

FOSS4G 2018 Code of Conduct

FOSS4G 2018 is a community conference intended for networking and collaboration in the open source geospatial community.

We value the participation of each member of the FOSS4G community and want all attendees to have an enjoyable and fulfilling experience. Accordingly, all attendees are expected to show respect and courtesy to other attendees throughout the conference. This includes all conference events, whether officially sponsored by FOSS4G 2018 or not.

To be clear, all delegates/attendees, speakers, exhibitors, organizers and volunteers at any FOSS4G 2018 event are expected to act respectfully toward others in accordance with the OSGeo Code of Conduct: https://www.osgeo.org/code_of_conduct. Organizers will enforce this code throughout the event.

The Short Version

FOSS4G is dedicated to providing a harassment-free conference experience for everyone, regardless of the many and various diversities of human beings. This includes, but is not exclusive to gender, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, culture or religion. We do not tolerate harassment of conference participants in any form. While conference organizers will make every attempt to provide a welcoming experience for those of all sexual orientations and gender identities, not all incidents may be actionable by local law in Tanzania. Unfortunately, this means that displays of lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) activities may lead to severe negative consequences under the local laws. These do not in any way reflect the views of the conference organisers nor of the community at large.

All communication should be appropriate for a professional audience, including people of many different backgrounds. Sexual language and imagery are not appropriate for any conference venue, including talks.

Be kind to others. Do not insult or put down other attendees. Behave professionally. Remember that harassment and sexist, racist, or exclusionary jokes are not appropriate for FOSS4G.

Attendees violating these rules may be asked to leave the conference without a refund, at the sole discretion of the conference organizers.

Thank you for helping make this a welcoming, friendly event for all.

The Longer Version

Harassment includes offensive communication related to gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, religion, sexual images in public spaces, deliberate intimidation, stalking, following, harassing photography or recording, sustained disruption of talks or

other events, inappropriate physical contact, unwelcome sexual attention, and reporting any other attendee, their friends or family, to authorities for LGBTQ, same-sex, or gender non-conforming, or activities.

Participants asked to stop any harassing behavior are expected to comply immediately.

Exhibitors at sponsor booths or similar activities are also subject to the anti-harassment policy. In particular, exhibitors should not use sexualized images, activities, or other material. Booth staff (including volunteers) should not use sexualized clothing/uniforms/costumes, or otherwise create a sexualized environment.

Be careful with the words that you choose. Remember that sexist, racist, and other exclusionary jokes can be offensive to those around you. Excessive swearing and offensive jokes are broadly not appropriate for FOSS4G.

If a participant engages in behavior that violates this code of conduct, the conference organizers may take any action they deem appropriate, including warning the offender or in exceptional circumstances, expulsion from the conference with no refund.

Participants should be mindful of LGBT local laws, which make any same-sex activity (or promotion) illegal. Appear to be heterosexual, especially if you need to interact with the police.

Participants should behave respectfully toward locals of the country and dress and behave respectfully when in public. Appropriate dress involves not showing shoulders and bare legs, regardless of gender. Public displays of homosexuality, such as holding hands or kissing in public places, could lead to arrest and imprisonment.

While the OSGeo Foundation supports a safe conference environment and will apply whatever means at its disposal to support this (including removing people from the conference if needed), participants should be aware of the limits of the FOSS4G committee's ability to protect delegates when it comes to issues around sexuality or gender identity.

Contact Information

If you are being harassed, notice that someone else is being harassed, or have any other concerns, please contact either our conference chair or the event coordinators:

- Maria Antonia Brovelli : maria.brovelli [at] polimi.it
- Mark Iliffe : markiliffe [at] gmail.com [Conference co-chair]
- Msilikale Msilanga : msilikalemsilanga [at] gmail.com [Conference co-chair]
- Ragnvald Larson : ragnvald [at] mindland.com
- Serena Coetzee : serenacoetzee [at] gmail.com

Conference staff will be happy to help participants contact venue security or local law enforcement, provide escorts, or otherwise assist those experiencing harassment to feel safe for the duration of the conference. We value your attendance.

Procedure for Handling Harassment -

Attendees

Contact any staff personnel as listed above. The staff will also be prepared to handle the incident. All of our staff members are informed of the code of conduct policy and guide for handling harassment at the conference. There will be a mandatory staff meeting onsite at the conference when this will be reiterated as well.

Report the harassment incident to one of the contact people above - all reports are confidential. You will be asked if you are comfortable also providing a written report.

When reporting the event to staff, try to gather as much information as available, but do not interview people about the incident - Staff will assist you in writing the report/collecting information.

The important information consists of:

1. Identifying information (name) of the participant doing the harassing;
2. The behavior that was in violation;
3. The approximate time of the behavior (if different than the time the report was made).
4. The circumstances surrounding the incident;
5. Other people involved in the incident;
6. The staff are well informed on how to deal with incidents and how to further proceed with the situation;
7. Do not report any attendees, friends, and family to the police for LGBTQ activity, report to staff above.

If everyone is physically safe, staff will involve law enforcement or security, but only at a reporter's request. If you do feel your safety in jeopardy please do not hesitate to contact local law enforcement by dialing 112. If you do not have a cell phone, you can use any hotel phone or simply ask a staff member. All reports should be made directly to one of the staff listed above.

Staff Procedure for incident handling

Be sure to have a good understanding of our Code of Conduct policy, described above.

Also have a good understanding of what is expected from an attendee that wants to report a harassment incident. (See section above outlining how attendees can report issues).

If there is an immediately dangerous situation, do not hesitate to call 112 (Tanzanian police emergency) first.

All reports should be made directly to the contact personnel mentioned above in this article, these will always be onsite. Their contact details will be available at the registration desk.

If contact cannot be made via phone or email, please proceed to the registration desk.

Incident Report

After ensuring that the reporter feels safe, try to capture as much of the incident that the reporter is comfortable providing in written form. If you cannot, transcribe it yourself as it was told to you. The important information to gather include the following:

1. Identifying information (name) of the participant doing the harassing.
2. The behavior that was in violation.
3. The approximate time of the behavior (if different than the time the report was made).
4. The circumstances surrounding the incident.
5. Other people involved in the incident.

Initial Response

Prepare an initial response to the incident. This initial response is very important and will set the tone for FOSS4G 2017. Depending on the severity/details of the incident, please follow these guidelines:

1. If there is any general threat to attendees or the safety of anyone including conference staff is in doubt, summon security or police.
2. Offer the reporter a private place to sit.
3. Ask "is there a friend or trusted person who you would like to be with you?" (if so, arrange for someone to fetch this person).
4. Ask them "how can I help?"
5. Provide them with your list of emergency contacts if they need help later.
6. If everyone is presently physically safe, and if the reporter is ok with it, involve law enforcement or security. Do not report any attendees, friends, and family to the police for LGBTQ activity.
7. There are also some guidelines as to what not to do as an initial response:
 - a. Do not overtly invite them to withdraw the complaint or mention that withdrawal is OK. This suggests that you want them to do so, and is therefore coercive. "If you're OK with it [pursuing the complaint]" suggests that you are by default pursuing it and is not coercive.
 - b. Do not ask for their advice on how to deal with the complaint. This is a staff responsibility
 - c. Do not offer them input into penalties. This is the staff's responsibility.

Staff meeting

Once something is reported at least two of the event coordinators should meet. The main objectives of this meeting is to find out the following:

1. What happened?
2. Are we doing anything about it?
3. Who is doing those things?
4. When are they doing them?

Follow-up with alleged harasser

After the staff meeting and discussion, have a staff member (preferably the conference chair or event coordinator if available) communicate with the alleged harasser. Make sure to inform them of what has been reported about them. Allow the alleged harasser to give their side of the story to the staff. After this point, if report stands, let the alleged harasser know what actions will be taken against them. Some things for the staff to consider when dealing with Code of Conduct offenders

(note that the list below is not a requirement and only applies if the staff deems it necessary based on the report):

1. Warning the harasser to cease their behavior and that any further reports will result in sanctions.
2. Requiring that the harasser avoid any interaction with, and physical proximity to, their reporter for the remainder of the event.
3. Ending a talk that violates the policy early.
4. Not publishing the video or slides of a talk that violated the policy.
5. Not allowing a speaker who violated the policy to give (further) talks at the event now or in the future.
6. Immediately ending any event volunteer responsibilities and privileges the harasser holds.
7. Requiring that the harasser immediately leave the event and not return.
8. Publishing an account of the harassment and calling for the resignation of the harasser from their responsibilities (usually pursued by people without formal authority: may be called for if the harasser is the event leader, or refuses to stand aside from the conflict of interest, or similar, typically event staff have sufficient governing rights over their space that this isn't as useful).
9. Additional common responses that are outside the scope of FOSS4G 2017, but are maintained here for future consideration:
 - a. Requiring that the harasser not volunteered for future events OSGeo runs (either indefinitely or for a certain time period).
 - b. Requiring that the harasser refund any travel grants and similar they received (this would need to be a condition of the grant at the time of being awarded, and was not in 2017).
 - c. Banning the harasser from future events (either indefinitely or for a certain time period).
 - d. Removing a harasser from membership of OSGeo.

Keep in mind that it is usually not a good idea to encourage an apology from a harasser in order to avoid further contact.

Follow-up communication

It is very important how we deal with the incident publicly. Our policy is to make sure that everyone aware of the initial incident is also made aware that it is not according to policy and that official action has been taken - while still respecting the privacy of individual attendees. When speaking to individuals (those who are aware of the incident, but were not involved with the incident) about the incident it is a good idea to keep the details out. Depending on the incident, the conference chair or their designate may decide to make one or more public announcements. If necessary, this will be done with a short announcement either during the plenary and/or through other channels. No one other than the conference chair or someone delegated authority from the conference chair should make any announcements. If some attendees were angered by the incident, it is best to apologize to them that the incident occurred to begin with. If there are residual hard feelings, suggest to them to write an email to the conference chair or to the event coordinator. It will be dealt with accordingly.

Record of Incident

Record of incidents and actions taken is to be preserved for future LOC and OSGeo use to be able to recognize patterns of behavior. The experience of many other Conferences has shown that patterns of harassment often occur over multiple years and these records allow future staff and volunteers to react appropriately. Collections of incident records should be kept confidential and

communicated from conference chair to conference chair or from conference chair to OSGeo Board of Directors as appropriate.

License

The procedures above have been adopted from the Ada Initiative guide titled “Conference anti-harassment/Responding to Reports” and PyCon 2017’s policy.

This Code of Conduct was forked from the PyCon 2017 Code of Conduct which was forked from the Geek Feminism wiki, created by the Ada Initiative and other volunteers which is under a Creative Commons Zero license.

Creative Commons License Conference Code of Conduct is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported License.