Organizing Regional Meetings

At Hydra Connect #2 in Cleveland, a group met to discuss the idea of holding regional Hydra meetings. It was suggested that it would be useful to have a set of guidelines to try and ensure that organizers got the benefit of experience from previous events and that the wider community would hear about the discussions etc that took place. These are not required meetings but voluntary as the need arises within the community.

The notes below represent work by Karen Cariani, Linda Newman and Richard Green. Please feel free to comment!

Whilst some of the content is probably overkill for organizing a regional meeting, readers may find parts of the pages at Organizing Samvera Connect meetings useful.

Make sure all attendees know that the Hydra community, including regional meetings, is covered by the Anti-Harassment Policy and that we have Samvera Community Helpers.

Running a Developer Concentrate - Penn State 2016 example and review

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General considerations

If the group can find a host institution willing to donate space, you can keep costs down. The lower the cost to attend, generally the higher the attendance. Food is one the considerations. A host institution may be willing to provide food and it is appreciated, but not required to meet!

You do not need to ask anyone’s permission to organize a regional meeting, however it will be a courtesy to send an email to hydra-partners@googlegroups.com so that Partners and Steering Group can be aware of, and promote, the event.

Calling these events “regional meetings” is a useful common approach but other names might be appropriate in some circumstances. Please do not call one of these events “Hydra Connect” or anything that could cause confusion with Hydra’s annual, international get-together.

You will almost certainly want to use official the Hydra logo on your publicity material. If you need a high quality original, please email hydra-steering@googlegroups.com. We are in the process of making the logo a legal trademark and so we are protecting the original artwork. Please do not alter the logo in any way.

Logistics

1) Identify Potential Attendees

  1. Current Partners, and known adopters
     a. See Partners and Implementations and https://mapsengine.google.com/map/edit?mid=zXYQDa2z16pc.krO3mzzr6Lcc
     b. Among other out reach efforts, be sure to use the Hydra-community elist for all communications in order to inform the rest of the hydra community
  2. Also potential adopters?
  3. How to reach out to unknown Hydranauts
     a. A message to Hydra-tech and Hydra-community could surface some
  4. Will you have a “keynote speaker”? Someone from Steering Committee? Other?

2) Set the Date

Send a note out to find potential date – try to have it midway between Hydra Connects - say between January and June - potentially use it to help plan unconference sessions for the next HydraConnect - so maybe not half way in between potential for virtual regional mtgs piggy back on other regional mtgs attracting the same group of people

  1. Avoid the period around LibDevConX (traditionally in late March or in April) and any other conferences likely to attract Hydranauts
     a. This can be difficult with code4lib in February, LDCX in March, CNI in April, and Open Repositories in June.
  2. Determine how long the meeting will be 1 day, 2 days?
  3. Determine what you want to accomplish in order to figure out how long it should be
  4. Determine roughly how many people might attend
  5. Is this an opportunity for a co-located Hydra Camp, either end-to-end or overlapping time-wise?

3) Find a Location and Space
1. If you need to hire a space, and/or there are other costs, what will you charge the attendees?
   a. How will you deal with booking? (EventBrite? Other?)
   b. What arrangements will you make for dealing with a profit/loss?
   c. If also a Hydra Camp, likely need a separate booking process for that
   d. Don't forget that there may be sales taxes and/or compulsory gratuities to account for.

2. If planning an all day or multi-day meeting, think about how people will eat

3. Promote / announce date and space
   a. to likely Hydra folks, including – if appropriate – “new and prospective adopters”
      i. Utilize both the Hydra-community and Hydra-tech elists so the broad Hydra community sees the announcement
   b. to Ruby/Rails developers community in the area

4. Develop directions to the location, and consider any transportation issues

4) Announcements and Communications

1. Create a wiki page (with sub-pages as needed) for your regional group. Link to your group on the “Samvera Regional Meetings” page.
2. It’s a good idea to check in advance of your regional meeting that key organizers have wiki accounts – see the Get in touch! page for instructions.
3. The wiki will not necessarily serve all purposes - from your group’s page you may decide to link to other systems (for example, EventBrite for registration, Google Drive for content actively in multi-author development). But still use the wiki page to aggregate important information and links, including links to registration, the meeting agenda or Un-Conference plans.
4. Be sure to update the Events, presentations and articles
5. Always utilize the Hydra-community elist among other outreach efforts to keep internal Hydra community informed. Include a link to your group’s wiki page in your email communications.
6. After the event, report back as appropriate on your group’s wiki page, and alert the Hydra-community elist to this content.

5) Figure out food

6) Set an Agenda or plan an Un-Conference

1. Some people will want to see the agenda before they’ll sign up
   a. if it is an un-conference a theme is still helpful to draw people
2. Is there a “Hydra theme” for the period (identified by Partners centrally)?
3. Try to have concrete outcomes and goals for the meeting
4. Ensure that, where appropriate, meeting notes have clearly stated action points with one or more names against them
5. Report activities and outcomes to larger Hydra community
6. It is helpful to tell participants about the Anti-Harassment Policy at the beginning of the meeting. The Hydra Participant Guide was developed as a presentation for this purpose. If none of the Samvera Community Helpers will be in attendance, consider forming a group of Helpers from the meeting attendees.

Conceptual & Wrap-Up

1) Think about what the regional group can do that advances the larger Hydra community

1. Are there coding opportunities to advance larger projects?
2. Outreach and community building opportunity
3. Planning for next Hydra Connect?
   a. Presenting regional work/initiatives
   b. Gathering ideas for the Connect program to be passed on to the organizers

2) Identify if there is common interest among the members in a region

3) If it was a training opportunity how would that work – how to identify common needs for common training program?

4) Don’t leave the meeting without some action items to encourage continuity and feedback to larger community

5) After you complete a regional meeting, share any tips or information about what made it successful on this page and with the Hydra community!