



Institute for Digital Agriculture & Advanced Analytics



Valued Partner, your Summer 2025 ID3A newsletter is here!



Welcome to the first edition of the ID3A newsletter!

At ID3A, we are building a bold vision: to be the nucleus for all things AI in agriculture—technology development, data-driven solutions, and integrated autonomy systems that empower the future of farming and vibrant rural communities. Our mission is clear: position ID3A and K-State as national leaders by developing impactful, deployable solutions that enhance on-farm decision-making, drive efficiency and profitability for producers, and strengthen rural resiliency.

We're focused on strategic action—targeting high-impact funding opportunities through agencies like the NSF and USDA, advancing key [GRIP and GRIPex project milestones](#), and building foundational partnerships across Kansas. These partnerships—whether with farmers, commodity groups, or tech industry collaborators—are essential as we co-develop a blueprint to understand stakeholder priorities and deliver meaningful, user-centric solutions.

Currently, we have one of the most exciting times on the K-State campus. The research landscape is shifting, and it demands stronger, more agile interdisciplinary collaboration. We encourage you to [become an ID3A affiliate](#), engage in cross-campus ideation, and help shape the next wave of workshops, proposals, and industry engagement efforts. Together, we can build a future where innovation extends beyond our labs, toward scalable, systems-level impact with measurable value to the end-user.

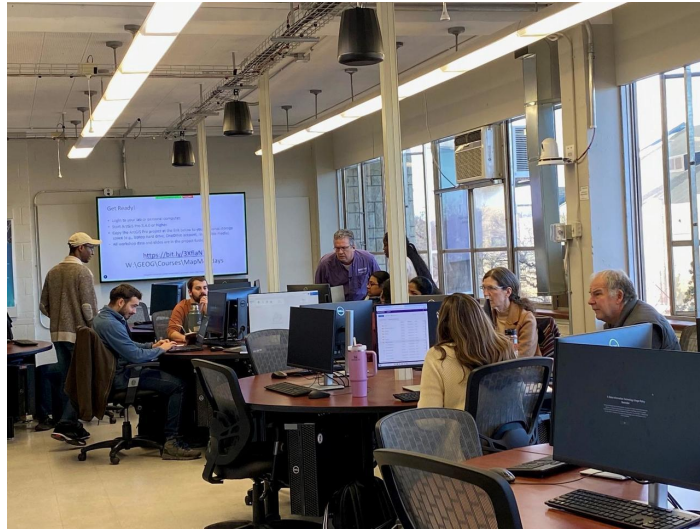
In the next 3–5 years, we envision K-State at the forefront of a thriving innovation ecosystem—bridging academia, industry, and community together to fuel student success through more internship and job opportunities, accelerate translational research, and redefine agricultural advancement for generations to come. Let's think big, build bold, and lead together.

-Ajay Sharda | Professor

Terry Beemer Foundation Chair for Engineering Innovation

Director, [Institute for Digital Agriculture and Advanced Analytics \(ID3A\)](#)

Workshops teach students and faculty new skills



This Spring, ID3A worked with our partners to host two distinct workshop series. The goal of hosting unique workshop opportunities is to offer K-State students and researchers the chance to learn new skills outside of the regular curriculum.

The first series was [MAP Mondays](#), taught by ID3A co-director [Shawn Hutchinson](#). In these workshops, participants worked within K-State's Geographic Information Systems Spatial Analysis Laboratory to explore GIS topics and software.

The second series, [Mixed Models](#), was taught by ID3A affiliate and assistant professor of statistics [Josefina Lacasa](#). In this popular series, workshop attendees learned the basics of linear mixed models to better analyze and understand data.

ID3A is scheduling more workshop series for the fall, so that K-Staters can take full advantage of the wide breadth of expertise and knowledge that [ID3A directors](#) and [affiliates](#) offer. If there are certain topics you would like to see offered in future workshops, contact us at id3a@ksu.edu.

ID3A continues work on GRIP research projects

Several ID3A directors and affiliates are using funds from [K-State's Game-changing Research Initiative Program](#), or GRIP, to further transformative, interdisciplinary research.

In 2023, ID3A co-director [Pascal Hitzler](#), professor of computer science, along with ID3A affiliate [Romulo Lollato](#), associate professor of agronomy, were awarded a little under a million dollars to pursue their research project, "Towards a Global Food Systems Data Hub: Seeding the Center for Sustainable Wheat Production." Co-primary investigators for this project include ID3A affiliates [Hande McGinty](#) and [Stacy Hutchinson](#).

In 2024, co-director [Ajay Sharda](#), professor of biological and agricultural engineering, was awarded nearly \$250,000 to pursue his project, "Mapping Seed-to-Plant Life Cycle to Predict Yields — Integrated Artificial Intelligence and Data Analytics Approach." Co-primary investigators for this project include ID3A affiliate [Hande McGinty](#), along with co-directors [Pascal Hitzler](#) and [Brian McCornack](#).

All of these projects represent a dedicated approach to digital agriculture and advanced analytics in the pursuit of improving global food systems.

Affiliate Spotlight: Helene Avocat



ID3A is proud to partner with experts across K-State.

Our affiliate program works to bring together researchers who are passionate about interdisciplinary work being done in digital agriculture and advanced analytics. In our Affiliate Spotlight Series, we introduce our affiliates and share their work, goals, and passions.

In this newsletter, we are highlighting Helene Avocat, teaching assistant professor of geography and geospatial sciences.

[Read about Helene](#)

Events

July 22: [AI in Ag Conference](#)

Recent news

- [Inaugural ASA DataFest helps students apply skills learned in the classroom, K-State Today](#)
- [Farming in the Digital Age, K-State Agriculturist Spring 2025](#)
- [Institute for Digital Agriculture and Advanced Analytics launches affiliate program, K-State Today](#)
- [K-State honors faculty with university distinguished professor title, K-State Today](#)
- [Inaugural Roots of Research awardees announced, K-State Today](#)
- [K-State researcher's study makes puzzling observation about Milky Way, deep space galaxies' rotations, K-State Today](#)

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