FOSS4G 2019 Letter of Intent for Bucharest, Romania

1. Who is your conference chair?

Successful past events, great memories and some amazing friendships that we all hold dear are deeply connected to FOSS4G. Thus here, today, humble and honoured, not without excitement and eagerness, through the voice of our conference chair, Vasile Crăciunescu, we kindly ask you to consider Bucharest as the venue for the Free and Open Source for Geospatial 2019!

Our chair, Vasile, is one of the pillars of OSGeo, quite well know in the community, if not for his calm and balanced views as Director for 2 terms, or for charing the FOSS4G CEE 2013, then for all those emails sent as CRO for the last three years. His experience as Program Committee Chair for several successful events (FOSS4G Europe 2014, FOSS4G 2015 Europe, FOSS4G 2017 Europe) stands as a promise for an awe-inspiring conference.

2. Who else is on your LOC?

Our team (in alphabetical order): Tudor Bărăscu (Qtibia Engineering), Octavian Borcan (HERE Technologies), Marius Budileanu (Faculty of Geography - University of Bucharest), Roxana Burlacu (Terrasigna), Bogdan Candrea (ForestDesign), Sorin Constantin (Terrasigna), Ştefan Constantinescu (Faculty of Geography - University of Bucharest), Olimpia Copăcenaru (Terrasigna), Cristian Flueraru (Terrasigna), Bogdan Grama (Soft Business Union), Codrina Ilie (Terrasigna), Robert Ille (Digital Mapping), Florin Iosub (Teamnet International), Iulian Iuga (Soft Business Union), Andreea Marin (Faculty of Geography - University of Bucharest), Ion Nedelcu (Romanian Space Agency), Dan Mihai Niţă (Faculty of Silviculture and Forest Engineering - Transilvania University, Brasov), Ionuţ Şerban (Terrasigna), Daniel Urdă (Teamnet International).

Who are we, the Romanian LOC? A well shaped, informal and robust of not-so-young-anymore GI professionals group based in Bucharest. You might know us by our geo-spatial.org T-shirts we keep wearing, or recognize us as the merry group at various FOSS4G events. Or better yet, you might remember the FOSS4G CEE 2013 in Bucharest: Jeff McKenna " *My brain is finally starting to come back online now, and I want to add to the praise for FOSS4G-CEE-Bucharest.*" , "*Again, thanks to the CEE local organizers (the fun geo-spatial.org team).* ", Anne Ghisla: "*Let me thank Vasile and the LOC for their excellent work [...]. *", Markus Neteler "*with this email I would like to express a big "thank you" for the outstanding FOSS4G-CEE in Bucharest last week. *", Jachym Cepicky: "*I wanted to express something similar, so I just add my big +1 to this *", Fenoy Gerald "*Let me say that it make rebirth the OSGeo light in the heart of people like me.*".

In 2013, we promised we will be back. 6 years later, it is high time we meet our promise.

3. What is your venue?

Why Bucharest? In the last decades, Bucharest became home for an increasing global and regional number of conference and events for all kinds of domains. The city offers valuable settings for a remarkable FOSS4G 2019 venue. We are in the process of choosing between two. Who has not heard of the second biggest building in the world?! It is the heaviest and the largest administrative building in the world and in our times, it is one of the most desired conference venue. The Parliament House indeed, needs no introduction. Our second choice stands to be the National Theater of Bucharest "I.L. Caragiale". An impressive building with an ancient architecture that overlooks on the city center, a colourful concentration of the Bucharest cultural and high-life. We

also hold a third backup option, Romexpo, an indoor arena used mostly for exhibitions that hosts every year more than 40 international fairs, commercial presentations and special events.

4. Historically, half to three quarters of delegates come from the hosting country / region. Hence it is very valuable to have links with the regional geospatial industries.

All LOC members are geo-spatial.org members. geo-spatial.org is the Romanian OSGeo Local Chapter since 2009, but our [history] [is] [longer]. Since 2007, we have been the elegant place for sharing geoKnowledge & geoData of Romania, bringing together students, young professionals and experts in Geospatial Information applied in a wide variety of fields: from historical cartography to remote sensing, from archeology to groundwater engineering. Thus, our connections run deep into the private, public and academia worlds. We strengthen our ties through the traditional open source workshops we have been organizing for the last XIX in 3 cities in Romania. Over 2200 presented, learned and taught with us, spreading the FOSS4G spirit. Although still a niche domain, in a small country like Romania, our community includes over 1000 people, active on our mailing list, Facebook page and making our get togethers fun and inspirational.

A long time ago, a visionary man shouted at us: "Your software is awesome, but.. useless without data!!!". FOSS4G 2019 Bucharest would revolve around geodata in all its forms and shapes: Earth Observation data, GIS data, public geodata, private geodata, VGI. We are honoured by a close, active and fruitful collaboration with the Open Government Partnership team in the Romanian Government for over 3 years. Our combined efforts have fostered wonderful results that will be carried on. We, in geo-spatial.org, have an almost religious respect for data. 2012 was the year that marked international recognition of our efforts in that direction: eHarta. With own resources and volunteer contributions, we have implemented a [collaborative] [project] [that] [would] [digitally] [preserve] [historic cartographic materials of Romania].

5. How do you propose to engage the regional communities in order to attract delegates and sponsors.

We expect to partner both with industry and academic communities. Their strong participation in the LOC is a proof of that. At this point, we have the support from Romanian Spatial Agency, Romanian National Meteorological Administration, National Agency for Cadastre and Land Registration (Romanian national mapping agency), Faculty of Geography – University of Bucharest, Faculty of Geography - Babeş Boylai University and the Faculty of Chemistry, Biology and Geography - West University of Timisoara. Also, positive feedback was received from the European Space Agency.

6. The more recent conferences have all worked with a professional conference organizer. If you plan to make use of one, please mention them.

We are planning to use AS Travel, a Romanian based company as our professional conference organizer.

7. Give a rough overview about potential costs (conference fees, accommodation, averaged prices for meal/drinks)

We anticipate the following prices (VAT included): conference early registration at 450€; conference late registration at 550-600€; early bird workshop registration 50€; regular workshop registration 75€. Discounts will be provided for students and Low or Lower-Middle countries. A meal menu in a city centre restaurant starts at 8€. The average (large) beer cost is around 1.6€. Accommodation: 5* at 120-160€/night; 4* at 80-120€/night; 3* at 40-70€/night. It is safe to say that Bucharest is a wonderful city to visit at an affordable price.