

FOSS4G 2017 Letter of Intent for Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Dear FOSS4G 2017 selection committee,

The OSGeo Ottawa Local Chapter is pleased to submit its proposal to host the 2017 edition of FOSS4G in the heart of Ottawa, Canada's National Capital.

Conference Co-Chairs

Javed Syed e-mail: turning.data.into.wealth@gmail.com phone: (613) 806-4159 (Cell)
Jérôme St-Louis e-mail: jerome@ecere.com phone: (819) 663-8539

Javed and Jérôme are co-chairs of the OSGeo Ottawa Local chapter. Javed holds a B.Sc. in geology from the University of Saskatchewan and through his venture TDW he leverages free geo-spatial open source software to assist in exploring and exploiting valuable minerals resources. Jérôme is the founder and CTO of Ecere Corporation, providing a free open source toolkit for cross-platform software development featuring a 2D & 3D graphics engine, widget toolkit, an IDE and a compiler for the eC programming language. Ecere also offers GNOSIS, a real-time 3D geospatial visualization SDK along with related consulting services.

Other LOC Members

- ◆ Dave McIlhagga: CEO, MapSherpa and DM Solutions Group
- ◆ Karine Jean: GIS Analyst/Event manager, Centre de Géomatique du Québec
- ◆ Saeid Homayouni: Professor of Geography, Ottawa University
- ◆ Michael C. Sawada: Professor of Geography, Ottawa University
- ◆ Scott Mitchell: Professor of Geography, Carleton University
- ◆ Regie Alam: President, ASG Mapping
- ◆ Paul Churcher: GIS Coordinator, Infrastructure and Environment at Department of National Defence
- ◆ Jinny Plourde: Business Development, Centre de Géomatique du Québec

Events Organizing Experience

- We are planning to hire a Professional Conference Organizer and are evaluating delegating organizational elements to Intertask Conferences and/or Andrew Ross with Location Tech/Eclipse Foundation.
- Dave McIlhagga was chair of the Open Source GIS and MapServer User Meeting conference in 2004, one of the first open-source GIS conferences.
- Karine Jean has played a key role organizing two editions of Vision Géomatique: 2012 in Saguenay, Québec and 2014 in Gatineau, Québec, both of which saw great success. She took care of landing financial partners, the general logistics, call for papers, booking the venue and budget management.
- Javed Syed has organizational experience in planning seminars and conferences as treasurer for CIM Saskatoon branch and as geology instructor for Northlands College in Lorange, Saskatchewan.

Venue Information

The proposed venue for FOSS4G 2017 is the Shaw Centre (formerly named the Ottawa Convention Centre) with a bold, modern design, brightly lit interior offering 200,000 square feet of highly flexible meeting space to accommodate up to 6,000 persons with outstanding views of downtown Ottawa through its crystalline glass facade. In July 2014, it finished in a tie for second place for the title of the "World's Best Convention Centre". The Level 2 might offer a good combination with a main hall 93.2' x 116' capable to hold 1200 people and 4 small rooms for simultaneous talks which could each fit 200 people (http://www.shaw-centre.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Shaw-Centre_FloorPlans_Level-2_June_2015.pdf). It is possible to set up Wi-Fi Internet for all attendees for a fee. We would propose for the workshops to be held on a separate day at the University of Ottawa; the University's professors on our committee have indicated their support for this.

Accommodations

The city's downtown is remarkably compact and walkable with over 6,000 hotel rooms in the heart of the city offering a broad array of guest room types and price points in the range of \$150-\$250. There are also more affordable options for those on a budget such as youth hostels, or if willing to stay further away from downtown. Gatineau, Québec is only 2 km away from the venue, across the Ottawa River, where there are additional accommodation options available. The Shaw Centre is linked by a bridge to the Westin hotel where rooms are around 250 \$ CAD / night, and it is linked as well to the Rideau Centre shopping complex. The craft shops of the ByWard market and Sparks Street – the country's first and oldest pedestrian mall – is a mere 5 minutes stroll away.

Local Organizations

We are in the process of approaching local organizations including the Canadian Institute of Geomatics, the Centre de Géomatique du Québec, GoGeomatics, the Centre de Recherche en Géomatique de l'Université Laval and the City of Ottawa to participate in hosting the conference.

We have the full support of Ottawa Tourism, who offer comprehensive and complimentary services such as organizational guidance, marketing material, information desk at the conference and access to the Delegate Insider Badge program offering discounts to various attractions, restaurants and tours in the region. They can also assist in securing discounted rates/funds for booking the venue and accommodations.

Why FOSS4G 2017 in Ottawa, Canada?

- The OSGeo foundation has some roots in this city from the early history of our local Ottawa chapter, which was formed as a merger of the Ottawa MapServer Users Group and the Ottawa GRASS Users Group. Key members of the OSGeo community used to meet at our monthly meetings at the Fox & Feather, where we still meet every month. It would be a great honor to welcome FOSS4G for the first time (the last event we received was the OpenSource GIS Conference and MapServer User Meeting in 2004).
- Ottawa and the surroundings has a very large concentration of companies dealing specifically in the domain of geospatial technologies.
- It was in Ottawa that Roger Tomlinson, the father of GIS, developed the first GIS system in the 1960s.
- Information Technology thrives in Ottawa, with a large representation from the public, private and education sectors.
- Ottawa is centrally located in the province of Ontario, with the award-winning Ottawa International Airport offering more than 125 non-stop flights daily to over 30 Canadian, U.S. and European Centres and just a 15 minutes ride to the heart of the city.
- Ottawa will be at the forefront of celebrations marking the 150th anniversary of the Canadian Confederation in 2017, with new attraction openings and ongoing special events.
- Ottawa is a cosmopolitan G7 capital that is home to Canada's federal government, national associations, international embassies, and national and international media.
- Ottawa is a bilingual city where both of Canada's official languages (French and English) are spoken.
- We're the North American headquarter of Le Cordon Bleu, and have a thriving culinary and craft beer scene that reflects our increasingly diverse population.
- In addition to our fine dining restaurant experiences, we offer many food truck and carts takeaway spots serving all kinds of affordable snacks from shawarma to poutine; and treats like our iconic beaver tails.
- Ottawa is among the most safe and secure world capitals, and is accustomed to hosting global gatherings of all kinds and adept at providing attentive service to an international crowd. It is an urban destination that wows visitors with art and culture, music and festivals, landmark sites and outdoor adventure.
- People have come to Canada from around the world to live in freedom and build our country into one of the most diverse on the planet. Today, Canadians gather in Ottawa to celebrate their diversity, their shared heritage, and their humanity.