Keynote speakers selected:

Kate Fickas
Keynote Abstract

Where are all the women? I asked myself this often as I entered and continued my 7 year graduate career in earth observation. Across four continents and at home in the United States, traveling to earth observation and geospatial conferences often meant feelings of isolation and impostorism because of the lack of representation of women in leadership roles or in the field at large. I needed a community. Ladies of Landsat was born out of the need for a supportive place for women and underrepresented scientists in the fields of remote sensing and earth observation. Now run by a group of women hoping to make the field of remote sensing and earth observation more equitable and inclusive for underrepresented scientists, we have grown our following to nearly 8,000 members on Twitter since I first opened the account in 2018. Despite the first multispectral optical satellite sensor being built by a woman, for the past 50 years, earth observation has been dominated by the voices of those who have historically held all positions of power. In my talk, I'll discuss how we work from multiple directions to achieve our broader mission to make an impact on the field by taking both bottom-up and top-down approaches to challenging the status quo and how anyone can be an 'active ally' in pushing the agenda of equality forward. I'll also discuss the exciting positive feedback loop that is currently active between open earth observation data and diversity, equity, justice, and inclusion. This includes co-development of remote sensing models and applications with local and indigenous communities and a pivot away from 'helicopter science' that we've seen occur for several decades. On a planet with a rapidly changing climate that more often than not disproportionately affects underrepresented groups, contribution towards local, applied solutions cannot be overstated.

Kate Fickas Bio
Link to headshot:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YzSf00UTWYHyyjEsttjHANBKQJOV7mBr/view?usp=sharing

Dr. Kate Fickas is a U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Mendenhall Fellow with the USGS Earth Resources Observation and Science (EROS) Center and the University of California, Santa Barbara Climate Hazard Center. Her work centers on coupling Landsat-derived land use/land cover change and climate data to better understand and predict climate change effects and extreme weather events on the landscape. Her passion lies in water and wetlands. Prior to her USGS fellowship, her master's and doctoral work at Oregon State University focused on multidecadal mapping and monitoring of freshwater wetlands using Landsat. Her postdoctoral work at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst explored the use of UAS remote sensing to evaluate salt marsh wetland vulnerability to sea level rise. Kate is the founder and co-director of Ladies of Landsat, a group that aims to make the field of remote sensing and earth observation more equitable and inclusive for underrepresented scientists.

Carrol Chan & Nemaia Koto:
Building an OSM Community in Fiji: The Journey and Future of OSM Fiji

This talk will cover the experiences gained from building an OSM community here in Fiji and how we have managed to sustain ourselves despite the Covid-19 outbreak that Fiji recently experienced early May 2021. We talk about the activities, challenges and the future we envision for OSM as well as our young community here in Fiji.

Tishampati "Tish" Dhar:
The History and Politics of Globe Viewers/Virtual Earths

In the beginning there was the real earth. Over time many virtual ones emerged. Each went through its own lifecycle due to the energy of the community around it, the quality of the technical work behind it and mostly influenced by the politics/ulterior motives of the entity that birthed it. This talk covers several such virtual Earth's starting with NASA WorldWind and finishing with Cesium for Unreal Engine. Along the way it gives a glimpse into the speaker's lived experience in working with the community, the code and for various organisations to earn their daily 🍞 bread.