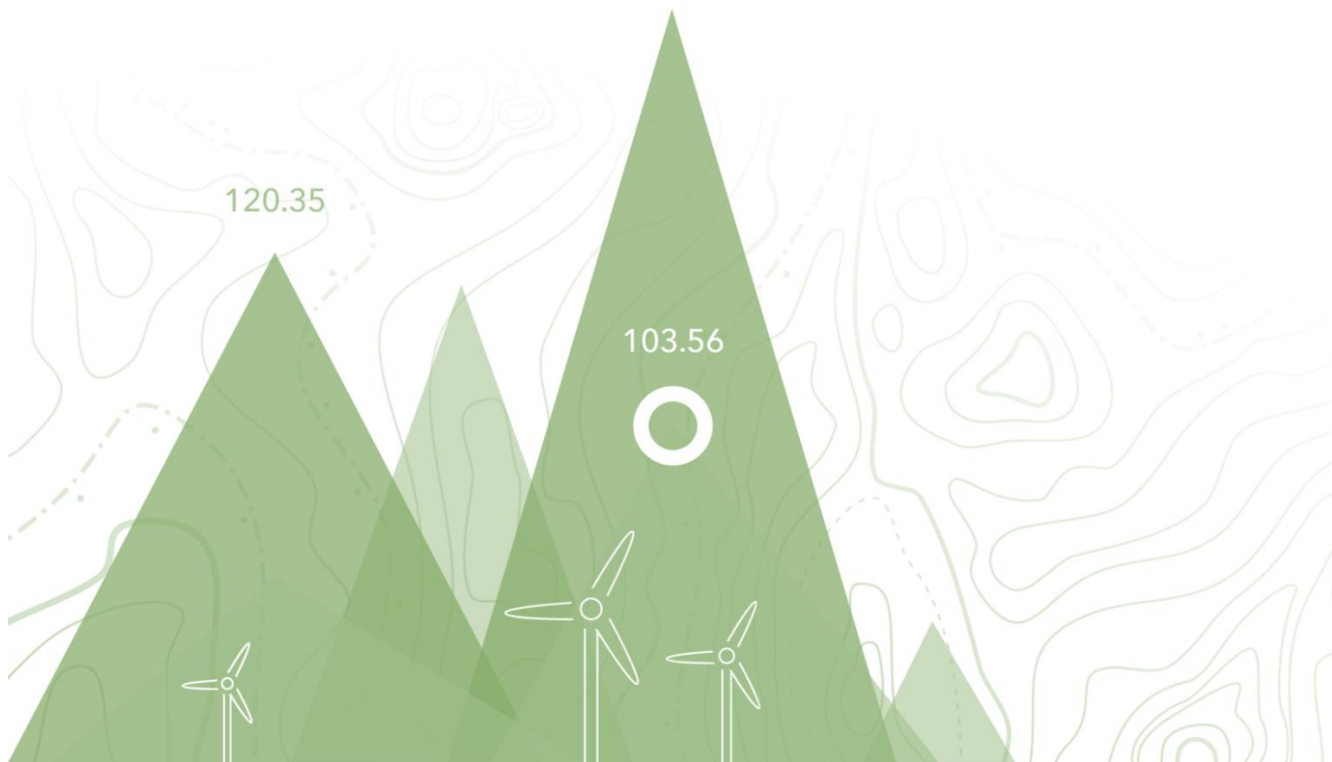

If you want to use data from a third-party source, you need to acquire the appropriate data permissions to distribute the data. You can contact us if you need any assistance. You may also be required to complete an image release form if you use any recognizable places, graphics you did not create, buildings, properties, people, maps, automobiles, pets, or artwork. The forms must be signed by the owner or representative of the data or image. The release form provides written permission identifying the subject and consent to its use for commercial purposes, as well as the attribute information. If you are having trouble identifying the data, contact us to determine whether we already have something in place.

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9. What are the best practices for authoring?

Good design and planning are crucial to the development of structured and self-contained content. These are our suggestions for authoring. You can contact us if you need any additional assistance.

- ✓ We encourage you to keep the lesson content short - **30 minutes** to complete a lesson is a good target length.
- ✓ Build the content around a scenario; present a story at the beginning and introduce the problem.
- ✓ The content should be relevant and specific to the audience defined and should be segmented to facilitate assimilation of new skills.
- ✓ Each lesson should have one or two clear learning objectives, focusing only on the key messages within the lesson.
- ✓ We recommend breaking up content into modules of no more than a few minutes in duration for better engagement and retention at a higher level.
- ✓ Start all step titles with a verb, or action word.
- ✓ Avoid jargon and culture-specific slang, colloquialisms, and examples, especially if you are addressing a multicultural audience.
- ✓ Spell out acronyms in full the first time they are used.
- ✓ Separate action text from explanatory text: put them on separate lines so that the actions are easy to follow.
- ✓ In actions, use direct, active language and eliminate unnecessary verbiage.
- ✓ The metadata should include the item name, tags, summary, description, and citations.
- ✓ Use the same units of measurement, extents, scales, and projection to maintain consistency.

- ✓ Do not include unnecessary data in the data package, and make sure the data is from a reputable source.
- ✓ Show screenshots of the software where relevant and provide reassurance to learners that they have completed a task correctly.
- ✓ Make sure that layer names and dataset names are completely visible, and no server names or user login names are visible.
- ✓ Crop graphics to show only the relevant area.
- ✓ If you are using graphics from a third party, cite sources appropriately.
- ✓ Include captions and always capitalize the first word and end with a period. Captions must be a complete sentence.
- ✓ Create tables that are editable and avoid exporting your table as a graphic file.

10. What is the review criteria?

The Learn ArcGIS team and our Subject Matter Experts review the proposal and the content to assess whether the content fits our collection and adds value. We also assess the proposal to see if your lesson will offer something unique, topical, or creative that other educators would find useful. We look for the following:

- Hands-on content that allows active participation. Learners should be able to replicate the workflow.
- Scenario-based content with a strong narrative, or any real-world story that can inspire learners and solve a problem.

For inspiration or ideas, visit our Lesson Gallery or explore the Curriculum Builder. For examples of web maps and applications, see The ArcGIS Book.

We follow stringent but fair quality guidelines when reviewing each proposal. We generally aim to notify contributors within one week about the status of submissions.

In summary

The Learn ArcGIS Contributor Program was created to provide an optimum learning experience, particularly relevant to the art and science of GIS, that can be taught across almost any subject matter. The program does the following:

- Provides an avenue to create and share new ways to cultivate the spatial curiosity through technology and inspire GIS as a STEAM discipline where the applicability is nearly endless.
- Encourages teaching and learning through doing and exploring, where students and learners can experience a blended learning environment.
- Accommodates individual learning needs and makes learning more personal and productive.
- Develops a global network of educators to support, share, and learn from each other's experiences.

If you are a teacher and are doing interesting work using GIS in your classroom, we want to hear about it! Get in touch with us and join your fellow educators in sharing and exchanging resources for building a better, stronger, global GIS classroom.