

Interview with RSA territorial representative for the US, Elizabeth Mack



Elizabeth Mack is an Assistant Professor in the department of Geography, Environment and Spatial Sciences at Michigan State University. Before working at Michigan State she held a number of posts at Arizona State University, as well as a Ph.D. from Indiana University, an MA from the University of Cincinnati and a BA and BS from Virginia Tech.

On this date, September 27, 2023, Elizabeth Mack holds the position of Former RSA Territorial Representative for the US.

On this date, September 27, 2023, Michael Glass holds the position of RSA Territorial Representative for the US (read more).



Why did you decide to join the RSA, what do you bring to the role of territorial representative?

The RSA is an international organization with members that are dedicated to studying a variety of topics facing regions around the globe using a diverse set of methods. It is an ideal organization for persons from a variety of disciplinary and methodological backgrounds. It is also an organization that fosters the development of early career researchers via special sessions and funding opportunities. This type of support is important since it fosters the next generation of people studying regional issues. As a territorial representative, I have had the opportunity to showcase research advancements from a U.S. perspective which serve as complements to research agendas of the scholarly community in Europe. It is my hope that this facilitates joint research opportunities between European and North American scholars.

What are your research interests?

The impact of information and communications technologies (ICTs) on the development trajectory of regional economies. This includes broadband infrastructure deployment policy issues, as well as the impacts of broadband on business location. Research on businesses and ICTs has appeared in *Regional Studies* journal, as has related work on industrial complexes in Mexico. Recently, my work is focused on understanding entrepreneurial ecosystems and water and wastewater affordability for residential and business consumers.

What challenges and opportunities are faced by early career researchers in your area?

I think synthesizing what appears to be an incredibly large body of literature and identifying how research addresses critical gaps in existing work can be challenging for early career researchers. They might also find framing of questions difficult compared to people that are more established in their careers.

As an early career researcher in the United States, young faculty members must grapple with high expectations for obtaining research funding and the production of high quality research products while teaching courses and participating in service to their department and wider discipline. This requires an ability to persevere and balance several demands at one time.

Can you tell us something interesting about yourself?

I am a sports enthusiast and enjoy watching college sports, particularly basketball and American football. World Cup and Euro Cup years are also really fun times to watch football. The fans' enthusiasm really captures the spirit of the game.