



Open Source Geospatial Foundation

Request for Proposals for FOSS4G 2018

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Key Info

Conference Title	FOSS4G 2018
Conference Year	2018
Conference Region	Rest of World
Conference number	12
Author/Conference Chair	Steven Feldman
Author contact	shfeldman@gmail.com
Conference Development Mail List	conference_dev@lists.osgeo.org
Version date	16 September 2016

Key Dates

Request for Proposals released	26-09-2016
Stage 1	
Letters of Intent submitted to Conference Mail List by	2400 GMT 10-10-2016
Period for questions to bidders ends	16-10-2016
Conference Committee votes on Letters of Intent	17-10-2016 to 18-10-2016
Selected Letters of Intent are notified and requested to submit full proposals	19-10-2016
Stage 2	
Full Proposals submitted to Conference Mail List by	2400 GMT 10-11-2016
Period for questions on proposals ends	20-11-2016
Conference committee call/IRC to discuss Proposals	Approx 22-11-2016
Time for final clarifications	
Conference Committee votes on Proposals	25-11-2016 to 28-11-2016
Recommendation made to OSGeo Board but not published	29-11-2016
Selection of host city announced by Board of OSGeo	Approx 5-12-2016

The Conference Committee reserves the right to adjust these dates and will notify any changes of dates on the Conference Mailing List.

Purpose

This document provides the background to the OSGeo Foundation's FOSS4G Conference and sets out the requirements and process for prospective bidders to host FOSS4G 2018.

Background

About OSGeo

The Open Source Geospatial Foundation (<http://www.osgeo.org/>) is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to support and promote the collaborative development of open geospatial technologies and data. The Foundation provides financial, organizational and legal support to the broader open source geospatial community. It also serves as an independent legal entity to which community members can contribute code, funding and other resources, secure in the knowledge that their contributions will be maintained for public benefit. OSGeo also serves as an outreach and advocacy organization for the open source geospatial community, and provides a common forum and shared infrastructure for improving cross-project collaboration. The Foundation's projects are all freely available and usable under OSI-certified open source licenses.

Conference History

The global FOSS4G conference and its predecessors have been the annual OSGeo "meeting of the tribes" for Geospatial Open Source projects and communities. For a history of prior events see <https://wiki.osgeo.org/wiki/FOSS4G> and https://wiki.osgeo.org/wiki/Past_FOSS4G_Reports)

About FOSS4G

The Open Source Geospatial Foundation (OSGeo) aims for each year's Global FOSS4G to be **the** geospatial conference of the year. In line with OSGeo goals, this conference will promote open source geospatial technologies and data.

Conference Attendees

Conference attendance has grown consistently over the last decade and the hope is that the next conference will continue this momentum. Historically, the majority of attendees (60-70%) come from within the region hosting the conference.

- European and North American events have recently attracted 800-950 delegates. Future events are hoped to attract 1000+ attendees
- Rest of World events have attracted 450-600 delegates. Future event sizes are likely to be predominantly determined by the size of the local community.

Some historic delegate information is at

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1BpkO5WOFQ_DZEWNMLj_hAhEre0m0io_j-JGf7geAW5Y/edit?hl=en_GB#gid=57



Conference Structure

Previous FOSS4G conferences have had the following general components. While this should be used as a guide, variations or alternatives may be proposed. The conference structure has evolved over time and we welcome further innovation in future proposals..

- One to two days of workshops.
 - Workshops are generally 3.5 hour instructional sessions, in a computer lab setting.
 - Attended by 200 to 300 people, depending on facilities.
 - Workshop instructors provide software, data, and materials.
 - Some conferences have provided free entry for workshop presenters while others have not, you should clearly state what your policy will be.
- Three days of the “main conference”.
 - Opening and closing plenary sessions with all attendees at the start and end.
 - Sometimes additional plenary sessions at the start and/or end of conference days.
 - Approximately six to nine parallel tracks of presentations, with each presentation consisting of a 20-25 minute talk, 5 minutes of Q&A, and 5 minutes of transition time between talks.
 - Attended by 500-900 people, depending on conference attendance.
- An “academic track”, with paper selection organized by an academic committee and a journal for publication of proceedings.
- A code sprint, held before or after the conference (or both). Interested developers join together for day(s) of programming.
- Streaming and archiving all conference proceedings
 - Most conferences have recorded all of the conference proceedings and archived the video to enable those not able to attend the conference to view plenaries and talks of interest. See <http://video.foss4g.org>
 - More recently conferences have offered live streaming which offers a remote participation option. This functionality is desired if the local infrastructure will support it.
- Social events
 - An “ice breaker” event on the evening before the first day. Usually held in a large bar or restaurant, but could be in any venue that allowed for easy mixing and mingling.
 - A “banquet” event on the evening of the second day. Usually held in a “showcase” venue,.Examples have included: an art museum, a castle, a harbor cruise, a cultural restaurant and a giant marquee.
- OSGeo Community events and activity
 - The OSGeo Annual General Meeting. Held in a venue suitable for about 200 people. Interested OSGeo members hear from local chapters, the board, and other speakers on the state of OSGeo. Preferably scheduled at the end of one of the main conference days.

- The Sol Katz Award, presented during the closing plenary session. The award is selected and presented by the Sol Katz committee, the conference organizers should include 15 minutes in the closing plenary schedule for the presentation.
- Student awards are funded and selected by the OSGeo educational team, Geo4All. Allow 15 minutes in the program for these awards. You will need to appoint a member of your LOC to liaise with Geo4All.
- Birds of Feather Sessions. Groups self-organize to discuss topics of common interest. Suggest times between the program, typically after presentations complete, but can also include breakfasts or dinners. Suggest locations such as lecture rooms or local pubs.
- OSGeo Directors Face-to-Face Meeting. Typically a 4 hour meeting held before or after the conference, in a board room or meeting room provided by the conference organizers.
- Some events have run a Map Gallery or competition.
- Exhibition – an exhibition area for sponsors, usually close to beverage and catering services
 - An exhibition space of equivalent size and prominence/location to the highest level of sponsor should be provided for OSGeo (at no cost)

More Conference Information

Prospective bidders are advised to review the following before submitting Letters of Intent or Proposals:

- The FOSS4G Handbook at https://wiki.osgeo.org/wiki/FOSS4G_Handbook
- The OSGeo Conference Committee wiki at https://wiki.osgeo.org/wiki/Conference_Committee
- The OSGeo Conference mailing list at http://lists.osgeo.org/mailman/listinfo/conference_dev (you must subscribe to be able to post to the list) or <http://osgeo-org.1560.x6.nabble.com/OSGeo-Conference-Committee-f3721662.html> (both have the same content, the latter may be easier to browse)
- Reports of past conferences https://wiki.osgeo.org/wiki/Past_FOSS4G_Reports
- Prior FOSS4G Lessons Learned: <https://wiki.osgeo.org/wiki/Category:FOSS4GLessonsLearned>
- Conference web sites in the format yyyy.foss4g.org e.g. <http://2017.foss4g.org>
- Document repository. Includes past bids, program books, sponsorship prospectuses, logo files, etc. <http://svn.osgeo.org/osgeo/foss4g>

Support by OSGeo

It is anticipated that the conference effort will be split into a local organizing committee (LOC) responsible for all work on venues, with the OSGeo Conference committee providing support, advice and access to past Chairs.

It is considered advantageous if key members of the LOC have demonstrated commitment and experience, such as shown by running a successful local or regional FOSS4G event. Ultimately the success of the event depends on a strong LOC that has a clear vision of the event they wish to build and the range of skills and time availability to pull everything together.

Most conferences are assisted by a professional conference organizer (PCO), this is up to the discretion of the LOC.



A FOSS4G is run by a LOC on behalf of OSGeo. You will need a legal organization (OSGeo Chapter, PCO etc) to contract with the venue and other suppliers.

It is expected that all FOSS4G events will be budgeted and operated to deliver a surplus over costs. Part of the surplus will be donated to OSGeo.

OSGeo can offer seed funding (an advance to cover start up expenses and deposits before revenues are received) and an additional limited guarantee to cover losses in the event of unexpected events (subject to approval of budgets and regular financial updates to an OSGeo board representative). If OSGeo provides seed funding and guarantees it is expected that in the region of 85% of any surplus generated will be donated to OSGeo. For more information see https://wiki.osgeo.org/wiki/FOSS4G_Handbook#Finances

Application Process

Conference Region

The OSGeo conference committee has decided to solicit proposals from specific regions each year. The sequence is 2016 – Europe, 2017 – North America, **2018 - Rest of World**, 2019 - Europe, 2020 - North America, 2021 – Rest of World etc.

See Key Info

Stage 1: Letter of Intent

"Letters of Intent" will be accepted from potential Local Organizing Committees (LOC) in the conference region. If there are no submissions from groups in that region, letters from any region around the world will then be solicited.

Dates

The timeline of the Lol and Proposal process and all deadlines are detailed in the section Key Dates above.

Requirements

"Letters of Intent" are limited to a maximum of two (2) pages, and should answer the following questions:

1. Who is your conference chair?
2. Who else is on your local organizing committee (LOC)?
3. What is the experience of your committee members with similar events?
4. What is your venue? (include access to Internet, room sizes, maximum attendees)
5. What are your provisional dates for the conference?
6. Early thoughts on prices of conference attendance? (indicative estimates)
7. What is the price range and general location of your proposed accommodations? (hotels)
8. Are you partnering with other local organizations?
9. What makes FOSS4G in your proposed location and with your team compelling?

Submission and Due Date

Letters of Intent should be submitted in PDF format only to the Conference Mailing List (see Key Info above).

The deadline for submission is detailed in Key Dates above.



Committee Question Period

A period between the Letter of Intent closing date and the Stage 1 decision date will be used by the committee to ask for further information regarding the potential bids (see Key Dates above). Questions will be asked on the Conference Mail List.

Committee Decision

If more than one Letter of Intent is received, members of the OSGeo Conference Committee will vote by each selecting a single letter as their choice. A letter must receive the backing of at least two members to move on to the full proposal stage. Exact voting results will not be released.

The committee reserves the right to extend the selection deadline and solicit additional proposals at its discretion.

Stage 2: Bid Submission

Once your Letter of Intent has been accepted you must then submit a full proposal, as outlined next. If only one letter is received in Stage 1, a full proposal is still required.

You are advised to read one or two successful Proposals from previous FOSS4G selection processes, see https://wiki.osgeo.org/wiki/Conference_Committee

Key elements for inclusion in your proposal

Stage 2 respondents interested in hosting FOSS4G should provide information on:

1. Your reasons for hosting the conference, and your goals for FOSS4G.
 - (a) How will your conference succeed financially (making a profit)?
 - (b) How will your conference succeed socially (giving people the unstructured space and time to meet and engage with one another)?
 - (c) How will your conference provide open source education (providing good training opportunities to new users)?
 - (d) How will your conference promote open source geospatial software (bringing new organizations into the open source community)?
 - (e) How will your conference promote inclusivity (welcoming a diverse community, students and those from lower income countries)?
2. The hosting location.
 - (a) What city will the conference be in, what is interesting about it?
 - (b) What venue will the conference be in, what are the number of rooms available, seating, and associated pricing?
 - (c) Available workshop facilities, number of rooms, computers per room, pricing, strategy for providing workshop facilities.
 - (d) Available rooms for additional small business meetings.
 - (e) What accommodations are available? Where are they relative to the venue? Pricing? Quantity?
 - (f) What is the maximum size your venue could entertain? The minimum?
3. The hosting organization and local community.
 - (a) Supporting local organizations (companies, universities, user groups) and individuals that would be involved in the local conference committee, and a sense of their level of commitment.

- (b) Local organizing committee.
- (c) Local open source development and implementation activity, interest and enthusiasm for open source geospatial in your region.
- (d) How do you plan to manage/organize work and relations with OSGeo (especially with the board and conference committees)?

4. The budget.

- (a) What is your budget? Expenses for venue, food, marketing, audio-visual, network access, video streaming and/or recording etc
- (b) What is your expected attendance? Why? Where do you think delegates will come from?
- (c) What is your expected sponsorship? Why? Do you have local potential sponsors already identified? At what levels?
- (d) Delegate fees for the conference, workshop and any social activities not included in the main conference fee. You should include detail of any grants or subsidized rates that you will offer which will be funded from within your budget.

Include a high level budget summary within your proposal and also provide a separate detailed budget as detailed in the Budget section below.

5. The program (see Conference Structure above)

- (a) Provide a high-level view of the program, indicating number of tracks, size of tracks, workshops, size of workshops, and other features of your program. Indicate the number of presentations, posters, and workshops you expect to accept.
- (b) What social events will be part of the schedule?
- (c) What dates do you expect to run the conference? Are they adjustable?
- (d) Provide a list of local/regional/international conferences around the selected date that are viewed as competition or collaboration.

The Conference Committee welcomes innovation in the structure and content of the conference program.

6. Other

- (a) Other relevant details (ie. do you plan to use professional conference organizing service, and approximate cost).

Budget

A budget template is available to download at <http://svn.osgeo.org/osgeo/foss4g/rfp/2017/osgeo-conference-budget-template.ods> (in Open Office format). Note that a budget is required for the submission, but it does not need to follow the template. This template is available for assistance during your planning. Please provide your budget in US dollars and confirm the date of any currency rate assumption.

Other considerations

Timing

The last two conferences have been held in the month of August, previously conferences and some continuity is desirable. However, other dates are possible, as long as you give yourself enough time to attract sponsors. Please propose a date for the conference, as well as the reasoning for your date selection (keeping in mind public holidays and related conference conflicts or synergies).

Conference Naming

The conference name will be 'FOSS4G 2018 presented by OSGeo'. Other variants of the name may be considered, for translation purposes.

Conference Logo

For continuity, the conference logo used must contain a variation of the FOSS4G “ribbon”. You can view how past organizing committees used the ribbon in their design at www.foss4g.org



OSGeo Code of Conduct (CoC)

Like all OSGeo activities, FOSS4G is subject to the OSGeo Code of Conduct, http://www.osgeo.org/code_of_conduct. The LOC is responsible for making the CoC a visible part of FOSS4G, as well as handling any CoC-related concerns related to the event.

Evaluation Criteria

The responses will be evaluated by the conference committee and a recommendation made for selection to the OSGeo board.

Criteria affecting selection will include:

- A sense of local capabilities (number of volunteers, committee members, experience, commitment, understanding of details) to pull off the conference.
- Suitability of the proposed facilities for hosting a conference.
- Ability to host several hands-on workshops.
- Size of conference that could be hosted?
 - Up to 1000 in North America and Europe
 - Potentially less (ca 500-700) in some Rest of World Locations
- Availability of a variety and suitable quantity of accommodation (some inexpensive accommodation is also desirable).
- Reasonable transportation to and around the conference venue.
- Cost for attendees
 - We hope to keep cost per participant under \$650 USD for the conference and workshops.
 - We would welcome innovative approaches that can offer more affordable options to delegates. These might include differential pricing, alternative venues, reduced catering costs, changing dates or excluding the cost (or part of the cost) of social events.
 - Note: please include all prices in USD in your proposal, and please specify a currency date in your proposal (e.g. USD 2015-07-01).
- Provision of streaming (optional)
- Video recording and archiving (expected)
- Interestingness of meeting locale.

- Involvement by the various sector types (local committee should include private and public sector interests).
- Clarity on financial responsibility
 - A sense of the reliability and plausibility of budget estimates provided
 - Does the conference require seed funding and/or a guarantee from OSGeo?
 - The level of surplus to be returned to OSGeo
 - Does the conservative budget estimate result in a reasonable profit.

Submission and Due Date

Your proposal should be submitted in PDF format only to the Conference Mailing List (see Key Info above).

If there are any sensitive attachments or appendices to your proposal (e.g. detailed budget) that you would prefer not to be made public please mail these to the Conference Chair (see Key Info above). These will be circulated privately to conference committee members and will not be posted to the mailing list

The deadline for submission is detailed in Key Dates above.

Committee Question Period

A period between the submission closing date and the decision date will be used by the committee to ask for further information regarding proposals; the question period is detailed in Key Dates above. Questions will be asked on the Conference Mail List.

Following the question period, the conference committee will convene a call to discuss the proposals and some further questions may follow this call before the committee votes.

Committee Decision Method

The OSGeo conference committee members will have a first and second vote for proposals. 1st votes will be counted, if there is a tied result, second choice votes will be added to first choice votes for the tied bids from the first round only. In the event that there is still a tie the result will be determined by a published random process (see the FOSS4G Handbook for details).

The evaluation criteria have no fixed weighting and are used as a general guide.

Committee Decision

Members of the OSGeo conference committee will vote after the question period ends to select the best proposal based on the evaluation criteria. Exact voting results will not be released. The conference committee will then propose the location to the OSGeo Board, who must formally approve of the decision.

The date of the final decision is detailed in Key Dates above.

Committee Discretion

The Conference Committee may vary this RfP process at its discretion. Any material variation will be dependent upon a majority private vote of the Conference Committee and a quorum of at least 5 members.

Post decision

Complete Seed Funding and/or Guarantee Agreement

If a bidder has indicated that they wish to receive seed funding or a partial guarantee from OSGeo, the Conference Committee will draft a Finance Advance Agreement (based on those previously used e.g. https://svn.osgeo.org/osgeo/foss4g/2016/budget_planning/osgeo-local-committee-advance-agreement.odt) for signature by the board and the LOC or their PCO.