FOSS4G 2020 Letter of Intent for Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

Members of the OSGeo Atlantic Canada Chapter, the OSGeo Ottawa local chapter, and the OSGeo Québec local chapter are proud to come together to officially bid on hosting the global FOSS4G-2020 event in Halifax. With a brand new state-of-the-art conference center opened in January 2018, along with the diverse strength of the local committee, we believe that this bid will continue the true spirit of the FOSS4G community, in a vibrant and welcoming environment.

1. Who is your conference chair?
Jeff McKenna: President, Gateway Geomatics, Chair of OSGeo Atlantic Canada chapter
Karine Jean: President, geomatiQC, Board member of the OSGeo Québec local chapter

2. Who else is on your local organizing committee (LOC)?

Name	Organization	Sector
Thierry Badard	Laval University	Academic
Lenore Bajona, Jon Pye	OceanTrackingNetwork	Public
Laura Beazley, Debbra Wilkinson	GeoNOVA	Public
Paul Boudreau	Dalhousie University	Academic
Bob Branton, Andrew Sherin, Alexi Westcott	COINAtlantic	Non-profit
Matthew Hanson	Development Seed	Private
Jérôme Jacovella-St-Louis	Ecere Corporation	Private
Mary Kennedy	OBIS Canada	Non-profit
Dmitry Kiselev	OpenStreetMap member	Community
Tom Kralidis	GeoPython community	Community
Dave MacLean	Centre of Geographic Sciences	Academic
Jonathan Murphy	GoGeomatics	Community
Mark Sunohara	Agriculture Canada	Public
Marian Tudorache	NavCanada	Private
Vicky Vergara	Georepublic	Private
Assefa Yewondwossen	World Bank	Public

3. What is the experience of your committee members with similar events?
Karine Jean has coordinated several events in the field of geospatial in Quebec during the last years. Among other things, she organized EnvisionGEOMATICS in conjunction with OSGeo-Qc in 2012, in collaboration with OSGeo-Qc, OSGeo-Ottawa and LocationTech in 2014 and for the 2017's edition. She is currently organizing the first Rendez-vous Géomatique event which will be held in October 2018.
Jeff McKenna initially helped create the original FOSS4G event, and also was involved in all of the FOSS4G local committees up to & including FOSS4G-Denver in 2011. Jeff was also a member of most of the workshop committees for many of the past FOSS4G events, and remotely planned the FOSS4G Denver code sprint for over 120 attendees. More recently Jeff has focused on assisting smaller regional FOSS4G events.
Jérôme Jacovella-St-Louis was the co-chair of the recent FOSS4G-Ottawa bid to host the 2017 event, and brings much experience to the group having been through the process first-hand.
Thierry Badard, a Board member of the OSGeo Francophone chapter, has been on the organizing committee for several OSGeo-Qc events.
Mark Sunohara, a founding member of the OSGeo-Ottawa chapter, was on the organizing committee along with Jeff McKenna for North America's first Open Source geospatial conference, OSGIS 2004 in Ottawa.
Andrew Sherin has been chair or co-chair of two CoastGIS symposia across Canada, in 2001 and 2013.
Bob Branton and *Lenore Bajona* were co-chairs of Ocean Biodiversity Informatics '07, held at the Bedford Institute for Oceanography in Dartmouth, NS.
Dave MacLean helped to organize Digital Earth 2015 in Halifax; *Laura Beazley* and Dave helped to organize various Geomatics Atlantic events in 2015, 2012, and 2009. Laura Beazley helped to organize Spring into Geomatics 2008, 2012, 2017, 2018 as well as organized the Canadian Council of Geomatics and Geographic Names Board of Canada joint Annual Meetings in Halifax 2014.
The *Ocean Tracking Network* team organized and hosted the 2015 International Conference on Fish Telemetry, a six-day conference held for 250 marine biologists from 25 countries in Halifax, Nova Scotia, July 2015.
Jonathan Murphy helped organize CGCRT round tables events, and over 100 GoGeomatics social events across Canada.

4. What is your proposed venue? (include access to Internet, room sizes, maximum attendees)
The proposed venue is the brand new Halifax Convention Centre (part of the Nova Centre), located in downtown Halifax. We have already received cost quotes from the venue, and have reserved the top 2 levels; both have floor-to-ceiling windows with natural light showing views of the Atlantic Ocean a few streets away. The new venue has over 120,000 square feet of flexible event space, and recently successfully hosted 2,900 attendees for an event in May. The 2 reserved levels have a ballroom for 1,700 people, a large open salon area for booths and posters, and 23 meeting rooms. We have already met with the in-house audio/visual team, and have plans to boost the available wifi bandwidth. For hands-on workshops, we are discussing leveraging the nearby Dalhousie University labs, or having the workshops at the Convention Centre.

5. What are your provisional dates for the conference?
We have reserved the venue for September 14-19, 2020. We feel strongly that a September date will allow both university and pre-university (highschool) students and classes to participate. Monday and Tuesday will be hands-on workshops, followed by 3 days of conference sessions, with the Saturday being the community sprint.

6. Early thoughts on prices of conference attendance? (indicative estimates)
We are budgeting for a realistic attendance of 1,000 attendees, but forecast for both higher and lower attendance points. Given quoted costs for venue, food & beverage services, and audio/visual, we are estimating the full price to be 750 USD, as well as a workshop set fee of 300 USD to attend 4 half-day workshops. We estimate the early bird price to be 500 USD, and aim to have about 60% of attendees use the lower early bird price.

7. What is the price range and general location of your proposed accommodations and how is the price-level in your area in general (e.g. costs for food, drinks)
Hotels average 150 USD for 4 star hotel rooms that are within a short walking distance from the venue. The conference venue is also opening a new attached hotel, The Sutton Place, which will offer 262 rooms (pending quote from their manager). As Halifax is a multi-university city, there are many places to stay for students and young professionals; also, for 1.90 USD you can take a 15 minute ferry ride (highly recommended) across the harbour to the city of Dartmouth, which offers inexpensive hotels. As the venue is in the heart of Halifax's vibrant nightlife, you can literally walk across the street to the best row of patios and pubs in the region, where a tall local craft beer on tap will cost 4.50 USD. Most pubs within walking distance to the venue offer "Happy Hour" reduced rates for appetizers and drinks. A delicious locally caught meal of fish'n chips will cost around 12 USD.

8. Are you partnering with other local organizations?
We are honoured to partner with COINAtlantic (Coastal and Ocean Information Network), a local non-profit who has been sharing geospatial openly in the Oceans community for decades. We have already agreed to partner with, and began working with, Discover Halifax, who will be providing local services and assisting with the event and bid. Our local committee also has 2 members of the Board of GANS (Geomatics Association of Nova Scotia), who fully support this bid. Another important note is that our local committee has the managing director of GoGeomatics, a Canadian-wide industry portal, that focuses on networking, training, and jobs for young professionals.

9. What makes FOSS4G in your proposed location and with your team compelling?
We believe this summarizes our bid well: Passion, community, and fun. Members of 3 local chapters of OSGeo have come together to help form the basis of this truly community team to bring the global event to Eastern Canada. Locally, the committee members contain a wide mixture of representation of the local industry, from the provincial geospatial division GeoNOVA, to the oceans-based team at the Ocean Tracking Network, as well as the GANS association members, and academic representation from one of the strongest geospatial schools in the world, the Centre of Geographic Sciences (COGS). Halifax is a wonderful venue for the global FOSS4G, rich in maritime history and culture, steeped in the sounds and smells of the Atlantic Ocean, built on the world-famous easy-going nature of Haligonians, who will make this a truly unique FOSS4G experience. We the local committee, each one of us an energetic do-er, will do everything we can to make this FOSS4G special.

"sociable!" (Nova Scotia saying, shouted as you raise your glass)