

## Section 1 – Mandatory Information

### **Proposed Date(s):**

November 12-13

### **Location (country, city):**

Latvia, Riga

Latvia lies between Estonia to the north, Russia and Belarus to the east, the Baltic Sea to the west and Lithuania to the south. It is the 'central' Baltic country in both size, business activity, communications and geographical location.

Riga is emerging as a top congress and conference city in Europe thanks to its strategic location, its rich and exiting culture, its unspoiled nature and its easy access by air from around Europe and around the globe.

Latvia has a long history of technological innovation with highlights including the Minox spy camera and one of Europe's largest pre-war telephone networks. Today, Latvia continues this tradition with original scientific research and by hosting a number of companies that use open source software in embedded and professional solutions. Latvia has an astonishing transition, going from a Soviet republic to a member of the EU and the NATO alliance.

### **Special visa or entry requirements (e.g. Vaccinations):**

- Visa depend on where you come from. Nationals of

Andorra	Costa Rica	Greece	Liechtenstein	Nicaragua	Slovenia
Argentina	Croatia	Guatemala	Lithuania	Norway	Korea
Australia	Cyprus	Honduras	Luxembourg	Panama	Spain
Austria	the Czech Republic	Hong Kong	Macao	Paraguay	Sweden
Belgium	Denmark	Hungary	Malaysia	Poland	Switzerland
Brazil	El Salvador	Iceland	Malta	Portugal	the United Kingdom
Brunei	Estonia	Ireland	Mexico	Romania	the United States of America
Bulgaria	Finland	Israel	Monaco	San Marino	Uruguay
Canada	France	Italy	New Zealand	Singapore	Vatican City
Chile	Germany	Japan	the Netherlands	Slovakia	Venezuela

do not require a visa to enter Latvia.

- Nationals of all other countries need a visa.
- No vaccinations are needed

### **Conference venue(s) (e.g. university campus, municipal buildings):**

The [Reval Hotel Latvia](#) offers the largest conference and events centre in both Latvia and the Baltic States, and is one of the largest conference facilities in Northern Europe. The hotel has hosted numerous Open Source events including *Sun Microsystems* conferences, Java events.

## **Conference facilities (e.g. WiFi, video streaming/recording):**

Conference center highlights:

- Free wireless Internet throughout the hotel
- 15 conference rooms with seating capacity of up to 2500
- Over 2000 m<sup>2</sup> total conference space
- Largest meeting room with meeting space of 962 m<sup>2</sup>, seating capacity of 1100, theater style
- High quality catering during your breaks
- Professional conference services and follow-up

## **Accommodation (especially any low cost hostels etc):**

Riga offers accommodation for every taste and budget. Most hotels have been built or fully renovated during the last 3-5 years and are conveniently located within walking distance to the Old Town, conference venues, and tourist attractions. Please refer to these sites for more information:

<http://hostelworld.com>

<http://www.hostelbookers.com/hostels/latvia/riga/>

<http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotels-g274967-Riga-Hotels.html>

<http://www.booking.com/city/lv/riga.en.html>

## **External transport links (nearest airport(s)):**

- Riga International Airport (20 minutes from city centre, with shuttle): Direct flights from 60+ destinations with Schengen zone ease of access
- Linked to Star Alliance, flights from around 850 destinations in more than 150 countries
- Sea port with ferry service from Scandinavia and Germany
- Convenient train and bus connections from Russia, Ukraine and Belarus

## **Internal transport links (within city):**

Riga is very compact city with key destinations and attractions within walking distance.

It features an extensive network of inexpensive bus, tram and train lines plus taxi service.

## **Team Lead (main contact person):**

Mr. Evijs Taube, Sun Microsystems ([evijs.taube@sun.com](mailto:evijs.taube@sun.com))

## **Team Members (all members should be willing and able to commit at least 3 hours per day to planning the conference during the last two weeks before OOoCon 2009):**

All team members are ready to commit the necessary time to plan and organize the conference during the 2 weeks prior to OOoCon 2009 in Riga.

Ms. Madara Greiziņa-Kuzmina, Open Technology Association of Latvia ([LATA](#))

Ms. Santa Rutka, [IBM Latvija](#)

Mr. Michael Dexter, [Linux Fund](#)

Ms. Inga Mičule

Mr. Juris Pētersons, [Jazz Communications](#)

Ms. Linda Vītola, [Jazz Communications](#)

***Local events that are taking place in parallel (or immediately before/after):***

No known conflicts

## **Section 2 – Your proposal**

***In 400 words or less, answer this question:***

***Why should the Community award OOoCon 2009 to your team?***

The opportunity to organize OOoCon2009 in Riga is an opportunity to broaden ODF and OpenOffice.org popularity and recognition in Latvia, Eastern Europe and around the globe.

- Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) in Latvia is currently:
  - In limited use by government
  - Not widely adopted by education institutions and enterprises
  - Facing resistance to change from a user base that is accustomed to pirated solutions, making for a ripe environment for raising OpenOffice.org and FOSS awareness people got used to existing usually pirated solutions
- LATA would drive promotions OO.o and FOSS through OooCon2009, boosting:
  - *Recognition* of OO.o and FOSS by those who are unfamiliar with it
  - *Adoption* of OO.o and FOSS by those who have heard about it
  - *Promotion* and distribution of OO.o and FOSS by those who have tried it
  - *Contribution* to the OO.o and FOSS community and projects by regional experts

This year offers a special opportunity to promote open source in Latvia and the region as we face our most difficult economic crisis since regaining our independence. Our public and private sector institutions face unprecedented budgetary challenges and would benefit greatly from adopting open source software, especially under the free-download/enterprise support model offered by Sun.

As a venue, Riga offers an unparalleled combination: truly original and preserved architecture and a wealth of experiences within walking distance. Riga's [Old town](#) and beautiful city centre is compact, romantic and full of [fun opportunities](#).

Riga benefits:

- A unique, economical environment for small to mid-sized conferences
- Central access to the Baltic market of 7.5 million people
- A Northern crossroads where East-West truly meets
- Attractive prices for goods and services
- Attractive cafés, bars, gourmet restaurants
- The hottest night life in Northern Europe

Our Riga OOoCon 2009 team have already laid the groundwork for this event: the [LATA conference 2008](#) was a major success with nearly 300 attendees and 16 speakers from around the world. We also organized Software Freedom Day 2008 in partnership with the Sun/MySQL team

during their world wide developers conference in Riga, during which the team was able to benefit from Riga's wide selection of culinary options, entertainment and health services.

Let OOoCon 2009 in Riga serve as a strong base for the future growth of OO.o and FOSS recognition and adoption in Latvia, Baltics and all of Eastern Europe!