

Saghi Sarafi

University of New Mexico, Department of Geography & Environmental Studies

October 2026

EDUCATION

University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM (expected Dec 2030)
Ph.D., Geography and Environmental Studies
Thesis: "Toward Living Vegetation Maps: Automated Regional Mapping and Error Quantification for Continually Updated Classification Products"

Carinthia University of Applied Science, Villach, Austria March 2023
M.A., Spatial Information Management
Thesis: "Remote Sensing-based Detection of Spatiotemporal Patterns of Urban Heat Islands"

Yazd University, Yazd, Iran March 2015
M.A., Urban Design
Thesis: "Designing Urban Streets Through Place Identity: The Case of Farah Street in Sanandaj, Iran"

University of Kurdistan, Sanandaj, Iran Sep 2010
B.A., Urban Planning

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Remote sensing; geospatial analytics; artificial intelligence; climate dynamics; sustainable urban futures.

AWARD And HONORS

Research supported in part by the UNM Community Health Allied Network (CHANGES), funded by the National Institutes of Health.	2026
Barrett-Campbell Graduate Scholarship, University of New Mexico	2025
Austrian Marshall Plan Foundation Award, 75th Annual Marshall Plan Conference, Vienna, Austria	2022
Best Student Award, University of Kurdistan, Iran — Ranked 2nd among 27 students in BSc Urban Planning	2010

EXPERIENCE

GIS Analyst , David Jacobs, Albuquerque, NM - Performed geocoding, linear referencing, and spatial analysis of traffic crash datasets - Developed interactive web maps and automated GIS workflows to improve data processing efficiency - Produced high-quality static and dynamic visualizations for reports and presentations	2025 – 2026
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Research Assistant, Gernot Paulus, Villach, Austria 2020 – 2023

- Collected, processed, and validated geospatial data for regional data capture initiatives
- Supported database management and quality control for large-scale spatial datasets

Urban Development Engineer, Kurdistan Province Construction Engineering Organization, Sanandaj, Iran 2019 – 2020

- Supported urban planning and development projects through spatial analysis and engineering design
- Prepared technical maps and reports to inform infrastructure and land-use decisions

Spatial Data Analyst, Gostaresh Fawaye Danesh Shahr (ICT Smart Cities), Tehran, Iran 2016 – 2018

- Conducted spatial data analysis to support smart city initiatives and ICT-based urban solutions
- Assisted in developing geospatial datasets and analytical reports for urban planning projects

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

“An Investigation of Vitality in Urban Street: Case of Jameh Mosque of Yazd”, The 5th Conference on "Urban Planning and Management", Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran 2013

“The Effect of Physical Criteria and Determining the Density of construction in Urban Development Projects”, The 1st National Conference of "Urbanism and Architecture Over Time", Imam Khomani International University, Qazvin, Iran 2013

Peer-Reviewed Publications

Sarafi, S., Lippitt, C. D., & Paulus, G. (2026). Land-cover change and urban heat in a warming climate: a global satellite perspective. *Theoretical and Applied Climatology*, 157, 691.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s00704-026-06604-1>

Extends my M.A. thesis on remote sensing-based detection of urban heat islands to a global sample of 100 cities (2000–2020). Open access (CC BY 4.0).