2015 Fairbanks Hackathon FAQ

What is the Hackathon? The Fairbanks Hackathon brings together local code enthusiasts and businesses, individuals and organizations with ideas for code projects. Coders select projects, split into groups, and spend a weekend creating software to address the challenges presented. Examples of previous projects in Alaska have included mapping apps to find sellers of local produce, neighborhood art installations, people trained in CPR, and en route buses, as well as apps to track fish counts for dipnetting, to determine peoples’ eligibility for food stamps, to improve search-and-rescue operations, and to provide updated election results to cellphones.

Who can come? People with all levels of coding experience are welcome. Individuals with other applicable skills (design, etc.) are particularly encouraged to contribute their talents. All ages are welcome. Please sign up using this form.

What kind of codes are we talking about? Whichever ones people know and can apply to the problem. This will often combine writing new code with borrowing existing open-source codes (aka “hacking.”)

What’s the schedule? Folks will gather at 6 pm Friday, September 25 in Room 221 of the Murie Building on the UAF West Ridge (campus map). Coders will choose projects, split into groups (or work individually if they wish), and spend the weekend working on them. On Sunday night groups will present their results, and the event will end at 6 pm Sunday, September 27. The building will be open 24 hours a day and chaperons will be on hand. Some food will be provided, but not enough to meet everyone’s nutritional needs for 48 hours, so plan accordingly.

Prizes, you say? The grand prize will be automatic entry into the UAF School of Management’s 2015 “Arctic Innovation” competition, the winner of which gets $10,000 to commercialize their product. In-kind and/or cash prizes will also be awarded to other groups with worthy projects, as judged by a to-be-assembled panel.

Who can submit requests for coding help? We’re leaving this open – businesses, nonprofit organizations, UAF faculty, and anyone else from the community is welcome to submit a proposal. They should be submitted in advance via this form so we can get our ducks in a row before September 25.

Who is putting this on, and why? Previous Hackathons in Fairbanks were staged by the Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation, which is playing a supporting role. The main sponsor this year is Alaska NSF EPSCoR (Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research), and other support also comes from the UAF Office of Intellectual Property and Commercialization. All three groups have an interest in fostering economic development in Fairbanks and at UAF.

Whom can I contact for more information? Tania Clucas with Alaska EPSCoR, (907)474-5895, thclucas@alaska.edu

How about a nice game of chess? No, let’s play Global Thermonuclear War.