

linux.conf.au

2013 *Come join the party....*

linux.conf.au 2013 Canberra Bid

Confidential

Introduction

The Canberra 2013 bid team is pleased to present this bid for linux.conf.au 2013. Please note that this document is the confidential bid document submitted to Linux Australia's national committee. It is not intended for public distribution, and contains spoilers for conference events that we do not intend to announce at this stage. Additionally, some text is copyright the Canberra Convention Bureau, and we are not licensed for public use of this text.

There is a bid budget spreadsheet hosted at Google Docs, which should be referred to for all financial statements regarding this bid.

The Canberra 2013 team does not intend to produce a version of this document for public consumption -- we have instead produced a conference bid web site at <http://lca2013.linux.org.au>, in the hope that this will be more accessible to delegates than a traditional emailed PDF document. Additionally, this site will form the basis for our conference web site if our bid is successful.

Executive Summary

linux.conf.au is one of the foremost open source conferences in the world, and is considered the most prestigious in the southern hemisphere. Every year open source geeks from across the globe gather in Australia to meet their fellow technologists, share the latest ideas and innovations, and spend a week collaborating on free, open source software projects.

A group of enthusiastic Canberrans are bidding to host linux.conf.au in January, 2013. This is Canberra's centenary year, making it a particularly significant year for the city. Canberra last hosted the conference in 2005, receiving universal acclaim. Eight years on, we would love to see the conference return to the capital. We have gathered a strong motivated team to run the conference, and believe that we are ready to host the event in 2013.

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The Bid Team

While it is normal for the committee to continue to develop during the process of organising the conference, a strong core team has already been established. This core team provides the right skills to be able to produce an extremely high-quality event. The current committee members are:

- Michael Still (chair): former Linux Australia and AUUG board member, linux.conf.au 2005 core team, LCA papers committee 2005 / 2008 / 2009 / 2010
- Stephen Walsh: former Linux Australia board member, linux.conf.au 2005 / 2008 / 2009 / 2010 teams, LCA papers committee 2009 / 2010 / 2011
- Mike Carden: Linux Australia board 2010 / 2011
- Neill Cox: linux.conf.au 2005 core team
- Rob Bolin: linux.conf.au 2005 core team
- Robert Edwards: linux.conf.au 2005 core team
- Steven Hanley: linux.conf.au 2005 lead organiser
- Anthony David: linux.conf.au 2005 monkey
- James Iseppi: linux.conf.au 2011 core team
- Paul Wayper: CLUG organiser
- Lana Brindley (diversity chair)
- Ivan Miljenovic
- Jeff Miller
- Kevin Pulo

As many of our team have previously run linux.conf.au conferences, we feel we are unusually well qualified to run linux.conf.au 2013. Based on our previous experience we have some great ideas on where we would like to take the conference in 2013, which we discuss further in this bid.

For the remainder of this document the bid committee is referred to as the “Canberra 2013 team” for convenience.

Why Canberra?

2013 is Canberra's centenary year, and we would like to make Linux part of that celebration. The entire city will come out in celebration throughout the entire year, which will provide a unique opportunity for linux.conf.au delegates to see the city at its finest. Canberra's centenary is a celebration of our capital city not only for Canberrans but for all Australians.

Canberra last hosted linux.conf.au in 2005. Since then the conference has grown significantly, and is now a much larger and more complicated event. The Canberra 2013 team would like to host this bigger and better event, showcasing some of Canberra's unique features and attractions.

Canberra is easily accessible for delegates, with excellent road and air transport options. Additionally, if any delegates would like to travel by dirigible to the conference, we can provide excellent tethering options over Lake Burley Griffin, with unparalleled views. Canberra's weather in January is pleasant, offering a venue for the conference which will meet the expectations of attendees.

Proposed dates

The Canberra 2013 team proposes to host linux.conf.au from 28 January to 2 February 2013. This period includes Australia Day, although there is precedent for this situation. These dates co-ordinate well with recent linux.conf.au dates, which will make delegates' planning easier.

Weather

Canberra's weather in January is well suited to a conference with diverse domestic and international attendees. The mean historical temperature is below 30 degrees, and rainfall is unlikely to be a big problem.

Year	Location	Min / Max Mean Temp	Rainfall	Source
2013	Canberra	13.6 / 28.5 C	59.8 mm	BoM
2012	Ballarat	10.8 / 25.1 C	39.8 mm	BoM
2011	Brisbane	20.7 / 29.4 C	159.6 mm	BoM
2010	Wellington	8.1 / 25.9 C	70.8 mm	NZ MetService

Transport

Transport to Canberra is easy. It should especially be noted that bus transport from both Sydney and Melbourne is cheap and convenient. A bus trip from Sydney takes about three hours, and from Melbourne about ten hours, including a stop for people to complain. The following grid is based on January 2012 return prices, and will of course vary over time. It is however indicative of likely costs for delegates:

Point of Departure	Straight Line Distance	Economy Airfare	Business Airfare	Bus (return)
Sydney	249 km	\$241	\$728	\$30
Melbourne	464 km	\$306	\$972	\$100
Brisbane	947 km	\$268	\$1,225	\$400
Adelaide	958 km	\$338	\$1,425	\$200
Perth	3,091 km	\$666	\$3,316	...
Darwin	3,138 km	\$646	\$3,205	...
Auckland *	2,306 km	\$655	\$1,141	...
Tokyo	7,963 km	\$1,933	\$3,898	...
San Francisco	12,208 km	\$1,952 **	\$6,903	...
London	17,000 km	\$1,892	\$6,284	...

*: It has been announced that there will be direct flights from New Zealand to Canberra by 2013. Pricing information is not yet available for these flights.

** : This price is unusually high, and indicates that promotional fares have not yet been announced.

Please note that the Canberra 2013 team has some ideas about how to make travel simpler for delegates. These are discussed in the “Event Goals” section below.

Venue

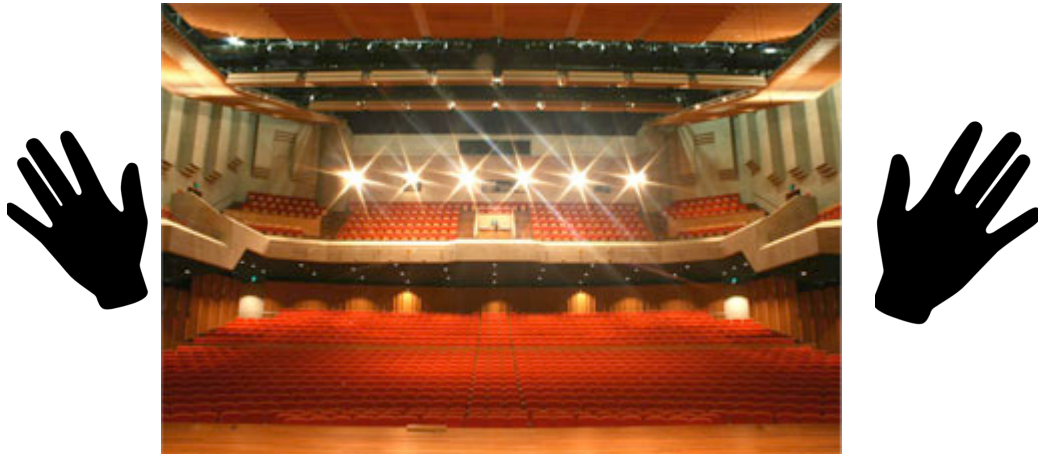
The Canberra 2013 team proposes to use the same venue as the linux.conf.au 2005 conference, with some changes to accommodate the larger audience. Conference sessions will be hosted in the Australian National University's Manning Clark lecture centre, which is located centrally on the campus. Keynotes will be held in the Llewellyn Hall theatre at the Australian National University School of Music, which is a short walk from the Manning Clark lecture centre. It should be noted that the campus is almost entirely flat, which means it will all flood at the same time, but it is also easy to walk around.



Map of relative locations of conference venues ([Google Map](#))

Llewellyn Hall

Llewellyn Hall is a 1,336 seat theatre. Its capacity can be reduced by opening only the ground level. In this case, the top level would be reserved for audiovisual tasks such as video recording. An advantage of this approach is that camera positioning could not be compromised by interference from delegates. Control of the seating means that the venue will still feel intimate for the number of delegates we expect at the conference, while not being cramped.



Llewellyn Hall viewed from the stage, with jazz hands

Manning Clark Lecture Centre

The Manning Clark lecture centre is the same venue used for all of linux.conf.au 2005. This is an integrated theatre complex, with six theatres of varying sizes, seating from 76 to 496 people.



Manning Clark theatre T1

All theatres are tiered and equipped with full AV support. There are three lockable concession areas. One of these will be used for event management (mostly delegate contact), and the other two will be used for serving refreshments. It is currently proposed that the three large theatres be used for the majority of the conference, with the smaller theatres being used for tutorials and mini-conferences. The Australian National University is a large campus, and there are a variety of facilities in nearby buildings for mini-conferences which need desk space, and for additional streams if desired.

The Canberra 2013 team has pencilled in bookings for both the Manning Clark lecture centre and Llewellyn Hall for the dates of the conference.

Open Day

The Canberra 2013 team would like to see Open Day made more accessible to people who are not usual attendees of the conference. We therefore propose to host the Open Day event not at the Australian National University campus, but in a more accessible location with higher pass-through traffic. Our current proposal is to host Open Day at the ACT Legislative Assembly building in Civic (Canberra's CBD, about a five minute walk from the conference venue at Australian National University). The Legislative Assembly building is a one minute walk from the Civic bus interchange, which is on the majority of weekend bus routes, with plenty of easy parking nearby.

The Canberra 2013 team has not commenced booking the Open Day venue at this time. There are several alternative options available however should the ACT Legislative Assembly building not be available.

In addition to the usual stalls and an introductory talk about Open Source, the Canberra 2013 team believes we can drive higher attendance rates for the Open Day by incorporating a limited "careers day" into the event. Sponsors will be invited to provide a staff member to explain career paths in open source at their company, and conference attendees will be invited to help out in a similar role. Careers days such as these run by local employers tend to have very high attendance, and we believe it is a good way to attract people who have not yet decided what career to pursue, as well as encouraging them to consider the use of Open Source in their career.

We would also support Open Day as a separate event from the main conference, with limited advertising including:

- Sandwich boards on major roads. These are commonly used in Canberra to advertise community events
- Listing with radio stations community switchboards
- Postings to relevant local forums (such as The RiotACT)
- A letter to high school careers advisers informing them of the event

We also have ideas about how to make Open Day more interesting to the public. These are discussed in the "Event Goals" section below.

Speakers' Dinner

Boat House by the Lake has been selected once again as the venue for the speakers' dinner, as it was very popular during the conference in 2005. The restaurant is located on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin, and is one of the most stylish, modern and awarded restaurants in Canberra. The menu has won several local and national hospitality awards, and features fresh local produce complemented by an excellent choice of Australian wines. Pre-dinner drinks can be enjoyed on the surrounding deck overlooking the stunning view as the sun sets over the lake.

For 2013, we intend to hold a relatively informal and drum-free event. We would like to focus on allowing speakers a chance to relax before their talk, and give them the opportunity to network with both new and familiar faces. We promise not to make anyone dance unless they really want to.

PDNS Breakfast

The Canberra 2013 team proposes to change the PDNS networking session to being a catered breakfast on the first day of the main conference, and then using the free time this creates to encourage people to organise their own dinner groups, either as part of a BoF session or through other means. This breakfast would be hosted at Llewellyn Hall prior to the keynote on Wednesday. We will of course provide champagne and a string quartet.

We believe a fully catered breakfast is a pleasant way for professional delegates to start the conference, while still having an excellent opportunity to network with other professionals.

Conference Dinner

The 250 hectare National Arboretum site is located only six kilometers from the centre of Canberra, and has been designed to conserve threatened plant species. Considerable progress is being made to implement the 100 Forests 100 Gardens concept that won the Arboretum design competition in 2005. Due to be completed in 2012, it will be an ideal location for community recreation and a valuable resource for ongoing education and research. The Arboretum is planting 100 forests of unique and interesting trees in a location which was devastated by bushfires in 2003.

Plans are in place to develop the visitor facilities on the site, including BBQ, picnic facilities and viewing decks. Eventually it is proposed that the Arboretum will feature outdoor sculptures, a café/restaurant, visitor centre, five star eco-hotel, children's playground, reflective pavilion, and a spacious outdoor events area. By 2013 the visitor centre will be ready, and the venue will be an exciting and unique opportunity to host an unusually casual and friendly conference dinner.

Event Goals

The Canberra 2013 team would like to propose the following changes to the conference for 2013. Any large scale changes will be made in consultation with the Linux Australia national committee.

- An approachable conference: implement the Linux Australia diversity policy, and encourage those who are traditionally under-represented at the conference to attend the event. See the “Diversity” section below for more specific ideas.
- An environmentally sustainable conference: reduce the amount of landfill produced in the form of unwanted attendee giveaways, and encourage events to have as little environmental impact as possible. We will also consider initiatives such as providing conference-organised coaches from Sydney and Melbourne as a method for convenient and cost-effective transport to delegates with a minimal impact on the environment. By 2013 Canberra will have a network of electric vehicle charging points, which will be convenient if delegates’ mech-warriors require charging.
- A simpler, cheaper conference: simplify the event in order to reduce costs. The cost of the conference has been creeping up over the last few years and the committee believes that it can reduce some of these costs without impacting the feel of the event. Lower ticket costs can also assist with stated diversity and attendance goals.
- Extend the traditional speaker 'rock-star' treatment to general attendees: offer additional services to all attendees, not just speakers, such as an airport shuttle service. This can also assist with stated environmental goals. By reducing costs in other areas, we can ensure that all delegates receive great treatment, and have an amazing conference.
- More time for ad-hoc social interactions: the conference traditionally runs an event every night during the week. This makes it hard for attendees to have dinner with people they haven't seen since last conference, and to plan their future Open Source work. The Canberra bid committee proposes to move the PDNS networking session to being a catered breakfast on the Wednesday morning, and then using the free time this creates to encourage people to organise their own dinner groups, either as part of a BoF session or through other means. The Canberra 2013 team will approach restaurants in the surrounding area and ask them what incentives they can provide to groups wishing to dine.
- Designated BoF meeting time. The Manning Clark lecture centre will remain open until 7pm for BoFs to meet on Wednesday night, and then BoF attendees will be gently encouraged to continue their conversations over dinner in the many nearby restaurants. If gentle encouragement doesn't work, we will use tasers to clear the rooms.
- A more accessible Open Day. Open Day is for the public -- not conference delegates. It should therefore be organised and run with convenience and interest for the public as the main criteria.

- No keynotes on mini-conference days. This confused delegates, who often treat mini-conference days as optional.
- Be more involved in the catering process for morning and afternoon tea. Catering for the three days of the main conference is quite a large expenditure -- usually around a quarter of the total venue and catering budget. For the Canberra 2005 conference the core team had a member dedicated to catering, and sourced food from local suppliers and dealt with serving it themselves. By following this model for our 2013 bid, we believe we can reduce costs for catering, while delivering a better product to delegates.

Open Government Summit

The Open Source in Government mini-conference was run at linux.conf.au in 2004 and 2005. The event then went into hiatus, until a reappearance at linux.conf.au 2011. This event is an obvious fit for a linux.conf.au in Canberra, especially given how topical open government is currently.

The Canberra 2013 bid team believes running an Open Government miniconf with separate ticketing would attract a large number of people who might not normally attend the conference. These attendees could be either users of Open Source, or people who are interested in other aspects of open government. It is likely that a significant percentage of these attendees would also choose to attend the entire conference as well, making it an effective opportunity for outreach. When last run, the event attracted over a hundred separately ticketed attendees. It has not been run recently, due mostly to a lack of organiser interest. However, we believe that attendees in Canberra especially would find value in this miniconf, if it were run.

Given the scope of such an undertaking, it is likely that it would be referred to as a "summit" rather than a miniconf, even though it would run in the same track as the other miniconfs. Attendance at the event would be included in the normal ticket price for regular conference attendees, or separate tickets would be available for the summit individually.

Diversity

Diversity is becoming an increasingly important issue for linux.conf.au. The Canberra 2013 team intends to fully implement Linux Australia's event diversity policy, and has already appointed Lana Brindley as Diversity Chair. We see diversity as a complicated issue, and no matter how much effort is applied we are unlikely to solve diversity problems overnight. However, we intend to produce the most accessible, friendly and embracing conference Linux Australia has held to date. Our ideas on how to improve conference diversity fall into two main categories:

Providing a safe environment for all delegates

It is important that linux.conf.au be a safe and pleasant environment for all delegates. To that end we propose the following:

- Implementing the Linux Australia diversity and anti-harassment policies.
- Making it clear to delegates at both registration time and during the event that such a policy exists, and that it will be enforced.
- Providing a safe separate space for delegates who need some breathing room. Delegates will be advised of its existence as required.
- Providing a clearly designated point of contact (Duty Officer) at all conference events, including social events. This is a clearly designated person to whom people can escalate concerns as they occur, and who has the authority and means to quickly bring any situation under control.
- Making communication of our diversity policy and compliance clear during the conference. The conference core organisers will provide a clearly designated official stance if required to respond to specific incidents during the event.
- We will provide first aid responders for all conference events.

Encouraging under-represented groups to attend

We also want to try and encourage currently under represented groups to attend the conference:

- For parents of young children, finding someone to mind the kids is a barrier to attending the conference. We intend to offer child care at the conference, which will allow carers to attend the conference or the partners program as they choose. Licensing requirements for such a scheme are minimal where child care is provided in the same location as the conference and the carer has the contact details for parents. We will ensure all carers have had a recent police check.
- Encouraging high school students to attend the conference. We will reach out to school careers officers explaining that the conference is an excellent opportunity to experience working in our industry before selecting a degree.
- Encouraging university students to attend the conference. We will also encourage these students to volunteer for the conference to further reduce their cost.
- Providing accessible venues and accommodation, and providing personal assistance to delegates' with disabilities where requested.

Delegate Accommodation

There are a variety of accommodation options available to delegates:



Map of conference venues and accommodation options ([Google Map](#))

UniLodge

The Canberra 2013 team has been in contact with UniLodge, an equivalent to the urbanest accommodation used for linux.conf.au 2011 in Brisbane. This accommodation is conveniently placed between the conference venue (about a two minute walk away) and Civic. UniLodge have stated that they are available at the time of the conference, with a total capacity of approximately 300 single occupancy rooms with individual ensuites, at a rate of approximately \$225 a week. UniLodge has a preference for booking being done directly with them, similarly to urbanest, which reduces the amount of complexity for the conference organisers. It should be noted, however, that UniLodge does not provide linen, delegates will need to bring that.

We have considered options for providing linen to UniLodge delegates. However, these are optional provisions which will be handled closer to the conference, if time allows.

If 300 rooms is not sufficient capacity for the student-style accommodation, it is likely that further rooms can be obtained in other university residences. It should be noted that these other rooms would be of a lower standard than those offered by UniLodge.

University House, ANU

This was used as the speakers' accommodation for linux.conf.au 2005. Located on campus, the hotel has 105 rooms, each with a large writing desk, in-floor bathroom heating, internet access, security key card access, and balconies. Standard rooms, superior suites, and 1 and 2 bedroom apartments with fully equipped kitchen or kitchenette are available. There is also a purpose-built suite for guests in wheelchairs, with easy access and functionality.

Diamant Hotel

This is the proposed speakers' accommodation for Canberra 2013. This 75 room luxury boutique hotel is positioned on Lake Burley Griffin. It has a restaurant (with great tapas!), on-site bakery and wine bar, day spa, boardrooms, gym, undercover secure parking and 24 hour concierge. Wheelchair-accessible rooms are available on request.

Novotel Canberra

Novotel Canberra has 286 spacious rooms, with large desks, data ports, daily newspapers, business centre, 24 hour guest services, and facilities for the disabled. The hotel is located directly above the Canberra coach terminal, convenient for those delegates travelling by coach.

Rydges Lakeside Canberra

Located on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin, Rydges Lakeside Canberra is a short stroll to the conference location. The Hotel features 201 rooms ranging from standard to presidential suites. All rooms were refurbished in 2009 and offer guests balconies with views of Lake Burley Griffin or Civic.

Proposed conference timetable

The following details are included as examples of how the Canberra 2013 team is currently envisioning the structure of the conference. This information is in draft form, and is subject to change closer to the conference:

Day	Event	Location
Sunday	Limited pre-registration	UniLodge
	First check-ins available	UniLodge
Monday	Conference registration	Manning Clark
	Welcome Session	Llewellyn Hall
	Miniconfs	Manning Clark
Tuesday	Conference registration	Manning Clark
	Miniconfs	Manning Clark
	Speakers' dinner	Boat House by the Lake
Wednesday	PDNS Breakfast	Llewellyn Hall
	Conference registration	Llewellyn Hall
	Keynote 1	Llewellyn Hall
	Catered morning and afternoon tea	Manning Clark
	BoF sessions and dinners	Manning Clark
Thursday	Keynote 2	Llewellyn Hall
	Speaker sessions	Manning Clark
	Catered morning and afternoon tea	Manning Clark
	Conference Dinner	National Arboretum
Friday	Keynote 3	Llewellyn Hall
	Speaker sessions	Manning Clark
	Catered morning and afternoon tea	Manning Clark
	Closing	Manning Clark
Saturday	Open Day	ACT Legislative Assembly

Sponsorship

linux.conf.au is fortunate to have a core set of sponsors who have been involved with the conference for many years. Additionally, each conference has had some success with attracting local sponsors as well. The last two conferences have encouraged these smaller sponsors by reducing the complexity of their arrangements. They offer “sponsor level” tickets which allow corporate entities to send several staff to the event as well as having some limited branding rights.

We understand that responsibility for organising sponsorship has recently shifted from the local organising committees to the national Linux Australia committee. This is to ensure a continuous relationship with the large sponsors between conferences. The Canberra 2013 team intends to use this process for sponsorship organisation, with the exception of the sponsor-level event tickets, which will be sold through the normal registration process.

The Canberra 2013 team intends to make the job of the national Sponsorship Committee as easy as possible. We suggest that the following local organisations might be interested in sponsoring the conference, and can arrange introductions (if needed) when the time comes:

- The Australian National University (source of student attendees and helpers as well)
- The University of Canberra (source of student attendees and helpers as well)
- Canberra Institute of Technology (source of student attendees and helpers as well)
- NICTA
- CSIRO
- Senator Kate Lundy