

Supporting Student Groups at McMaster

Tips for successful event planning

Three Weeks Before

Determine goals and purpose of event	Who is your target audience?	
	What are the learning objectives, if applicable?	
	What do you hope to accomplish?	
Select date and time	Are hosts, VIP's, speakers available?	
	Consult campus calendar/religious holidays.	
	Consider campus culture/workday schedule.	
Submit an online Student Event Approval Form and Risk Assessment		
Set budget. Refer to the budget template on the Student Event Planning webpage	Do you plan to ask for sponsorship and from whom?	
	Are there University / other sources of funding?	
	Have you considered all the expenses?	
Select and reserve venue	Audio visual.	
	Parking availability/restrictions.	
	Maximum capacities.	
	Other events occurring near the space – will they conflict?	
	Accessibility.	
	Access times to space.	
	Loading/delivery capabilities.	
	Set-up and take-down time.	
	Surrounding sound impediments.	
	Security issues.	
Facilities contracts.		
Consider Plan B	Have you considered an alternate location because of inclement weather?	
	Who will make the rain plan call?	
	How and when will you communicate the rain location to your guests?	
	In case of rain, have you considered, e.g. vendors, rental equipment, etc.?	

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Guest list	Will you be charging entrance to the event? Will the cost be a barrier for students to attend?	
	Will you need to contact guests? Do you need contact information?	
	Have you asked guests about dietary / religious food restrictions?	
Special permits, licenses, insurance		
Non-University participants	Will you have vendors? Do you need to notify anyone or get permission?	
	Will they pay for their own parking?	
Advertising	How will you advertising the event?	
	Will you create a website? Who will host it?	
	Will you invite media?	

Two Weeks Before

Update website material	Accessibility information and resources, including accessible parking.	
Add event to campus calendar		
Contact Parking	Ensure transportation options for guests needed accessible parking.	
Create timeline and delegate duties	Will you need to create sub-groups to manage, e.g. finances, marketing/ advertising, logistics.	
Schedule photographer/ videographer		
Prepare marketing materials	Submit to Underground for printing and posting posters.	

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Posters, banners, signage	Who will design?	
	Who will print/produce?	
	Who will put and take-down?	
Travel arrangements for Speakers	Research best options.	

One Week Before

Reserve transportation and accommodation for speakers, if applicable		
Secure a/v needs	Lighting, sound, wireless microphone, on-site a/v tech.	
Catering	Does anyone have dietary restrictions.	
	Place food order.	
Secure entertainment		
Design marketing material	Posters, invitations, tickets, programs, pamphlets, social media.	
Secure bio's for speakers		
Send save-the date(s)		
Order any décor (if applicable)		
Catering	Send final numbers to caterer.	
Create detailed event agenda and send to speakers		

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Meet with committees and get updates/ to do list		
Prepare survival kit (pens, pencils, sharpeners, scissors, tape, batteries, chargers)		
Order parking passes		
Review final to-do list		
Check all equipment/materials		

Three Days Before

Review final to-do list		
Decorate room		
Hang signage		
Prepare survey		