

Proposal to host BOOST 2019 at the University of Washington, Seattle, 2016

People

The local chair would be Shih-Chieh Hsu (Assistant Professor at UW)

Facilities

We propose Alder Commons. This compact facility is located on the West side of campus, and is the lower level of Alder dorms. It is located less than 100 m from “The Ave”, otherwise known as University Ave, which contains many local food establishments. From the university blurb:

Alder Commons, located in brand new Alder Hall, has four meeting/breakout rooms, a 222-seat auditorium and a foyer area (The Commons) suitable for departmental meetings, banquets, lectures, events and conferences.



Alder Commons is run by the University (see the [webpage](#) for official information). The facilities are self-contained – connected – and students and others will not generate foot traffic through the area.



- Large plenary room that seats about 220. I'd suggest using this as the large breakout room as well (see picture in the right).
- Alder 103: seats up to 62. Suggest it as a second meeting room for small group discussion.
- There is also a smaller meeting room we can use if we need to.

These rooms are all arranged around single *commons* area. This will be configured with lounges and benches, seats, chairs, etc. The coffee area will be setup there, and we should be able to leave coffee out there for the full day. People can see into the plenary room from this area through a large glass wall (not seen in the picture). Poster session is possible to be setup in this area.

I ran the US ATLAS week conference here and my colleague Gordon Watts will host ACAT 2017 here. The attendance was 100 people, and was very easy to manage.

There are other options around the university, both cheaper and more expensive. There is only one way to go in cost, however, and to keep the conference together and close to the poster area.

Technical Support

All the rooms contains ceiling mounted projectors and screens. The main plenary room contains a sound system and speakers that we can plug into. We will supply wireless microphones or similar in order to make sure the speaker is easily heard as well as two for passing around through the audience to so questions can be heard.

The university supplies WiFi. The signal and bandwidth is nothing short of excellent. There should be absolutely no trouble handling a conference this size (UW has close to 40,000 students, a great number of whom live on campus).

Administrative Support

The department has a full office support staff. We have used them to help organize in the past – they have coordinated folder stuffing, badge printing, handling the budget, etc.

We will hire students to help staff the tables for check-in and general questions.

Coffee Breaks

Two coffee breaks, one mid-morning and one mid-afternoon, will be catered. They will include snacks, water, coffee, and tea. Coffee and hot water will be left out from mid-morning till the end of the day so that people can grab what they want when they want. Snacks will be left out starting in the morning until the end of the day.

There is a small commons market about 20 m from the commons area, and it includes a nice coffee shop. If one wants something extra it is a few steps away.

Food

We expect participants to eat breakfast at their hotels, or purchase snacks at one of the many small stores and restaurants near the conference site, Alder Commons.

Alder Commons is located 100 m from “The Ave”. Along this large street, and just off it, are many local places for lunch. Most are very cheap, and many more flavors and better (and worse!) quality than a university catered lunch. We are currently proposing this for lunch.

We will plan a reception on Monday or Tuesday night at another location on Campus. We will serve wine, beer, other drinks and cater a number of snacks.

We suggest a dinner on campus, at the faculty club. This has views of Lake Washington and serves very good food as well as having decent wine, beer, and other drinks. We have not arranged the menu yet, but in the past we have done a buffet style dinner with meat, fish, and vegetarian options. We are looking into the cost of doing an off-site dinner, right on the water.



For evening meals that aren't organized by the conference there are too many options, from very high end to... dirt floor specials. Most are easily accessible from the university by public transportation and by taxi.

Hotels

The hotels near the university can easily accommodate a conference like this. There is a good deal of demand, however. We will do our best to get some blocks reserved, but the hotels will want to release them as early as possible. The rates below are physics department rates, and what we'd get if you were to make the reservation now. It is too early to lock in a price for a room, however.

Easy Walking Distance to Alder Commons (10 minute or less walk):

- University Inn - \$109/night
- Watertown - \$137/night

Still close (15-20 minute walk):

- DECA - \$135/night
- Silver Cloud Inn - \$139/night (might be 25 minute walk).
- A new large one being built... I'm afraid we don't have enough information, though it should be open by the time of this conference.

Cheap Option

- Modern dorm rooms (these are not your father's dorm rooms, and are likely not even your dorm rooms). Private bathrooms, about \$80/night. Include a cash card worth \$20/day (has to be spent before the day after you leave). These are only available for a summer conference date (see date section below).

Other options:

- AirBnB (sometimes you can get something right on the water)
- Downtown Seattle, about a 20 minute bus ride or drive or so, with some walking, is packed with hotels.

Connection

We have a connection with Tony Hey, over at Microsoft, who is in charge of academic outreach for computing there. In his past life he was a theoretical physicist (Southampton, wrote a fairly well known Quantum Field Theory book).

At the University of Washington is the eScience Institute (<http://escience.washington.edu/>) – “Supporting data-driven discovery in all fields.” They were recent recipients of a large (~\$40M) 5-year grant for data research in sciences. The UW branch of this is located on the 6th floor of the physics building, located about 300m from the conference center. This institute is getting setup now and will be fully running by the time of this conference.

The provost has also identified this as a major initiative. The institute also has direct connections with Microsoft Research.

The local organizing committee is interested in making connections with these connections, and getting the right people to attend (and perhaps sponsor) the conference in particular interests of Machine Learning application to BOOST object.

Getting Around Seattle

Seattle is a series of neighborhoods, split by bridges. Traffic during rush hour can be brutal. There is not a very good public transportation system, unfortunately. That said, the campus is well served by the bus system, with easy connections from in front of Alder Commons to downtown and Capitol Hill.

Taxi's can easily be called in the campus area. The town also has Uber and Car2go.

Parking

On campus parking is limited. There are a number of garages that are close by, but the students and faculty fill them up. We can purchase passes for a small number of cars, etc. If there is a real demand for this, then we will have to revisit free passes. Street parking is almost impossible during the day in this area.

Dates

The periodicity of BOOST is approximately 12 months. In BOOST 2015 and BOOST 2016, both are hosted a few weeks before summer conferences. This proposal could follow similar strategy. The exact day will still to be decided but this proposal could follow similar strategy as there will be Lepton Photon in 2019.

If having the cheap dorm rooms available was considered a priority, then the conference would have to convene later than the end of June, early of the August or the beginning of September.

Excursion

While only some of the schedules are currently known, Seattle hosts the Seattle Symphony, Seattle Opera, the Pacific Northwest ballet, several theatre companies, the Seattle Art Museum, etc...plus many artistic events on the UW campus. The Seattle Symphony has no events scheduled in the first half of the August yet. The Seattle Mariners of the baseball American League has four-day series of games with White Sox in the coming weekend of the meeting. The Seattle Sounders, of Major League Soccer will play with Huston Dynamo.

Great family entertainment can be found at the Seattle Aquarium, the Zoo, and the Museum of Flight(located in Boeing Field, half way to Seatac airport). The Pacific Science Center, located in the Seattle Center grounds (where the Space Needle is) offers temporary and permanent hands-on exhibits for all ages! Located on their grounds there are two IMAX theaters. One can take a monorail ride from the Seattle Center to downtown, or vice versa. There are relatively inexpensive eating venues at both ends of the monorail, at the Seattle Center House and at the Westlake Mall.

Most of the free museum day is scheduled in the first Thursday of every month. There are two museums/gallery on-campus: Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture and Henry Art Gallery.

Budget

The initial conference estimates indicate this can be done for less than \$350/person, including the banquet. This far out it is very difficult to get a firm amount as no one is willing to commit to prices this far in advance.

Due to rules at the University of Washington (and, frankly, the USA), the conference banquet fee will have to be broken out separately, and will be close to \$70 and \$100/person, depending on the location, etc. (the \$350/person number above is expected to include this!).

These budget numbers assume no sponsorship. We have investigated sponsorship and it should be no problem: the university is well setup to deal with gifts of this nature.

