

# Request for OSGeo funding – Pacific Geospatial Conference (FOSS4G Oceania) Travel Grant Program 2022

See: [https://wiki.osgeo.org/wiki/FOSS4G\\_Travel\\_Grant\\_Programme\\_Cookbook](https://wiki.osgeo.org/wiki/FOSS4G_Travel_Grant_Programme_Cookbook)

For the first time The Pacific GIS and Remote Sensing Council (PGRSC), OSGeo Oceania and HOT OSM are collaborating to present the 2022 GIS users conference in Oceania. The conference series has been running in Fiji for about 20 years and is the largest GIS and RS Conference in the Pacific, with content covering applications of FOSS and open data. This year will be enriched with additional formal integration into the FOSS4G community, combining the annual FOSS4G and SoTM Oceania event with the PGRSC conference. Thus, a new conference name will be used to represent this new venture: "The Pacific Geospatial Conference".

The Pacific Geospatial Conference will be held from 28th November to 2nd December at the University of the South Pacific in Suva, Fiji and the theme will be "Digital Platforms, GIS and Remote Sensing to anticipate and manage impacts of Global Warming."

Following the success of our Travel Grant Program (TGP) in 2018 and 2019, OSGeo Oceania is offering a TGP for the 2022 Pacific Geospatial Conference, aimed at enabling attendance for people who are disadvantaged by economic circumstances and/or geography. Oceania is a vast region, with a highly distributed population, a large proportion of which is in small, lesser-developed countries. Travelling to Fiji could be difficult and expensive, even for local communities in the most remote areas of the country, and visas are also costly.

There is a strong need in this region for this type of program, and there are clear economic and social benefits of spreading open geospatial knowledge to those who stand to gain the most. The TGP's goal is increasing the diversity, accessibility, and reach of the conference. We want to support worthy recipients who are interested in gaining in-depth insight into development and application of open-source geospatial software and are committed to making an impact in their home country, given the opportunity provided.

## Funding request

**To support this program, we are requesting support from the OSGeo Travel Grant Fund in the amount of USD\$3,500.**

We are pleased to confirm we are prepared to more than match OSGeo's contribution with our own funds. OSGeo Oceania has already approved a cash contribution of AUD\$5000 (approximately USD\$3500) and we also hope that OSGeo's contribution will act as a 'seed' for other funders, such as NGOs and government grants.

## Number and size of grants

With the initial budget, we aim to offer approximately 25 grants supporting travel. This is not a fixed strategy; we will reallocate the budget depending on the applicant pool. Depending on the success of our fundraising drive, we may be able to expand the program by offering more grants in this round, or running a second, targeted round. OSGeo's contribution of USD\$3,500 could already unlock up to 10 more grants, doubling the amount of grants we can offer per tier.

We plan to offer grants in 3 tiers. These are subject to change depending on demand and available funding. Eligible costs include transportation, accommodation, and visa costs.

Tier	Support offered	# of grants *	Est. budget
2	- Free conference & workshop registration - Up to FJD \$3000(~USD\$1340) to assist with eligible travel expenses	1	FJD \$3,000 (~USD\$1,300)  1 registrations
3	- Free conference & workshop registration - Up to FJD \$1500 (~USD\$670) to assist with eligible travel expenses	2	FJD \$3,000 (~USD\$1,300)  2 registrations
4	- Free conference & workshop registration - Up to FJD \$300 (~USD\$134) to assist with eligible travel expenses	8	FJD \$2,800 (~USD\$1010)  8 registrations

*\* Number of grants available will depend on the final budget and actual costs. For example, travel for TGP recipients from Fiji islands will be much less expensive than travel from distant parts of Oceania.*

## Selection criteria

As a general set of guidelines, successful TGP applicants:

- are resident in the Oceania region
- would find it difficult to attend without funding assistance
- can demonstrate experience/interest in open geospatial
- belong to an underrepresented community, and their presence will contribute to diversity amongst conference attendees
- is in a position to add value to their own community

We intend to follow the selection criteria established for the HOT unSUMMIT Grant (see [here](#) for more information)

We intend to follow, approximately, the same process we used in past Travelling Grant programmes:

- One selection committee member will act as chair. This person will communicate with grantees as they submit, clarifying any doubts about their applications, and opening a channel of communication.
- At the close of the submission period, the chair will prepare an anonymised spreadsheet of eligible submissions and lead a discussion with the selection committee about the assessment criteria and process, to ensure the group is working collaboratively.
- The selection committee will undertake a period of review and scoring, using the listed criteria. This will, hopefully, indicate a clear consensus on most of the grants. The committee will meet and discuss any marginal choices and agree on a final set of grants.
- The chair will communicate with grantees and confirm the uptake of the grants, and work with grantees to facilitate travel planning, including securing appropriate visas, as needed.

### Selection committee

Grantees will be selected by a Selection Committee, currently consisting of:

- Elisa Puccioni
- Adam Steer
- Jonah Sullivan
- Mikko Tamura
- Carrol Chan

We will also ask the [‘She leads and she inspires’](#) Oceania champions, who have applied and granted the funding for participating at the conference by HOTOSM scholarship programme, to become members of the Selection Committee for the other applications. We think that this will encourage them to take responsibility for their role of champions and strengthen the involvement of these women in the Oceania OS community.

Further information

**How will grants be paid, and by whom:** This will depend highly on the grant recipient's specific circumstances. We intend to reimburse recipients for actual expenses via bank transfer if possible. It is often not convenient or even possible to do standard bank transfers. Additionally, some recipients will require funding in advance to enable their participation: In the past years we worked with grantees to ensure a smooth delivery of funds on arrival at the conference, and will address this in a similar fashion in 2022.