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Clare Hadley

Stakeholder Engagement Manager

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**Royal
Geographical
Society**

with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning



Job title: Stakeholder Engagement Manager

Organisation: Ordnance Survey

Location: Southampton, UK

How did you get to where you are now?

I have a Geography degree, and Post Graduate Diploma in Survey, Cartography and Map Production, and an MSc in Geographical Information Systems. I am a Chartered Geomatics Surveyor and a Chartered Geographer. On graduating I joined the Directorate of Overseas Surveys (DOS) – a part of government which did survey and mapping as part of British development aid. I was sent to learn survey with the School of Military Survey (as a civilian student) and then worked as a Land Surveyor in Liberia and Malawi. Following a government restructure, DOS was merged with Ordnance Survey (OS). Initially I worked in research on digital map data, then took some of my work into production as the cartographic processes became more digital. I was then on an exchange with the Australian counterpart of OS where I worked on their federal data policy. This was the point at which I moved away from technical work. On my return to OS, my first role was to set up a cross-government

customer agreement, then I moved on to manage relationships with our partner companies. Next, a foray into international business development and consultancy and from there to policy and stakeholder engagement in UK, Europe and worldwide.

What do you do as part of your role?

My role is all about how Ordnance Survey interfaces with the external world. We have a complex set of stakeholders – customers, government policy-setters, influencers and lobby groups, regulators, suppliers etc. and we have to ensure that we understand how we should be engaging with each of them to ensure that we get out of that relationship what we, and the country, needs.

In a typical week I might attend a United Nations meeting to determine the fundamental data themes needed by all countries; map out the key stakeholders for a particular topical issue; speak to colleagues in other parts of government regarding a response to a consultation; advise our Board on relationships with particular organisations; or develop the programme for an international conference hosted by OS.

What skills and characteristics do you need for this role, apart from geographical knowledge?

I need to understand how geography and geospatial information can benefit people, governments and countries - and make the case for it. For this I need communication skills and also to be able to see what drives and motivates those I am speaking to. Networking is a key part of this and it enables me to make useful linkages. What do you enjoy most about your job? Early on in my career I enjoyed getting out and about as a surveyor. But nowadays, what I enjoy most is seeing something work better, be more

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efficient or effective, a better decision, or a whole new application as a result of using geography. There are many who see the meetings involved in policy and engagement as tedious but it is often only through extended conversations that change actually comes about.

Do you get to travel for your role?

Yes. I attend various meetings and conferences around the world – usually UN and meetings of other national mapping agencies in Europe. In recent years this has taken me to the USA, China, Ethiopia and Brussels. I also do some limited work as a consultant for the commercial part of OS which has taken me recently to Tanzania and Dubai.

What advice would you give to someone wanting to go in to this career?

It is important to understand what geography can do for people and be able to articulate it in a way they will understand – related to their own economic or social needs. You have to build trust with stakeholders so they are confident that you know what you are talking about – so actual knowledge and professional credibility is as important as communication skills.