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Preface

The Association of Geographic Information Laboratories in Europe (AGILE, <http://www.agile-online.org/>) seeks to ensure that the views of the geographic information teaching and research community are fully represented in the discussions that take place on future European research agendas. AGILE also provides a permanent scientific forum where geographic information researchers can meet and exchange ideas and experiences at the European level.

The activities of AGILE are managed by an eight person council elected by the member organizations. Its main tasks are to develop an organizational structure to release the goals of AGILE, to further develop with the help of the members a European research agenda, to instigate and stimulate AGILE initiatives, to network with other organizations working in the field of Geoinformation and concerning technologies and to organize the yearly AGILE conference on Geographic Information Science.

During one of the last meetings, the Council discussed to strengthen the focus on young researchers who are doing challenging scientific work within the more than 80 member laboratories. Therefore, the Council decided to implement a new initiative that is focused specifically on PhD candidates. This decision was the advent of the AGILE PhD School. The first of its kind has now been carried out at the University of Applied Sciences in Wernigerode, Germany. PhD students and senior scientists met in Wernigerode to present their subjects, exchange ideas and to discuss critically experiences, results and challenges.

Within this booklet, the selected papers of the PHD students are included, all of them presenting work in progress in different stages of PhD projects covering various fields of Geoinformation Science.

The AGILE Council would like to thank the participants who issued in a first step position papers, and afterwards long papers, and took part in the PhD school to give valuable input. The PhD school is financed by AGILE; furthermore the participants get a grant from AGILE which should help to alleviate their costs.

Special thanks go to Martin Raubal (University of Zurich, Switzerland) who supported the selection of papers, and Bénédicte Boucher (Institut Géographique National, France) who confronted the PhD students with the theoretical and practical requirements of a National Mapping Agency.

Have new insights and make new experiences while reading the challenging papers included in these proceedings.

Lars Bernard, Hardy Pundt

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