

Dear FOSS4G selection committee,

We are pleased to send you this Letter of Intent (LoI) for the organization of FOSS4G Conference in 2012 in Prague, Czech Republic.

Local Organization Committee

Proposed members of our organization committee pose extensive experiences with organization of conferences and Committee members are active in world-wide geospatial communities:

Mr. Karel Charvát – Conference Chairman, Chair of Czech Centre for Science and Society
Mr. Jáchym Čepický – Programme Committee Chairman, Help Service - Remote Sensing
Mr. Zbyněk Křivánek – Economy and Management Section, Czech Centre for Science and Society
Ms. Jitka Faugnerova – CENIA*, Organisation Committee Member
Mr. Otakar Čerba – University of West Bohemia in Pilsen Organisation Committee Member
Mr. Jan Ježek – University of West Bohemia in Pilsen Organisation Committee Member
Mr. Martin Landa – Czech Technical University Organisation Committee Member
Mr. Přemysl Vohnout – Czech Centre for Science and Society Organisation Committee Member

Introductions of key persons:

Mr. Karel Charvát, Conference Chairman

Mr. Charvát is former president of EFITA, currently a member of Board of Seniors of EFITA, Chair of Czech Centre of Science and Society (CCSS), actively participating on various EU projects and geospatial communities.

Mr. Jáchym Čepický, Programme Committee Chairman

Mr. Čepický is a long-time active developer and user of Free and Open Source Software for Geoinformatics. He was a developer of GRASS GIS, contributor to various projects and author of the PyWPS. He is working as a developer in Help Service - Remote Sensing at the moment.

Organizations involved

CCSS, a Head Conference Organizer

CCSS is a leader entity of the high-tech SMEs association and also acting in the field of the public administration and research organizations. It is an independent, non-profit and non-governmental research organisation. The CCSS co-operates with a wide range of institutions as well as individuals, both national and foreign ones. It is focused on the international activities in the field of international research projects and utilization of modern technologies. The CCSS supports co-operation networks of the small and medium businesses within the framework of regional economies.

The CCSS has experiences with organization of international events ranging from small project meetings up to large conferences (nowadays organising European and World Congresses for Informatics in Agriculture and Precision Farming).

Supporting organisations

Help Service - Remote Sensing ltd., most active FOSS4G development company in Czech republic, active contributor to various projects (PyWPS, OpenLayers, MapServer and others).

Czech Environmental Information Agency (CENIA)*, established by Czech Ministry of Environment, being responsible (among others) for implementation of INSPIRE directive in Czech.

The Geomatics section of Department of Mathematics of Faculty of Applied Sciences in the University of West Bohemia in Pilsen (UWB) contributes to various geospatial activities, including developing and implementation of open-source solutions. FOSS4G applications represent the very important part of education curriculum as well. Important part of our activities is focused on European projects (Plan4all, SDI-EDU etc.).

Conference Venue

No final decision was made on the final place of venue until now nevertheless, we have several offers that meet the conference requirements. These offers are under detail analysis from economical aspects but also from the point of view of quality of services, at the moment. We started to negotiate with two institutions in Prague. Both are well equipped with wireless internet connection, conference halls with sufficient capacity for starting and closure of the Conference and smaller halls for parallel sessions as well as rooms for hand-on workshops and tutorials.

Organization committee has already addressed the following entities:

- Czech University of Life Science (CULS) located near the Prague Airport, with very good connections to City Centre. In September, there are free capacities at university dormitories as well as several hotels in close distance. The CULS is capable to accommodate conferences with up to 1000 attendees, however, the biggest hall available can accommodate just 500 attendees. Dormitories are offered of a price started at 15 EUR per person per night, going up to 20 EUR p.p.
Nearby located hotels do have prices starting at 85 EUR, going up to 225 EUR. Hotel rooms are equipped with Internet connection. Catering facilities are available on the spot.
It takes 35 min to come to CULS using standard Prague public transport from Prague Airport and 15 min by taxi.
- Top Hotel Praha & Congress Centre, equipped with big halls and smaller rooms, suitable for parallel sessions. Catering and in-place accommodation capabilities are advantage. Capability to accommodate up to 5,000 attendees.
Rooms are charged by 45EUR up to 100 EUR. They are all equipped with wireless Internet access. Catering facilities are in place.
It takes 53min to come to Top Hotel using standard Prague public transport from Prague Airport and 25min by taxi.

Prague public transport is known for its reliability. Going from one city end to another using underground usually does not take more than 50 minutes. In Prague, there is enough accommodation capacity for both low cost as well as executive types of accommodation.

Geospatial Open Source Community in Czech Republic

Although there is no Czech OSGEO Local chapter, Czech FOSS4G community is active regarding software development, its usage and support. There is regular Geoinformatics Conference (organized by Czech Technical University, Prague) with international attendance (Germany, Poland, Slovakia and other countries). Many Czech developers are active in various FOSS4G projects.

Prague: Best place in Europe for FOSS4G

Prague is called a „heart of Europe“. Located in the middle of Europe, Prague is predetermined to be crossings of the routes of many businessmen and travellers as well as their ideas. Therefore, the FOSS4G Conference could undoubtedly become a great opportunity to visit Prague, the Czech Republic or other places in Central Europe, and compared to other countries, no site of interest is on a big distance. Prague is also favourable for attendees from Middle and Eastern European Countries. Conference was not organised in formal socialist countries until now.

Conference will be supported by universities, which are actively participating on FOSS4G development (University of West Bohemia in Pilsen, Czech Technology University in Prague, Technical University of Ostrava). It is also supported by governmental organizations, e.g. Forest Management Institute (FMI), Czech Environmental Information Agency (CENIA).

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