

Organising and planning a small community event does not need to be stressful, hard or break the bank to be effective. See below for tips and tricks as well as a checklist to help plan, organise and hold a successful event.

## 1. Why are you holding your event?

It is important to determine why you are holding an event.

- Determining the 'why' helps you to focus on the 'what'.
- The 'why' is a good way for potential sponsors, funders or contributors to easily understand your objectives and assess if they align with their own.

## 2. When and where

Once you have your purpose and vision start to think about who can be involved. You can then start to consider the venue and timing of the event.

- Good decisions at this point can help with budgets, marketing and logistics.
- Some events will have a pre-determined timeframe e.g. Christmas, Seniors Week.
- Some locations are better suited to particular events than others. Consider safety when choosing locations.

## 3. Theme

After deciding the 'why', 'who', 'where' and 'when' of your event you can start looking at the content:

- Do you have a theme (e.g. the look and feel of the event)?
- What will happen at the event and how is it all going to happen?

## 4. Budgets and funding

Once you have your purpose and vision you can start looking for funding opportunities.

- Are there internal funds available? Make the treasurer your best friend!
- Are there grants available? If applying for a grant – use your purpose as your outcomes statement.
- Are there other groups or businesses you can partner with? They may have resources available and want to achieve a similar outcome.

You can save on budget by considering the impact that the timing and venue can have on costs.

- Is there a hire fee?
- Is there a not-for profit discount?
- Is a bond required?
- Will the venue offer a discount/sponsorship?
- Can you join with an existing event to share resources?
- Could your event coincide with Youth Week, Seniors Week or similar to qualify for a special grant?

Partnering with other groups can reduce costs for your event.

- Can a not-for-profit, school or local band contribute to the music?
- Are there activities that a local not-for-profit organisation can bring?
- Can a stage/tent be sponsored?
- You may be able to partner with other groups that have resources that they are happy to share (e.g. BBQ trailers, jumping castles etc.).

## 5. Marketing and communications

Even at the very beginning, start considering marketing and communication for your event:

- Gain initial letters of support;
- Start a list of all contact details;
- Create a distribution list;
- Start writing key messages based on your purpose;
- Design an expression of interest form/volunteer skill collection; and
- Put together an agenda for planning meetings – while not always necessary it can keep to you on track.

By choosing a community venue and working with community contacts you may gain low cost or no cost options for marketing and communication about your event.

- Does the venue have an email list/regular publication or web site?
- Create and distribute 'hold the date' emails, letters and websites?
- Do neighbours need to be informed of any possible disruptions?
- Decide geographic area for distribution and book flyer distributor if using.

Your event is planned and ready to go? Now it's time to communicate, communicate and communicate some more!

- What collateral do you have to offer?
- What will bring people to the event? Do you have any big names or draw card activities planned?
- Create posters, flyers, emails and social media.
- Promote on websites and other publications.

Other marketing and communication you will need to consider before your event:

- Thank you speeches/letters/certificates;
- Vendor/suppliers provided with bump in/out information;
- Ensure any naming rights/agreements are met;
- Feedback forms; and
- Don't forget your own organisations marketing material for the day!

## 6. Logistics for your event

Logistics and potential costs of your event will be impacted by the location you choose. When planning your event consider:

- Is power available?
- Are you closing roads? Do you need a traffic management plan? Is additional parking required?
- Are bookings required – is there a fee?
- Parks and public spaces require a council process such as permits for amplified noise, road closures etc.
- Are the toilet facilities sufficient?
- Are additional bins required?
- Is the chosen venue accessible? (e.g. an older person with a walker)
- Do you need access or are keys required?
- Is an alternate wet weather location or time required?

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Your event is starting to take shape – this is where your logistics really kick in and play the biggest part. Have you considered:

- Music? Staging?
- Adequate lighting?
- Volunteers?
- Safety (e.g. speed in the precinct)?
- Has equipment been tagged and tested?
- Will food be bought or be free? Allergies and dietary requirements? Permits?
- Have first aid requirements been considered?
- Plan for possible risks and establish if you need a COVID Safe Event Plan!
- Has the run sheet been completed?
- Don't forget to help organise a team to help pack up!

## 7. Event Day

Be prepared for anything and everything to happen.

- Choose an organiser for the day.
- Remember why you are holding the event.
- Remind the team of the reasons for the event/activity.
- Keep a sense of humour and allow your plans to adapt when needed.
- Promote your supporters.
- Troubleshoot any problems that come up on the day. Most people attending will not be aware of issues but will pick up on your reactions.

## 8. After the Event

- Ensure all equipment has been returned and bonds received.
- Hold a session with your team to talk over the event.
- Don't forget to celebrate first and critique second.
- Document your learnings; complete the event/project evaluation template
- Review feedback forms and report to any funding bodies (as required).
- Ensure thank you communications have been sent.
- Now you can start planning your next one!

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Use the **Event planning checklist** to help you organise an event and make sure each task or process is completed and correct.

You do not need to use every point on the checklist – consider what will help and leave out the points not relevant to your organisation or event.

No.	COVID Safe Events*	Completed (✓)
1.	All event organisers are responsible for considering and adhering to the most up-to-date COVID-19 information. Please check the Queensland Government <a href="#">Industry Framework for COVID Safe Events</a> for further details.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
2.	Ensure staff and participants observe physical distancing.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
3.	Collect contact tracing information using the <a href="#">Check In QLD app</a> .	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
4.	Arrange regular and thorough cleaning.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

No.	Pre-Event	Completed (✓)
1.	Do you have an organising committee with a key organiser?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
2.	Do you have a COVID safe plan?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
3.	Do you have a risk management plan?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
4.	Does everyone understand their role?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
5.	Have you set a budget and assigned someone to manage it?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
6.	Do you know what you want the outcome of your event to be? (is it to raise funds, celebrate, recruit volunteers etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
7.	Have you confirmed the date, time and venue of the event?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
8.	Have you completed a venue site inspection? Check it has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A safe area for the event;</li> <li>• The right capacity for number of attendees you expect;</li> <li>• Enough room to move around;</li> <li>• The right look and feel for photo opportunities;</li> <li>• Access for people with disabilities; and</li> <li>• Accessibility to transport, car parking and vehicle access.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
9.	Have you booked the venue including time to set up and pack up?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
10.	Do you have appropriate permits/licences in place?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
11.	Do you need to invite guest speakers or a Master of Ceremonies (MC)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
12.	Have you advertised your event? Do you have a plan on how to spread the word?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
13.	Do you have a way for your guests to register or RSVP?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
14.	Have you arranged a photographer to capture your event?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
15.	Will you need volunteers to help on the day? If so, have you advertised for them and do you have volunteer role descriptions for them?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
16.	Have you organised a microphone, sound system, projector etc.?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
17.	Have you organised marquees or shade as required by the event?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

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No.	Pre-Event	Completed (✓)
18.	Have you organised banners, T-shirts or anything else you might need for your event?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
19.	Will you have catering? Make sure you have a selection to meet dietary requirements. Check if you need a food permit.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
20.	Have you booked your entertainment? If not, do you have music?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
21.	Do you need a seating plan?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
22.	Do you need gifts or flowers for the event?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
23.	Have you packed stationery items you might need to fix posters/banners etc.?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
24.	Have you printed copies of everything you need e.g. guest list, run sheets, speeches, contact details of volunteers/suppliers, feedback forms etc.? Make sure you collect evidence for any funders.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

No.	During the Event	Completed (✓)
1.	Have you allowed enough time to set up?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
2.	Is the sound equipment working?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
3.	Have you decorated the venue?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
4.	Do you need background music?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
5.	Do you know where the restrooms are so you can let others know?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
6.	Is the organiser clearly distinguishable from the guests?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
7.	Have you set up a registration table so you can capture participant details?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
8.	Do you have photo consent forms for participants to sign?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
9.	Do you have takeaway information if required?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
10.	Is there signage to direct people as to where they can find you as organiser?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
11.	Have you allowed enough time to pack up?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
12.	Ensure you thank funding bodies, sponsors and contributors on the day.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

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No.	Post Event	Completed (✓)
1.	Have you completed an evaluation of how the event went?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
2.	Have you contacted the organising committee to discuss what worked well and what didn't? What would you do differently next time?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
3.	Have you sent thank you letters/emails to staff, volunteers, suppliers etc. that attended?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
4.	Have you paid all your invoices?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
5.	Have you uploaded your event photos/videos to social media?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
6.	If you have received funding to hold this event, have you completed all acquittal requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

For more detailed information on planning a larger scale event see our [Events-toolkit](#).

**Disclaimer**

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