Berlin 2011

Proposal

DebConf11 - Berlin....2
Local Core Team....5
Why Berlin....8
Arriving in Berlin....11
Import Regulations....13
Fun and Free time....15
Spending free time in Berlin....15
Possible Day Trips....16
List Of Prospective Local Sponsors....18
Best Time for DebConf in Berlin....19
Accommodation....20
DebConf Info-Desks....21
Local FLOSS Communities....22
Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin....23
Conference Facilities....25
Costs....25
Available Rooms....25
Network connectivity....28
Handicaped People at the Venue....28
Specs For Audio And Video....29
Food....29
Urania....31
Conference Facilities....32
Network connectivity....34
Specs For Audio And Video....34
Food....35
Another Backup-Plan....36
Conclusion....37
Credits....38
Hotel and Venue Overview Plan....41

DebConf11 - Berlin

First We Take Manhattan, Then We Take Berlin

(Leonhard Cohen)

We the Berlin core team, apply in order to propose Berlin. Our City is the location in Germany to hold DebConf in 2011. We are convinced that Berlin is able to host a very successful and interesting conference. After being held in New York City next year, Berlin for 2011 is a good follow up in Europe. The cities are like antipoles of the old and the new world.

1: Berlin, Alexanderplatz Weltzeituhr

Besides the official program we want to offer many interesting ways to spend free time as well. We will prepare proposals for the attendants relatives who want to come along and spend an interesting week or two in Berlin.

Berlin is a very interesting everchanging city. It has more than 750 years of fascinating history, and many places invite you to explore or stay and relax

While taking a walk in the middle of the city you will pass by the Brandenburg Gate, which is the worldwide known symbol of the reunion of Germany. And don't forget to visit the "Eastside Gallery", the remains of former Berlin Wall, that is now covered with lots of famous Street-Art.

If you like the fine arts, you will have a wonderful time at many of the Berlin Museums and Art-Galleries, like the "Neue Nationalgalerie", "Alte Nationalgalerie" or the "Bode-Museum" at the famous "Museums-Insel". Five of Berlins most important museums await you on a small island between two arms of the river Spree.

In case you are not interested in dusty art we are sure you like the "Kommunikations-Museum" or "Technik Museum" where a Z1, the first computer built by Konrad Zuse, is awaiting your visit. The "Technik Museum" also offers a wide range of technical history apart from computers, like trains or even a small rebuild brewery. The museum also has got a special if you are visiting Berlin with your children: the "Science Center Spectrum". In this part of the museum, you and your children can play with experiments.

Also nightlife within walking distance from Humboldt University pulsates in the former old jewish quarter of town. This part of town, once neglected and left to decay by the socialist rulers has in the past 20 years grown to be one of the hotspots in town. Besides the reconstructed Synagogue you will find restaurants with cuisine from all over the world, clubs, art galleries, fashionstudios, one of the last squatted houses in Berlin, the so called Tacheles, an underground art- and culturecenter well worth a visit. We will provide our visitors with a detailed guide to these and other places in time for the conference.

2: Berlin, River Spree

Maybe some of you like to prolong the time after the conference and have some refreshing days with the family here? The Berlin local team will gladly give hints how to organize it.

But first let us talk more about the conference:

The venues that we are negotiating with are in the middle of the city, *Humboldt University* being situated in the former East-Berlin whereas *Urania* lies near the Tiergarten in the former West. Both have a multitude of restaurants and bars nearby and many chances to spend leisure time on exploring the history and culture of the city.

Humboldt University, our favourite venue is embedded in the heart of the old Prussian city and was founded in 1810, therefore Berlins oldest university. A two minute walk away is the World Heritage Site of "Museum Island". The former Jewish part of town with the Synagogue begins right behind the university grounds. It is today again a very vivid place with restaurants with cuisine from all over the world . Many galleries are offering contemporary and underground art and a hip crowd is swarming allover the place at night. Most of the hotels we are negotiating with are located right there.

Berlin is, compared to other big cities a rather comfortable place to live with a quite slow pace. Traffic is not as bad as at other places of this size. Public transport even at night is very good with the city trains (S-Bahn) going 24 hours on the weekends and night buses during the week. Relatively cheap taxi service is available around the clock, you stop them by waving your hand or order by phone. Bars and restaurants are open until well after midnight and a lot of cafes and bars stay open much longer. A number of nightshops offer groceries, alcohol, tobacco and other goods all night long. An increasing number of cafes, bars and official institutions to be found all over town offer free wlan access.

3: Berlin, Unter den Linden

Local Core Team

Currently there are over 15 persons taking part in planning DebConf11 in Berlin.
To tell you a little bit more about the backgrounds of each one, we will introduce ourselves in a short way:

- Mario Behling
  I have been mostly around in Asia during recent years for FOSS Bridge, OLPC, OpenSource.af, Freifunk projects and LXDE. As the president of the LXDE Foundation besides coordinating work on the desktop environment, I am supporting the international FOSS community and organize events around free and open source software, content and infrastructures.
  Tasks: Freifunk networks, Internet, co-organization, finding sponsors, international contact making etc.

- Sven Guckes
  maths&cs, freelancer, lives in Berlin. advocate of Free Software who has given several talks in AT and DE (and BeNeLux+FR+SE+UK).He specializes in texttools and text interfaces.
  Tasks: communication (chat+mail+wiki; facebook+twitter+upcoming+xing)

- Frank Hofmann
  Tasks: printing services

- Annette 'kuroi' Kalbow
  No DebConf but Bobcatsss conference-organization experience: main-orga and technical adviser at an international librarian conference with about 400 attendees; several smaller local events and present at different local floss-events like LinuxTag-BBQ or BLIT; Debian user since woody
  Tasks: contacting possible venues/hotels, finding sponsor, coordination

- Konstantin Knothe
  I have some experience with event-catering, therefore I will take good care of the needs of our guests

Tasks: catering and related

- Christian Maxen
  I am a long time unemployed dipl. mathematitian. LPIC2 certified mechanic and a dissident. My activity area is a "Training Center for Futurecapable Systems" where I do my job. I work for Skolelinux in Berlin
  Tasks: helping hand, analog (carrying cable..) and digital checkings

- Roberto Menk
  Working in Debian-Edu (Skolelinux) since 2007 and have organized local events for Debian-Edu.

- Magnus 'evnu' Müller
  I am a student of computer science at Humboldt Universität zu Berlin and working for the chair "Systemanalyse". I am also a member of the sidux association and a long time user of the sidux distribution.
  Tasks: Communication with Humboldt University and public relations

- Robert 'starg' Lehmann

- Gavin Quast
  Tasks: checking venue locations, finding sponsors

4: Some People from the Berlin Team at c-base

- Jan Hauke Rahm
  I am studying protestant theology at the Humboldt university in Berlin and hope to get that done soon. My involvement with Debian developed out of pure interest in Linux and brought me to DM status and will hopefully bring me to DD status whenever DAM finds time to review my application. So, in contrast to probably most of the Debian contributors I'm not bound to IT stuff during day time and can do my Debian stuff as a relaxing moment

after entirely different tasks. I'm very much looking forward to having Debconf11 in Germany and although I don't know at all yet where I'm going to live then, I'd be happy to help it getting to Germany in general and Berlin in particular.
Tasks: Attending orga meetings and catching up with whatever needs to be done :)

- Frank Ronneburg
  Working with & for Debian for around 60 years - check out my book "Debian GNU/Linux Anwenderhandbuch" ;-)

- Matthias Schmitz

- Fabian Schubert
  Member of sidux e. V., organizing events for sidux and free software.

- Ferdinand 'devil' Thommes
  7 years work in Kanotix and sidux, member of sidux e.V board, organizing official appearances for sidux since 2007 (LT 2009 / FrOSCon 2009 together with Debian) on conventions, sidux community manager
  Tasks: contacting possible venue/hotel combinations, coordination

- Erik Wenzel
  Tasks: Network(Internet/wlan/switching), preparing DebConf11

- Torsten Werner
  I am a Debian developer and participating at DebConf since DebConf5. I have experiences with Pentabarf hacking and I was helping the organizers of the Wizards of OS 4 conference. I am working in the Java packaging team and the FTP team in Debian. I am contributed to Debian for 10 years.
  Tasks: finding sponsors, Pentabarf hacking for DebConf10, preparing DebConf11

A lot of other people have also offered their help, for example the students of the "Informatik Fachschaft" or people with special interests like tourist guidance or website design and we have an offer from someone who would like to help with accounting and preparing documents regarding taxes and legal issues.

Why Berlin

You can't get a better place than Berlin!
Because Berlin offers all opportunities to hold a great conference. We will have a lot of very supportive institutions, and a lot of people that will be happy to welcome Debian and its developers.

Since the unification contract in 1990 it is again the capital and also the biggest city in Germany. It is located right in the heart of Europe. Resulting from the many ups and downs in history, Berlin is one of the most interesting places in Europe. It offers a rich culture, nightlife, and also beautiful scenery with big parks and old architecture. Berlin[1] has 3.5 Mio. inhabitants of many different origin
and culture.

Germany and Berlin are very open to foreigners.
Berlin is a multicultural and cosmopolitan city with many foreign communities, we have about 500.000 people living here without a German passport. Migration has quite a long history in Berlin, which goes back to the time of the Emperor Friedrich Wilhelm and the Huguenots, members of the Protestant Reformed Church which were persecuted in their homeland France and were given religious freedom in Berlin around 1700.

5: Berlin is a lively city, with a lot of history

Berlin today is a multi cultural city with the Turkish community as the largest, along with vibrant Russian, Arabic, Vietnamese, Spanish and French communities. They all have a big influence in Berlin with their traditions, habits and shops. From the half million foreigners living in Berlin 73% are from other european countries, 15% from Asia, 5% are Americans, 4% Africans and 3% stateless people. A restaurant guide for restaurants serving your local food will be available later.

6: Twilight at the new Trainstation

It is not hard to find your way around town. Most of the Berliners speak at least basic English, many speak it well. Because a lot of Berlins inhabitants have their roots in foreign countries other languages like French, Italian, Spanish, Turkish, Russian and Arabic are common too.

Smoking is prohibited in official buildings, public transport, most bars, pubs and restaurants. But some bars, pubs and restaurants have a smoking area.
As the conference will be in summer, smoking is possible if you are seated outside of the place. If seated inside, people made it a habit to leave the place for a smoke outside which is a good way to meet new people. You can run into some interesting and openminded people.

Handicapped people can easily move around allover the city, all public buildings and public transport have special facilities and are mostly "barrier-free", the goodhearted but loud-mouthed inhabitants of Berlin will help you, if you need help and ask for it. And of course our staff in Berlin will help you as much as possible: just ask! Most stoplights have audible beep for blind and visualy impaired and vibration pad for the hearing impaired.

Berlin has a wide selection of all kind of stores, from the most famous "KaDeWe" to smallest "Tante-Emma-Laden".

We have a lot of stores that offer all kinds of hardware, software and services, including strange and uncommon needs, for example:

- Atzert Radio, located in Kleiststraße 32-33 in the district of Schöneberg (subway station Nollendorfplatz, close to Urania, our alternative venue)
- Conrad Elektronics, located in Kleiststraße 30-31, (right next to Atzert Radio, see above)
- K&M[2], a germanwide computer chain with 5 shops in Berlin, accessable from both possible venues in ~ 10-15 minutes
- for Apple users: Gravis Store[3]:
- Supermarkets, department stores and any other kinds of shops are spread all over the city, easy to reach from the venues and hotels.
- Some smaller shops are open 24/7.

7: Administrative District

Arriving in Berlin

You have several ways to reach Berlin, for example planes, trains or by car for people living nearby. From the German side there is no general problem to get a visa[4], attendees should contact the German Embassy in their country well ahead of time to apply for a visa if needed. Please inform us of problems getting a visa right away, so we can try to solve the issue from our side.

We have 2 major airports: Berlin Tegel and Berlin Schönefeld (Berlin-Brandenburg International, BBI)

There are some cheap airlines flying near the chosen city, for example Ryanair, Germanwings, AirBerlin, TUIfly amongst others, those cover most of the planet.

8: Streetscene at Alexanderplatz

You can also reach Berlin by train by "Deutsche Bahn", for example there is a highspeed train (ICE) from Munich which takes about 6 hours or from Köln (Cologne) in little over 4 hours. Several buscompanies offer daily services to and from Berlin, taking a bus is a lot cheaper but not as comfortable as train. Some people from Germany, especially those close to Berlin will want to arrive by car, we will provide maps how to get to the venues and hotels in time.

Even coming by bicycle is a good idea for those living around Berlin, the wider periphery of Berlin is covered with good cycle tracks. Those wanting to explore Berlin by bicycle without bringing one have a look at section 'Fun and Free Time' below which has adresses for renting bicycles.

The trip from the airport to the venue will take with Public Transport (bus and/or subway) about 30 minutes

- example 1:
  "Regionalbahn" from Airport Schönefeld to S-Bahnhof Friedrichstraße:
  23 minutes with the train and about 5 minutes walk (or 1 station with the tram) to the venue HU or to the hostel

- example 2:
  express-bus from Airport Tegel
  30 minutes to the door of venue Urania (change at 'Hertzallee')

We are currently negotiating with BVG[5] (Berliner Verkehrsbetriebe, the carrier for the local transport) about "Free ride for DebConf attendees". Total cost will be 10.000 - 15.000 € and would allow all visitors to use the local transport net all over the city including Potsdam and Schönefeld Airport where most attendees will arrive. This will be an eticket that can be printed before traveling and would prevent people fiddling with the ticket machines at the airport. Therefore they will not have to go through changing money for the transport and can start their stay in Berlin very relaxed. We should be able to find a sponsor for the whole sum or at least part of it.

For public transport in bigger groups, it is recommended to announce the group beforehand if there are more than one or two wheelchairs, there are several companies and associations that offer mobility-services for people with disabilities as well.

9: Berlin TV-Tower, west

Import Regulations

There are some import regulations, which might affect DebConf, we will send an "Invitation Letter" to attendees including details about customs clearance later.
This "Letter to DebConf-Attendees", will contain all important information about regulations and visa that will be sent to every attendee. A customs official told us that we should give notice to them a week ahead that a group of people with lots of hardware/media will arrive. Then everybody can hand over his "Invitation Letter" together with their passport and everything should go smoothly.
Here is a short overview of regulationsthat will affect us:

- There is no hard limit for notebooks or media.
- Number of notebooks: more than 2 have to be registered with customs at Berlin airport (or whatever airport travelers touch German ground)
- Travelers should declare more than 2 notebooks by themselves and will get a receipt for 'temporary importation'. They have to leave the country with the same amount of notebooks.
- Keep in mind that customs may ask you to boot your laptops; even if its encrypted you have to prove that it is bootable, therefore you will be asked to enter your passwords - for details: see "letter to DebConf attendees" later. An explanation for that procedure is that there are people smuggling drugs in notebooks. Good they don't know that if we were drug peddlers our notebooks would still boot :)
- Media (CD/DVD, more than 20 with private data) or more than just a few usb devices (usb-pen, ssd cards) should be declared as well.
- Money transfers or cash up to 10 000 € need no registration

10: "In Berlin by the wall you were 5 feet 10 inches tall, it was very nice, Candlelight and Dubonet on Ice" (Lou Reed on "Berlin" 1973)

- Tobacco and alcohol for personal use can be imported in the following amounts:
- Alcohol: 1 liter of liquor (> 22% alcohol) or 2 liters of Wine/Champagne or liquor (< 22% alcohol)
- Tobacco: 200 cigarettes or 50 cigars or 250 grams of tobacco
- Food: please do not try to import food, this will delay your customs clearance and will only lead to the food being confiscated.
  Berlin has stores for most kinds of your local food you might want.
- Special care should be also taken with items that could be considered as weapons (more detailed info later)

12: Philharmony

11: Potsdamer Platz

Fun and Free time

13: The Reichstag, Germanys Parliament

Spending free time in Berlin

Both of the proposed venues are in the heart of the city and allow a wide range of day- and nighttime activities from high culture (Opera House, Museum Island, Theaters) to underground culture. Just relaxing and socializing in or outside one of countless restaurants with cuisines from all over the world is another pleasant way to spend a warm summer night. See our guide for the actual venue later with details on cultural activities and restaurants.

14: Modern Architecture at Potsdamer Platz

A nice way to explore the city is renting a bicycle. Berlin is a bike city, many people use them and there is cycle or bus lanes most all over town. One place to rent bikes is right behind the University: "Fahrradstation"[6], they also offer guided biketours in different languages. "Fat Tire"[7] is located at Alexanderplatz and also offers many additional services.

A nice evening can be spent at c-base[8] a non-profit center for research in the fields of computer hard- and software and networking. We are grateful c-base is housing our DebConf11 meetings in their nice environment. Thanks a lot for that!

Possible Day Trips

Here are some ideas for possible Day Trips:

- Potsdam, Schloss Sanssouci

  including a swim in one of the natural lakes in the beautiful Park Babelsberg[9] The Park Babelsberg is part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site.

  A trip to Potsdam will not cost much because we can use the S-Bahn from Berlin to get there, rent bicycles in Potsdam and a bus for the disabled people to move around.

  Whomever is interested in movies and their making might be interested in taking a tour at Filmpark Babelsberg[10] a studio complex where recently "Inglorious Basterds" by Quentin Tarantino was filmed.

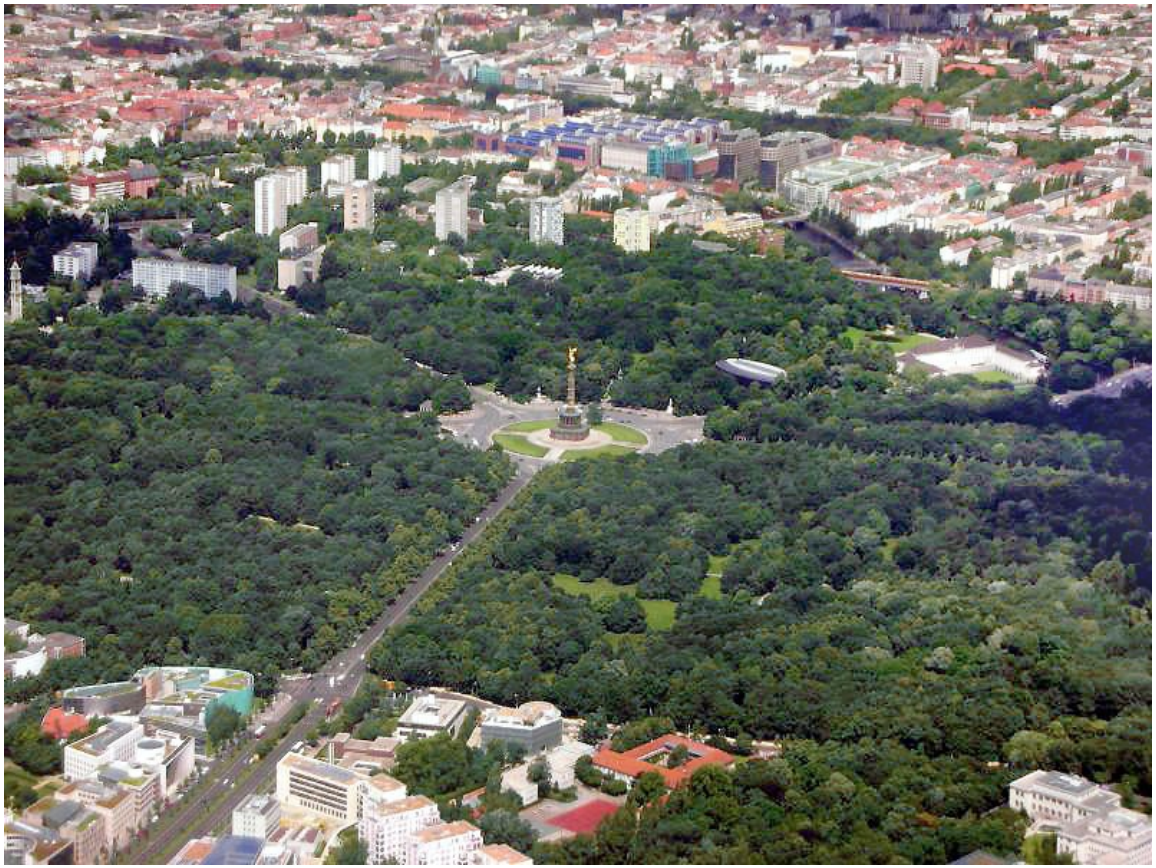
- Visiting a brewery, of course with tasting. We had a first talk with them, needs further negotiation, for sponsoring as well.

- Another idea is a boat-trip -maybe to Potsdam as well-, good also for disabled people, because most shipping companies offer special service. Because this trip will be a lot more expensive, we are negotiating about financing/sponsoring, details will follow later.

15: Victory Column

- Still another idea is to organize a guided tour of the town with Chinese rickshaws and bicycles to learn about Berlins history from Prussian times, 2 worldwars, DDR until todays modern city. Capacity of the rickshaws is for about 150 - 200 people, the others can have a rented bike, costs would be ~ 30€ per person for a 2 hour trip.
  Good for disabled people also, and they have two guides for blind and visual impeded people

- Another possbile Daytrip would be a big BBQ at the Berlin Tiergarten, there is a space for barbeques there, we could grill meat, vegis or cheese and have some barrels of different beers. For people with special needs regarding food, we will prepare a "special bento". This would be a rather cheap and for sure a funny way for daytripping. :)



16: Berlin Tiergarten, the green heart of the city, in the middle: Siegessäule

List Of Prospective Local Sponsors

We have a list of people, companies and assosiations that might be interested in the conference.

Since we are still very early in the process, please contact Torsten for details. We should have no problems in Berlin to find more companies and organisations willing to sponsor us.

- o Strato AG is interested to sponsor connectivity
- o GUUG offered help
- o InterNetworX contacted

17: City Lights

Best Time for DebConf in Berlin

The beginning of August would be the best time because Humboldt University has semester break. After talking with other places that we consider for lodging about their bookings, this seems to be a good solution as well.

Our first choice is Humboldt-University, and because we want to use at least one of their main rooms, we have to pick a date from semester break where no exams take place. That's why the first half of August is the best date for them as well.

In case we will not be able to get permission to hold DebConf at the university, we still have the backup-solution Urania. The dates are checked with them and are ok. But if a another timeframe is needed we still have time to change it to another date. Urania needs a fixed date from us until Summer 2010.

We have checked for conferences happening at the time of year we propose (first half of August) and have not found any so far that would either complement or bother us.

18: Relax...

Accommodation

Depending on the venue we have different possibilities.

Prices range from ~ 10 € (dormatory) to 30 € (low category but nice and clean hotel with 3-5 bedded rooms) all other categories are available in the neighbourhood.

For example the larger (about 400 beds) of the 10 € dorms is 10 minute walk to Urania or 15 minutes on public transport from the university, the other hotels are 1 - 10 minutes walking distance, for example at Urania there is 4 hotels just across the street. From the university the proposed hotels are a 5 and 8 minute walk away.

We expect a high influx of people to Berlin, as it is a particularly attractive city and steeped in history. Employees in Berlin hotels speak at least English, some of them French, Spanish or Russian too, so they are able to converse our guests from other countries.

19: Montage of several of proposed accommodation facilities

20: Backyard of the Dorm

DebConf Info-Desks

The dorm/hotel-staff is able to give directions and answer questions about everyday needs and touristic questions.
We plan to have a special "DebConf-Infodesk" at the venue for questions of a more specific nature and also a "hotline" per telephone and on IRC #debconf-helfdesk that allows to answer questions remotely.

And of course it will be possible for couples to stay in their own rooms. The number of roomkeys available depends on the location, one of the places is able to hand out keys to everyone (5 € deposit) even for the bigger dorm rooms. If there are not enough keys available or one gets lost, the hotels front desks will be able to help 24/7

Rooms are ready for handicapped people, in all planned locations there are at least one or two rooms available, details follow later - for first information please contact Annette

21: „DebConf Info-Desk" at the Dorm

Local FLOSS Communities

Because Berlin has a lot of people living here, we also have a lot of people who are active member of several groups related to open and free software, some of them are:

- Belug (http://www.belug.de/)
- BLIT (http://www.blit.org/2009/)
- Bralug (http://www.bralug.org/)
- Berliner Typo3 Usergroup (http://www.btug.de/)
- c-base (http://www.c-base.org)
- CCC-Berlin (https://berlin.ccc.de/wiki/Hauptseite)
- DeepaMehta (http://www.deepamehta.de/)
- Java User Group Berlin Brandenburg (http://www.jug-bb.de/en/)
- LinuxTag (http://www.linuxtag.org/2009/en.html)
- Linuxworks - LUG Fhain (http://linuxwiki.de/linuxworks)
- LXDE Foundation e.V. (http://foundation.lxde.org/)
- newthinking store (http://www.newthinking-store.de/)
- php Usergroup Berlin (http://www.bephpug.de/)
- sidux-ev (http://www.sidux-ev.de)
- Ubuntu-Berlin (http://www.ubuntu-berlin.de)
- Freifunk (http://start.freifunk.net/)

22: On Museum Island

Let us know if you miss anyone ;-)

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

We are in favour of Humboldt University as venue for the conference.

It is not only best located and has all the rooms needed in adequate sizes but we also have 2 people of the local team that study informatics there and have good contacts to professors and students that can solve a lot of problems for us. Also the 'Fachschaft' (student council) has shown a lot of interest and offered help when they learned of our proposal.

We have contacted alumni from Humboldt University with connections to Debian and asked them to give us some patronage. Here is what one of them wrote:

> *As both an alumnus from Humboldt University Berlin and an official Debian developer, I can see a strong connection between the Debian project and the HU.*
> *I studied computer science from 1999 until 2004 at the HU, and the computer science department there was my way to official developer status in the Debian project. Being active in Debian development already, HU staff and students supported me to become a Debian developer and therefore able to contribute quite efficiently to the project.*
> *In my opinion, the university is a strong connection point between official and new developers and Open Source projects. It provides much more free and open software exchange and development than private and profit driven environments as in industry. This way, students and other prospective developers can get in personal contact with Debian and other Open Source projects even though Open Source software development is technically done completely via the Internet. Further, Humboldt University can foster and extend its strong connections to the scientific and Open Source software community if it promotes and encourages free and open source software projects such as Debian.*
> *Therefore, I would really appreciate a Debian Conference at the HU campus in Berlin.*
> *Thank you, Roland Stigge*

Some reasons why we choose Humboldt-University as the place for DebConf:

- The main buildings of the Humboldt University are situated in the heart of the historical part of Berlin.
- Sleeping quarters are within 5 - 7 minutes walking distance, many restaurants within 5 - 15 minutes.
- There are buslines right outside the venue, a subway and S-Bahn (city train) is 3 minutes away.
- Convenience stores and all-night restaurants, everything is nearby. A big convenience store in S-Bahnhof Friedrichstr is about 400 meters away and open until 10 am. There are some all-night shops as well. We will provide a more detailed guide with a map later. Many restaurants are close by, fastfood places as well, please see our restaurant guide for the actual venue later.

23: Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, main building

Conference Facilities

Costs

Commercial venues are too expensive, the offers we had so far range around 150 000 €. We now concentrate on the universities for which we probably only have to pay the actual cost for security, electricity and cleaning.

Available Rooms

The auditorium, hacklabs and info desk are in the same and/or neighbouring buildings, we can use them as needed. We are still negotiating with them, which rooms are good to use for the whole time, this will depend on the schedule of the university and on our needs. Humboldt-University offers amongst others the following rooms:

24: Audimax at Humboldt-University

The following bigger rooms are available in the main-building:
"Audimax" in the main building,
with seats for 732 people and
extra seating for 282 people available on the gallery.
Maybe that is a good space to have the video-equipment.
"Kinosaal" in the main building, 433 qm,
seats for 562 people

Several smaller rooms (30 to 100) are also available in the main building

Right across the street behind the main building are
two middle-sized rooms (178qm / 116qm) and
several smaller workshop rooms for about 30 to 100 people are available as well, details will follow later

The smaller rooms can be used for hacklabs, BOFs etc

The numbers above are the maximum allowed number of people (fire dep. rules) for each room.

A catering area, "Mensa", with tables and seating for at least 300 people and a "smaller Mensa" - Cafeteria, with seating for about 100 people, for snacks and coffee.
Catering depends on further arrangements, there is a in-house-catering-company, we are still negotiating with them.
Bringing in your own food is not a problem. Places where food and drinks are prohibited are rooms with the universities own computer equipment.

25: A lot of open space awaits us

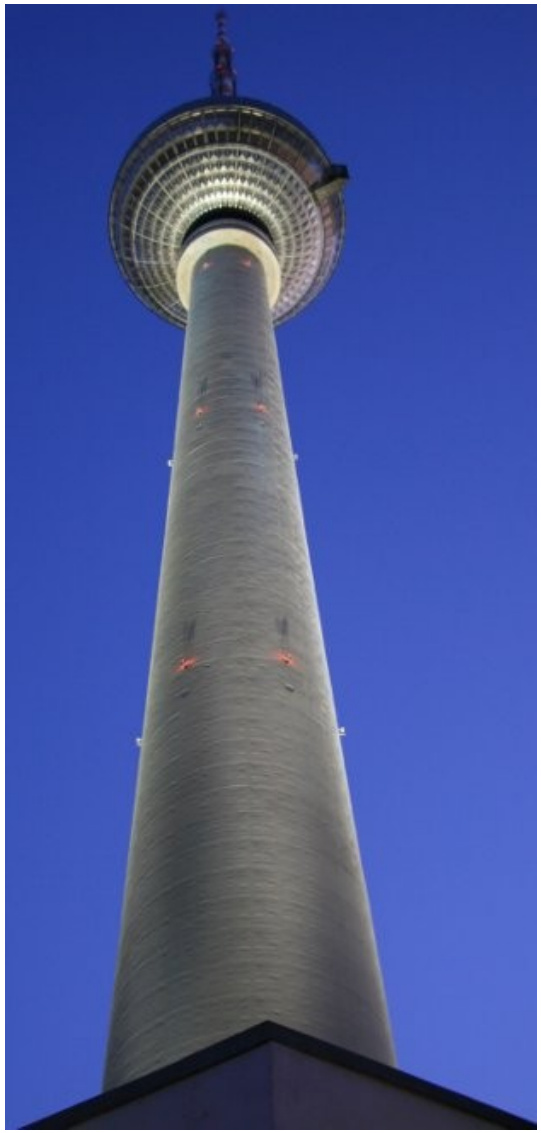
Some rooms like "Audimax" have fixed seating, others can be freely equipped to the respective needs, details will follow later. Smaller auditoriums can't be merged into a bigger one, but since we have plenty of rooms to choose from, that will not be necessary. And maybe we can "trade" a bigger room for two smaller ones or vice versa if needed on short notice.

University security-guards and additional help by our volunteers is provided.
We are pretty sure that we can have 24/7 open hacklabs if we can provide security and pay for it.

We have a first overview plan of the building, more detailed blueprints with exact distances will be available later, some of them on request; please contact Annette for details.

General conditions of the rooms, e.g. for servers will be provided later in detail, since the universities data center staff and the head-admins from the department of computer science will be involved we except that we will we be able to take care of this very well.

27: Chancelors Building



26: Berlin TV-Tower, east

Network connectivity

The buildings are partially wired, and most areas of the building are accessible over wireless lan too.
Most of the area is already covered with access-points[11], we have to check if thats enough, if not we can easily add extra ones.
They are used to handling a lot of connections, we talk to admins later about the maximum capability, and we will ask where we are allowed to use wires.

The University already has access to DFN (Deutsches Forschungs Netzwerk), we will negotiate with them if is possible that we can use this.
Just in case this will not work out: Strato (Europes second biggest webhoster) will be one of our sponsors, they will help us to get the needed connection.

28: Another building of Humboldt-Universität

We will talk to the admins about using the infrastucture later in detail, first we need the "official ok" from the University. It will be possible to set up the network before DebCamp, if we are allowed to use the HU-network, it will be no problem, but if we will use a payed/sponsored connection we will have to negotiate that.

Handicaped People at the Venue

The venue is completely equiped with facilities for motion-handicapped people. All hallways at the University are accessible with wheelchairs, automatic doors and elevators are right next to Audimax (our main conference room). We and the university can offer solutions for the sight- and hearing-impaired to follow the conference

accordingly. Every part of the building is accessible with wheelchairs. Some of the students are also handicapped, we can ask them for advice of best practices, some of them work at "Refrat - Enthinderungsberatung"[12], a students association which offers consulting and support as well. For other services provided by the city please have a look at the webpages for handicapped Berlin visitors in German[13] or English[14].

Specs For Audio And Video

As there are many conferences held at HU there is sufficient equipment. More details will be provided later. Both, clip-on and hand-mics, fully equipped with appropriate audio equipment are available in a sufficient number, since they are used to hold conferences with panel discussions and we can ask "Technische Betreuung" of the university if we need additional equipment.

The internet connection at Humboldt-University is sufficient for video streaming.

29: lets have a hot & spicy conference

Food

Mensa[15] and Cafeteria are right inside the main building and serve standard student food, if you prefer "higher class food" there are several restaurants outside, at least three on the backside of the main building and "Gendarmenmarkt" (a historical marketplace with good restaurants surrounding it) is also close (7 minutes walk).

Mensa at Humboldt-University is provided by Studentenwerk, they offer a variety of warm lunches ranging from 2 to 5 Euros, breakfast, additionaly coffee and snacks; there is a studentcafe which will offer additional opening hours depending on our request; many restaurants and also fastfood places are a few minutes away. Normaly you can get a continental breakfast (buffet line) and several dishes to choose from for lunch, changing on a daily basis and a six-week turnover.

30: Catering Area at the Dormatory

At least one of them is a vegetarian dish, other preferences/needs (vegan / lactose-alergic / gluten-alergic / religious (of any denomination)) can be fulfilled. We need to know these wishes/needs in good time ahead of the conference. Vegatarian/vegan food is also available in the "default configuration" of most places, we can order other "special food" on request, this has to be negotiated later in detail. In a few minutes walking distance from the venue/hotel there is kosher fastfood and a kosher restaurant available.

The costs depend, for example "Mensa" offers regular vegetarian food at the same price as non-vegi food, other special delivered food will cost extra, details follow later.

Urania

We prefer Humboldt-University as the venue, but since we are still negotiating with them, we searched for a "fallback"-alternative, and we found a very nice - but not so cheap - place in the former western city called "Urania"

- very nice supportive team
- situated near one of Europes largest innercity parks (Tiergarten)
- auditorium, hacklabs, info desk in the same building, 24h/day open
- sleeping quarters (Hotel) across the street
- catering in the building
- local transport (bus outside the building and subway 3 minutes walk - details see transport map) available to all areas of the city
- convenience store is 50 meters away, others reachable in a 5 minutes walk
- several restaurants (vegetarian, all-night etc) are near, fastfood-places as well

31: Urania

Conference Facilities

We can rent the whole building, that will cost up to 150.000 Euro if we want to use every room for over two weeks. Because by doing so we block their other bookings we cant negotiate that price. We think that will be further negotiable if we agree on a timeframe where they dont have bookings and if in the first week (DebCamp) we only use the upper floor, the "studio" and the two surrounding rooms. There is enough space for about 150 people. Early access to other rooms will be possible to setup the network and video equipment. The Admins said they will happily coorperate with us, they would really dig a cool conference inbetween the other boring stuff :)

These are the rooms Urania offers:

- two bigger rooms (one with seating for 800, red; the other for 300 people, blue)
- three smaller rooms (different sizes from 70 to 150 people)
- a very nice studio - preferable use as "hackspace" and for DebCamp
  surrounded by two middle sized rooms
- usable foyers on all three levels, for infodesk, informal gatherings, registration,
- catering area, with tables and seating for at least 100 people
- some extra rooms for storage and servers etc (admins are willing to help)

Smaller auditoriums can't be merged into a bigger one, but there are enough rooms for each usecase. The only "flexible space" is the studio, which looks like the best place for the hacklab.

The hacklabs will be allowed to stay open the whole time, as long as we pay for security we have access 24x7. We will proably need full time security anyway, provided by a private security company, and with additional help by our volunteers because they made it sound like a strong requirement.

There are fixed chairs in the rooms with seating for 800/300. In the "blue room" the first 1/3 of rows have additional small foldaway tables on the backside of the seats. Chairs and tables can be arranged in the smaller

rooms as needed.

We got a first overviewplan, more detailed blueprints will be available later, some of them on request: please contact Annette for details.

The whole building is suited with elevators and ramps for motion handicapped, only one smaller room (a "workshoproom") has a small step, but they will renovate that room until 2011, so either that obstacle is gone or we will take care that there will be a ramp. Another issue is the "red room", that room is only accessible with a special elevator for wheelchairs, but there will be someone from the Urania staff that will operate it. Everything else, including toilets, is ok. Annette talked to the people from Urania, they had been able to give reasonable good answers, we are convinced that it will go smooth since they have many years of experience with handicapped people visiting the events there.

32: Rooms at Urania

Network connectivity

The venue has a 16 MBit connection at the moment and is partialy wired. House technicans would help us get other needed areas wired.
There is a glasfibre line capable of up to 600 MBit in the house (not connected atm because not needed). Getting that connected is no problem but will produce extra cost. The actual price is still unclear.

There are accesspoints that cover most areas. We would probably need to add some more to handle the amount of connections which is no problem

Questions regarding flexibility, routing, firewalls, ports, traffic-shaping etc have to be answered in detail later. The admin will do anything he can to help us since he is a linux guy anyways.

Specs For Audio And Video

All rooms are fully equipped with appropriate audio equipment, the main rooms are often used to hold conferences and panel discussions, so they have everything we need. They even have a professional projector in case we want to show a movie. :) But we should check back with the videoteam what they additionally need as soon as possible.

Both kinds, wireless and hand mics, are available in a sufficient amount, details will follow later.

We will have enough bandwith for videostreaming, our sponsor "Strato" will help us with it.

Food

The catering area at Urania is located the buildings' first floor, about 20 meters from the main conference room and with seating for about 100 persons at a time, maybe is possible to use the lower foyer as a second catering area as well. Catering depends on further agreements, there is a in-house-catering-company, we are still negotiating with them, please ask Ferdinand or Konstantin for details later.

33: Catering Area at Urania

There are other possibilities as well, for example, across the street is an official building with a cantine and just a few minutes walk there are several other buildings that provide food in different styles and price ranges, for example the Nordic embassies are known for their good and reasonable priced seafood. The Wittenbergplatz is about 3 minutes walk away, there are for example the "Einhorn" that offers vegan / vegetarian food, the department store KaDeWe[16] with its "Food-Floor" and first class restaurant "Silberterrasse" and several other offers in different styles.

The dorm is in walking distance too, and they have seatings for 160 people at a time inside and additional seating outside in the tent in the garden. They will provide us with a delicious continental breakfast, and offered a buffet for lunch as well. They are able to make vegetarian and vegan dishes, taking care of the needs of lactose and gluten allergic people (they are used to prepare catering for school excursions, where it is common that someone has to keep a special diet), they are not able to take care of special needs like kosher food, but they said, it is allright if we have it delivered from some other place. The price for food will be included in the total cost for the dorm, so for special food there will be no extra cost. The delivered food has to be paid extra. Konstantin will provide you with details for that later. He will talk with them to have well balanced and diversified menues.

Another Backup-Plan

In case we are not able to negotiate about the rent for Urania, we have other alternatives as well.

34: Haus der Kulturen der Welt

Haus der Kulturen der Welt[17]:
A beautifully located venue in the middle of the Tiergarten, one of Europes biggest inner city parks with the river
Spree in the back of the building and the cafe right by the river.
First negotiations with them were a bit hard because we had the wrong dialogue partner. The house is affiliated with the Ministry of Culture which we should have been talking to. We are in contact with them now and they are seeing the cultural relevance in DebConf which is the criteria to possibly get a reasonable price we could pay. All our needs are or can be fulfilled in the venue, a big enough affordable hotel is 5 minutes walk along the riverside. Since this is "fallback 2" further info will be available if other solutions fail. This venue could move to "fallback 1" if we get a reasonable price.

We have also tried for a all-in-one solution. we spend some hours in Hotel Berlin talking to the people there. They seemed to be interested in housing a "different than usual" conference.
The hotel is perfectly suited for our needs and if an attendee wanted to he would not have to leave the hotel for 2 weeks. The problem is the price: 500T € (that includes sponsoring by the hotel already, the first offer was much higher)
So, if anyone has half a million bucks stashed away somewhere, now is the time to speak up :)

Other alternatives are Berlins other universities (Technische Universität, Freie Universität) and several Universities of Applied Sciences, we haven't talked with them until today, because we are nearly 100% sure, that our first choice "Humboldt-University" will work out very well.

Conclusion

We are done, literally :)

Writing this paper and the investigation to get all the facts was a bunch of work. We do hope we could give you a good overview and a feeling for what is possible for DebConf in Berlin and why we think Berlin is the right place.
All information and facts in this paper have been thoroughly investigated but are of course in the span of 2 years subject to changes.

We, the Berlin Core Team eagerly hope we get the acceptance of bid and are more than willing to pull this through all the way to create for the Debian Developers and anybody they might bring along the best DebConf ever.

Should another city have a better bid, congrats in advance, it's still Germany and we can join their team to see where we can help.

In this spirit, thanks for reading our proposal and for considering us capable of making it come true.

See you in Berlin!

Credits

This paper was researched and written by:

Annette (kuroi) Kalbow
Ferdinand (devil) Thommes
Magnus (evnu) Müller
with help from the Berlin DebConf Team

You can reach us for now on IRC #debconf11-germany

Photografies in this paper are licenced as:

Photos: 19,31,32,33
Copyright ©; 2009, Annette Kalbow
License: WTFPL

Photos: 1,2,3,8,20,21,23,24,25,28,30
Copyright ©; 2009, Magnus Müller
License: WTFPL

Photos: 5,6,7,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,17,18,22,26,27,34
Copyright ©; 2009, Phillip Jaenicke
License: CC- by-nc-sa 3.0

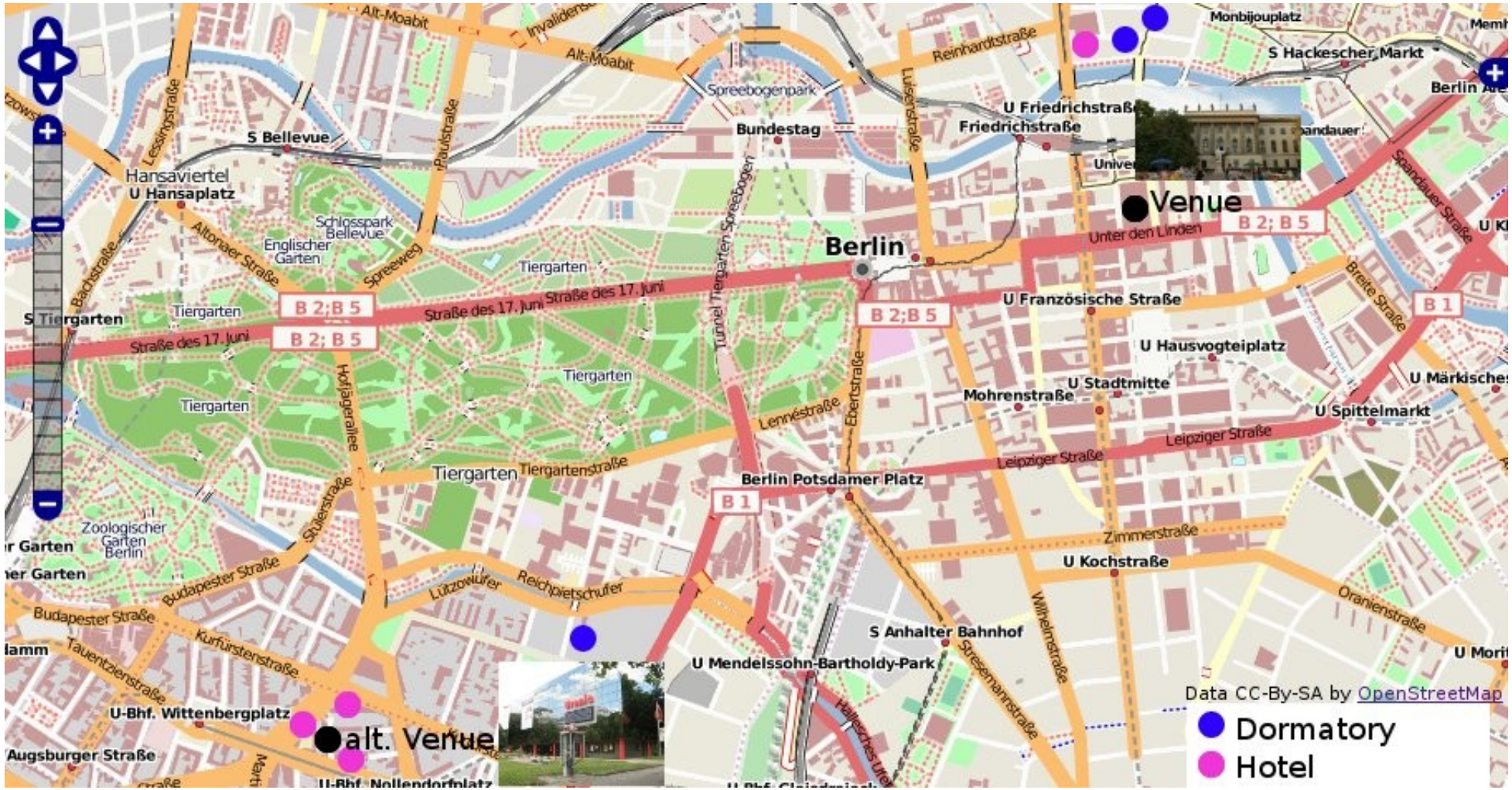
Photos:16
Copyright ©; 2006, beedubz, http://de.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Datei:Berlin_Tiergarten_Siegessäule_Luftansicht.jpg&filetimestamp=20070701175958
License: CC -by-sa-3.0

Thanks to Postkutscher for taking a picture of the cake

Illustration Index

1: Berlin, Alexanderplatz Weltzeituhr....2
2: Berlin, River Spree....3
3: Berlin, Unter den Linden....4
4: Some People from the Berlin Team at c-base....6
5: Berlin is a lively city, with a lot of history....8
6: Twilight at the new Trainstation....9
7: Administrative District....10
8: Streetscene at Alexanderplatz....11
9: Berlin TV-Tower, west....12
10: "In Berlin by the wall you were 5 feet 10 inches tall, it was very nice, Candlelight and Dubonet on Ice" (Lou Reed on "Berlin" 1973)....13
11: Potsdamer Platz....14
12: Philharmony....14
13: The Reichstag, Germanys Parliament 15
14: Modern Architecture at Potsdamer Platz....15
15: Victory Column....16
16: Berlin Tiergarten, the green heart of the city, in the middle: Siegessäule....16
17: City Lights....18
18: Relax....19
19: Montage of several of proposed accommodation facilities....20
20: Backyard of the Dorm....21
21: „DebConf Info-Desk" at the Dorm....21
22: On Museum Island....22
23: Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, main building....24
24: Audimax at Humboldt-University....25
25: A lot of open space awaits us....26
26: Berlin TV-Tower, east....27
27: Chancelors Building....27
28: Another building of Humboldt-Universität....28
29: lets have a hot & spicy conference....29
30: Catering Area at the Dormatory....30
31: Urania....31
32: Rooms at Urania....33
33: Catering Area at Urania....35
34: Haus der Kulturen der Welt....36

Hotel and Venue Overview Plan



1 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Berlin
2 http://www.kmelektronik.de/shop/index.php?show=shopinfo&ShopID=21
3 http://www.gravis.de/stores/berlin/
4 http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/diplo/de/WillkommeninD/EinreiseUndAufenthalt/StaatenlisteVisumpflicht.html
5 http://www.bvg.de/index.php/en/Bvg/Start
6 http://www.fahrradstation.com/fahrradstation.php/aid/106/cat/77/1
7 http://www.fahrradverleihberlin.com/german.html
8 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C-base
9 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sanssouci
http://www.potsdam-tourism.com/pages/highlights_babelsberg.html
10 http://www.filmpark-babelsberg.de/index.php?id=137
11 http://www.cms.hu-berlin.de/dl/netze/wlan/intro/standardseite#wo
12 http://www.einhornonline.de/main.php?idside=23
13 http://www.visitberlin.de/deutsch/zielgruppen/d_zg_behinderte.php
14 http://www.visitberlin.de/english/zielgruppen/e_zg_behinderte.php
15 http://www.studentenwerk-berlin.de/mensen/speiseplan/hu_sued/index.html
16 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/KaDeWe
17 http://www.hkw.de/en/hkw/selbstdarstellung/anfang.php