

FOSS4G 2017 Letter of Intent for Boston, Massachusetts, USA

The Boston Location Organizing Committee is pleased to present this **letter of intent** to OSGeo. This committee of volunteers has come together quickly and with overwhelming support to host the 2017 FOSS4G Conference in Boston and to work diligently to make it a memorable and productive event.

1. Who is your conference chair

Michael Turner, Executive Vice President of [AppGeo](#)

2. Who else is on your Local Organizing Committee (LOC)?

Our process has identified a diverse array of committee members representing key geo sectors:

Name	Organization	Sector	Title
Guido Stein	AvidGeo	Community	Founder
Charlie Schweik	UMass Amherst	Academic	Professor
Laurel Ruma	O'Reilly Media	Private	Director of Acquisitions
Giovanni Zambotti	Harvard University - CGA	Academic	GIS Specialist
Patrick Florance	Tufts University	Academic	Associate Director of Geospatial Technology
Aleda Freeman	MassGIS	Government	Web Mapping Services Manager
Sarah Williams	MIT	Academic	Assistant Professor Info Technology & Planning
Mike Foster	Maptime Boston /MIT DUSP	Community	GIS Specialist
Carolyn Bennett	Boston Redevelopment Auth.	Government	GIS Manager
Alex Kubicek	Understory	Private	CEO
David Bitner	dbSpatial	Private	Owner
Josh Lieberman	Tumbling Walls	Private	Principal
Regina Obe	Paragon Corporation	Private	President and Co-Founder
Will Mitchell	NBT Solutions	Private	Principal
Josh Rosenthal	PeopleGIS	Private	Developer

3. What is the experience of your committee members with similar events?

Our proposed Chair, Michael Turner, has been working in the geospatial industry since 1985 and is one of the founders of AppGeo. He served on the Program Committees for the 2012 (DC) and 2013 (MSP) FOSS4G North American events. He has attended, sponsored and presented at each of the FOSS4G events held in North America from 2011-2015.

Our committee has a wealth of experience from a variety of conferences, including previous FOSS4G events. This experience is integral to our ability to support both this conference bid and hopefully the conference itself. Many of our members have served on Program and Organizing Committees for FOSS4G events in the past, and one of our members is a former Chair of FOSS4G North America. In addition, our team includes an OSGeo charter member and the Chair of the OSGeo Education and Curriculum Committee. Local to Boston, we have members who run yearly geospatial conferences and events including the [Harvard Center for Geographic Analysis \(CGA\) Conference](#) (since 2006) and the AvidGeo Conference. Included in our committee is a former co-chair of the Where 2.0 Conference who has also worked on the Gov 2.0 Expo, and OSCON Java. Finally, many of the companies participating in the LOC have sponsored and helped host previous FOSS4G conferences and OSGeo events.

4. What is your venue?

Either, the **Hynes Convention Center** run by the [Massachusetts Convention Center Authority](#)

Or, a suitable hotel with attached conference facilities:

- **Westin Boston Waterfront**, 425 Summer Street; Boston, MA 02210
- 793 Guest Rooms

- 1500 Capacity of Largest Meeting Room
- 41 Total Meeting Rooms
- **Sheraton Boston Hotel**, 39 Dalton Street; Boston, MA 02199
 - 1220 Guest Rooms
 - 2100 Capacity of Largest Meeting Room
 - 53 Total Meeting Rooms

All conference locations under consideration have built-in wifi/Internet capabilities

5. What is the price range and general location of your proposed accommodations?

We anticipate 1-2 anchor hotels very close to/part of the conference facility that will likely have higher costs in the \$250-\$300 per night range. We would also anticipate another 1-2 hotels that will be available and would be a short public transportation ride away and at significantly lower costs in the \$150-\$200/night range. Boston also has more economical options for people willing to stay outside downtown Boston, including hostels with price ranges from \$40-\$80/night.

The LOC has been actively working with [Greater Boston Convention and Visitors Bureau](#) on preliminary planning and to identify available conference facilities and appropriate and affordable options for accommodations.

6. Are you partnering with other local organizations?

Yes, **AvidGeo** and **Maptime Boston** which are the two most active local geo meetup groups.

We expect to partner with a **professional Location Organizer** (LO). The most likely candidates for LO would be:

- [VTM Group](#), which ran a fabulous 2014 FOSS4G in PDX
- [Eclipse Foundation/LocationTech](#), which organized and ran the 2015 FOSS4GNA in SFO

We expect to partner with, and leverage the rich **academic communities** via their strong participation on the LOC. Academic communities will help supply appropriate volunteers and a super strong and targeted academic track at the conference. In addition, our links with the local academic communities will help ensure both venues and content for the “workshop day” that precedes the conference.

7. What makes FOSS4G in your proposed location compelling?

From the emergence of the [tech industry on Route 128](#) in the 1970’s and through the launch of the free software movement by [Richard Stallman](#) at MIT in the 1980’s the greater Boston area has deep roots in technology and open source. The region also hosts an unparalleled constellation of academic institutions - including some of the most recognized names in the world - many of whom house active and leading geospatial programs. Further, Boston is the state capital of Massachusetts and is the seat of a government that includes the [MassGIS Program](#), an early innovator in state-level deployment of open source and open geospatial data.

Boston’s technology and academic core house thriving startup and geospatial tech communities that will support the conference. In addition, some of the largest names in the geospatial and technology industry - Google, Esri, Microsoft, Autodesk - have large presences in the region and will help anchor local and national sponsorship.

Finally, Boston is a fabulous conference destination with multiple [convention spaces](#). Boston’s strong, international Logan Airport - located only 15 minutes from downtown by subway - has direct flights from 20 European and Asian destinations and Massachusetts has a wide variety of historical, aquatic, cultural, environmental and culinary attractions. From Cape Cod’s beaches, to the Freedom Trail and the Minuteman National Historic Park in Concord, to the nearby White Mountains in New Hampshire and scenic coastal Maine, as well as the Red Sox and the Pops, the Boston region strongly attracts out-of-state and international visitors. Boston nightlife includes a robust restaurant scene (seafood anyone?) from food trucks to James Beard award winning eateries and innumerable bars, nightclubs and musical venues.

In short, Boston has the core ingredients - hotels, conference facilities, strong public transportation, international airport - to host this type of event. And Boston also has the intangibles of a close knit geospatial and academic community and a thriving, beautiful and walkable city that will make FOSS4G 2017 a memorable experience.