Dear FOSS4G selection committee,

Forum Virium Helsinki expresses its sincere wish to host the congress of the FOSS4G in Helsinki in September 2013. This invitation is fully supported by both local and national authorities.

Friendly, modern and functional, Helsinki is the leading conference city in Finland. An average of 100 international conventions with more than 20 000 delegates are arranged in Helsinki each year. Nordic professionalism and service combined with world-class venues and hotels make Helsinki a brilliant event location. The Helsinki City Tourist & Convention Bureau will help the organisers with 30 years of expertise, and the City Hall is ready to welcome the FOSS4G delegates for an evening in the prestigious City Hall.

Forum Virium Helsinki is a development company of digital services and part of the City of Helsinki group. Forum Virium Helsinki is one of the leading open data advocates in Finland and very active in location-based service development. The event team of Forum Virium Helsinki consists of experienced conference professionals.

Helsinki offers great opportunities for social events and off-conference –activities. State of the Map conference is being planned to take place before FOSS4G in medieval capital of Estonia, Tallinn, just a short boat ride from Helsinki on the southern shore of the Gulf of Finland.

In order to provide the optimum venue for the FOSS4G congress we have made preliminary reservations in both the Alvar Aalto –designed Finlandia hall and the top venue by the seaside, Marina Congress Centre.

It would be a great honor for us to host the Congress of the FOSS4G. We look forward to seeing you in Helsinki and wish you warmly welcome.

Yours Sincerely,

Jarmo Eskelinen   Jarmo Ratia

CEO, Forum Virium   Chairman of local organization committee

Why Finland? Here are some reasons…
- Open Finland: no visa problems, one the best airports in the word (global survey, 2006).
- Open Source: the Internet runs on LAMP, half of which was designed in Finland (Linus Torwalds created Linux and Monty Widenius MySQL).
- Open Data: mandated in Government policy. National Land Survey maps open in 2012.
- Open Government: one of the least corrupted countries (#2, Global corruption index 2011).
  > http://www.visithelsinki.fi/en/professional

Local Organization Committee

Forum Virium Helsinki will be the host of the FOSS4G conference. Forum Virium Helsinki develops new digital services in collaboration with companies and public sector organizations.

The key partners of Forum Virium Helsnki are Elisa, IBM, Logica, Nokia, Siemens, Sponda, TeliaSonera, Tieto and YLE Finnish Broadcasting Company. Besides the City of Helsinki, other public sector partners Finnvera, Sitra, Tekes, Tieke and VTT. Furthermore, a large number of international cooperation partners participate in the projects. *> www.forumvirium.fi*

Forum Virium Helsinki has strong capability and experience to organize seminars and conferences to fulfill its targets. Among others, Forum Virium will host the Open Knowledge Festival on September 2012. Open Knowledge Festival will combine Open Government Data Camp and Open Knowledge Conference for first time. *> www.okfestival.org*

General committee

- Mr Jarmo Ratia, General Manager of National Land Survey (retiring Sept. 2012), chairman
- Mr Jyrki J. Kasvi, Manager at Information Society Development Centre, ex-member of parliament
- Mr Jarmo Eskelinen, CEO of Forum Virium
- Prof Ari Jolma, Aalto University (Academic track)
- Mr Pekka Sarkola, Secretary General of FOSS4G 2013 conference

General committee will have also other members from supporting organizations. There will be also five subcommittees for workshops, program, academic track, production and marketing.

Supporting organizations

At this moment following organizations have expressed their support for FOSS4G in Helsinki 2013: Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Transport and Communications, National Land Survey of Finland, Finnish Environment Institute, CSC – IT Center for Science Ltd, Finnish Geodetic Institute, Aalto University, University of Eastern Finland, COSS (Centre for Open Systems and Solutions), Progis Association and several private companies (Logica Ltd, Arbonaut Oy, Mapita Oy, Gispo Ltd, Simosol Oy, Eero Paloheimo Ecocity OY).

Venue

The proposed venue for FOSS4G is Marina Congress Centre. Located in the very heart of Helsinki, Marina offers flexible and top-of-the-class facilities for a great conference.
> http://www.marinacongresscenter.com/

Accomodations

The organisers will negotiate discounted prices for a range of hotels after the decision about the conference location is made. Good alternatives are for example Hotel Marina (across the road from the Congress Centre) and design hotel Klaus K. Rack rates in 2012:
5 star € 250 - 390
4 star € 150 - 260
3 star   € 100 - 180
2 star and hostel € 35 – 60