

## **Call for expressions of interest to host CODATA-RDA Research Data Science Schools**

### **Introduction – why**

The CODATA-RDA Research Data Science Schools are a fantastic opportunity to provide foundational data skills to Early Career Researchers in your region. We have run six Schools to date (three in Trieste, Italy, one in Sao Paulo, Brazil, one Brisbane, Australia and one in Kigali, Rwanda) working closely with the International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) and its sister organisation UNESP.

We have received significant interest in running Schools in Africa and this call for proposals is intended to address that. We hope to expand the number of schools with future Schools running in either Spring or Autumn from 2019 onwards. The call aims to solicit concrete proposals to develop a schedule for the ongoing African programme. The Schools should rotate around the continent to benefit different regions and stakeholder groups.

Hosting requires a significant investment of time and finances. You will be expected to provide a venue for the School, administrative effort to support the application process, coordination and on-site liaison, and financial support for participants. A recent regional school in Brazil for 32 students cost approximately €13,000 to cover student travel, accommodation and catering costs during the School. This is in addition to any venue costs.

### **Scope and remit of the School**

The African Schools should be for a minimum of 20 students. An upper limit is not set as this will depend on the venue facilities and financial support available, but experience shows that 30-40 students is optimum. Accepted applicants should be diverse in terms of gender, nationality (i.e. from the region), ethnicity and discipline. The majority of attendees for the school should be Early Career Researchers with some introduction to Statistics in their undergraduate career (e.g. they should understand concepts such as correlation).

You should also consider your vision for the School - do you want this to support a regional audience (e.g. an East African School drawing participants from a small number of neighbouring countries and a greater percentage from the direct vicinity / city in which the School is hosted) or an international school with participants from a wide range of countries and continents?

As the Schools aim to develop regional expertise, local instructors should teach 60% or more of the material. We can provide recommendations from Software/Data carpentry networks, CODATA and Research Data Alliance communities if required.

### **Requirements of hosts**

### Venue and catering facilities

Hosts are required to provide a venue for the School. Catering for coffee breaks should be provided on site and either onsite or closeby lunch options are required.

Accommodation should also be provided for students and speakers. Ideally this would be onsite or reasonably accessible via public transport links. Students typically share twin rooms while speakers have a private single room.

Hotel accommodation and venue facilities should have reliable (wifi) internet connections.

### Computer Laboratory

There needs to be lab space with machines running the Linux OS, as well as a seminar room. Some software will need to be installed before the school (for example R and RStudio) and the students should have their own accounts for the duration of the school so that they can store their data. The machines themselves do not have to have a particularly fast CPU or large memory but a reasonable amount of connectivity is required (download speeds of at least 10 Mbps for the entire class). Support will need to be on hand to deal with issues during the lab or to deal with any problems with projectors etc.

### Administrative support

The local host should assist in the entire administrative process to plan, coordinate and deliver the Schools. This will require regular calls with the Task Group and specific inputs to support the application process and arrange student visas (if required) and travel logistics.

An online system should be offered to collect, process and evaluate applications. These comprise a short webform, CV and support letters attachments. The host should allocate effort to contribute to the evaluation process and ensuring a balanced mix of participants. It is not necessary for the online system to be hosted locally.

Depending on the mix of participants, visas may need to be arranged. The host should provide the necessary administrative support for this, and assist students with travel logistics and bookings. The CODATA Task Group will liaise with speakers and seek funding to cover their costs.

### Social Media

The event will be tweeted extensively during the school with the hashtag #data<Location><Year>. The organisers will provide a number of group photos and provide the files so that they can also be tweeted. Attendees of the school will be requested to join the Alumni Facebook page and will also be contacted in the future for anonymised longitudinal studies.

### Financial support

Investment is needed to support student travel, accommodation and catering. The exact level of this will vary depending on the home location of participants. Assuming the School is held in a large urban area, one could estimate that c.30-50% of the participants come from the local area and may not need overnight accommodation. Others should be from the

region so travel bursaries, daily subsistence stipends and accommodation for the fortnight should not exceed €800 per student.

While the Task Group has secured a range of sponsorship in the past, particularly to support instructor and helper costs, the local organisers should not rely on the TG to provide financial support for the event.

#### Local Instruction

The Task Group will interview potential local instructors on their suitability. If in the unlikely event that the Task Group cannot secure enough funding to cover external instructors expenses then there should be enough local instructors for the school to go ahead.

#### Timeline

The following milestones and timetable are a guide to the delivery of the school.

- Milestone 1: 10 months before event - set exact dates
- Milestone 2: 8 months before event - organise instructors (regional and international)
- Milestone 3: 6 months before event - set up application web page and advertise
- Milestone 4: 14 weeks before event - Deadline for applications
- Milestone 5: 10 weeks before event - Deadline for processing applicants and sending out invitations
- Milestone 6: 8 weeks before event - Book accommodation, catering etc.