

FOSS4G 2025 Proposal for Auckland, New Zealand - Letter of Intent

1. Who is your conference chair?

Our Co-Chairs will be:

- **Simon Nitz** - Simon is the GIS Lead at Whanganui District Council, a local government organisation in New Zealand. Simon is highly regarded throughout Australia and New Zealand as a leader in his field with 30+ years in the industry. He has provided GIS consulting services to organisations in New Zealand and Australia, focusing on FOSS4G desktop and web mapping solutions. In the 90's and 00's Simon was chair of the MapInfo User Group in New Zealand for 16 years. Simon has also been involved in organizing FOSS4G SotM Oceania events.
- **Alex Leith** - Alex is an open geospatial technologist with a proven track record in delivering operational data infrastructure. With a global perspective and extensive expertise in software development, cloud infrastructure, and program governance, Alex is a recognized leader in the field of Earth observation. Alex is a founding director of OSGeo Oceania and former Chair of the organisation. Alex has been involved in organising small and large events, including FOSS4G SotM Oceania events in Melbourne, Wellington and Auckland.

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

Our LOC is made up of geospatial enthusiasts and community mappers from scientific, software development, business, and government sectors from the Oceania region (in no particular order):

Simon Nitz	John Bryant (OSGEO Oceania Deputy Chair)
Alex Leith (OSGEO Oceania)	Ed Neerhut
Elisa Puccioni (OSGEO Oceania Chair)	Steven Haslemore
Emma Hain	Timothee Duhamel
Greg Lauer	Pierre Kurth
Hamish Campbell	Oliver Homes
Dawn Hendrick	

3. What is the experience of your committee members with similar events?

Our committee members have extensive experience organizing FOSS4G events in the oceania region, including the following major regional conferences:

- 2024 Hobart, Australia (currently in planning, scheduled for November 2024)
- 2023 Auckland, New Zealand - [FOSS4G SotM Oceania 2023](#)
- 2022 Suva, Fiji - [Pacific Geospatial Conference 2022 – OSGeo Oceania](#)
- 2021 Local Hubs and Video Streams - [FOSS4G SotM Oceania 2021](#)
- 2020 Local Hubs and Video Streams - [FOSS4G SotM Oceania 2020](#)
- 2019 Wellington New Zealand - [FOSS4G SotM Oceania 2019](#)
- 2018 Melbourne Australia - [FOSS4G SotM Oceania 2018](#)

Video footage from these events is available at:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbqmnF77HxLCmO9d7LrEbpq>

We have experienced users of [Pretalx](#), [Tito](#) and [Slido](#) for smooth conference management.

Previous OSGeo Oceania events have also included a very successful Travel Grant programme (total of \$20k NZD in 2023), which we will also offer in 2025. Travel grants will ensure we are inclusive of people from the Pacific, Asia, South America and other regions that may not otherwise be able to afford to attend the event. Our team is experienced in delivering the travel grant program, including support for participants obtaining visas.

4. What is your proposed venue? (include access to Internet, room sizes, maximum attendees)

Our venue is [Auckland University of Technology \(AUT\)](#) located in Central Auckland City New Zealand. AUT have already indicated that they will provide in-kind sponsorship of the venue, significantly reducing venue costs for the 2025 FOSS4G global conference. This is the same venue used for the FOSS4G SotM Oceania 2023 conference.

AUT Events is a commercial division of AUT Hospitality Services, who is a service provider to AUT University. AUT Events manages commercial operations ranging from conference and event management, event food and beverage services, venue bookings, audio visual services as well as onsite café operations.

High Speed internet access is available across the entire AUT campus.

Room sizes range from full conference room facilities, auditorium and lecture theatres to modern classroom spaces fully equipped for running workshops.

The maximum number of attendees that can be catered at AUT for a plenary session is 550 (Conf Centre + Open Forum). If numbers are greater than 550, then Plenary sessions could be held at the adjacent Auckland Town Hall which has capacity for up to 1500.

5. What are your provisional dates for the conference?

Monday, November 17th to Saturday, November 22nd, 2025.

These dates coincide with the end of the Academic year and start of the summer holidays.

6. Early thoughts on prices of conference attendance? (indicative estimates)

Type	Details	Cost (NZD)
Standard	General registration.	\$950
Early Bird		\$700
Student	For secondary and tertiary students at any institution.	\$200
Workshops		\$50

7. What is the price range and general location of your proposed accommodations? (hotels)

Auckland City allows attendees to select from a wide range of accommodations less than 15 minutes walk from the venue. We are also working with AUT on the availability of onsite student accommodation.

Typical price ranges for accommodation in central Auckland:

Hostels/Student	Hotel (Budget)	Hotel (Mid range)	Hotel (Luxury)
\$60-\$100	\$80-\$150	\$150-\$300	\$300+

Price ranges above are per night in NZD.

8. Are you partnering with other organizations? (e.g. local entities or other events like HOT OSM Summit)

- Auckland University of Technology (AUT)
- Regional QGIS Users event
- Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand (Potential Partner)
- HOT Open Mapping Hub (Asia Pacific) event (Potential Partner)

Other partners from both technical and geospatial fields will be disclosed on the full proposal, both national and international, covering public, private and not for profit sectors.

9. What makes FOSS4G in your proposed location and with your team compelling?

The only hosting of a global FOSS4G conference in the Oceania region was 15 years ago in Sydney, Australia being the FOSS4G 2009 Conference with 436 attendees; we are very keen to have the opportunity to showcase our Oceania region to the global FOSS4G community and Auckland is the perfect location to do this.

Auckland is the largest city in New Zealand, situated on the country's North Island. Known as the "City of Sails," Auckland is surrounded by stunning beaches, picturesque islands, and a stunning harbor. The city boasts a vibrant culture, with a rich history and a diverse population that includes Maori, Pacific Islander, Asian, and European communities. New Zealand is LGBTQ-friendly and was one of the first countries to legalise same-sex marriages.

Auckland is serviced by 27 Airlines with non-stop flights from the Middle East, Asia, North and South America and the Pacific, and 1-stop flights from Europe and Africa. [Flights to Auckland \(AKL\)](#)

More than 60 countries have visa-free agreements with NZ and can enter using a [NZETA](#). Other countries can apply for a Visa electronically.

Auckland is a popular destination for business and tourism, offering a range of world-class attractions and activities. Visitors can explore the city's many museums and galleries, sample local cuisine at the bustling markets and restaurants, or take a scenic cruise on the harbor. For those looking for a bit of adventure, Auckland is a great base for exploring the stunning natural beauty of New Zealand as well as being a primary gateway to the wider Oceania region.

Discover Auckland: <https://www.aucklandnz.com/>

Auckland is also a hub for innovation and technology, with a thriving startup scene and a strong economy. The city is home to a number of universities and research institutions, making it a prime location for the FOSS4G conference.

10. What are your COVID-19 safety plans (or other similar threats)? What will you do if travel is significantly restricted in 2025? What is your financial strategy to make the event sustainable in this complex situation?

We do not anticipate travel restrictions being as relevant as they once were, however we do have experience in running Local Hubs and Video Streams during the COVID years and would look to supplement that with the online [Venueless](#) platform.

New Zealand Covid Travel Safety and Information:

<https://www.newzealand.com/int/covid-19-travel-safety-information/>