

Event Planning is a large exercise. This How-To serves as a checklist to help organize your larger plan. This process should be collaborative, including your team, and carried out well in advance of your intended event. Even though the steps are presented in a linear fashion, prioritize each step for your own event timing.

STEP ONE:

Determine your event type. Are you creating a cultivation event? A fund-raiser? A program or project for the community?

STEP TWO:

Think strategically about the timing of your event. Consider different options to coordinate venue availability and preparation time.

STEP THREE:

Confirm your venue or location. Your venue may impact guest attendance and the type of activities that can be carried out.

STEP FOUR:

Create a guest list. Think broadly. You have active participants and donors, but also new prospects, potential collaborators, even press that may be appropriate to also engage with your work.

STEP FIVE:

Recruit volunteers. Think about the many ways people can help. Volunteers can help fill the areas of need or expertise to implement your event.

STEP SIX:

Determine pricing for the event for guests. Take into consideration meal costs, venue rental, supplies, decorations, etc. What do similar events in your area charge for admission/tickets?

STEP SEVEN:

Secure sponsorships or donors to underwrite a portion of event expenses and help keep costs down. Work to create in-kind partnerships for goods or services. What caterers/restaurants/event supply providers work with other organizations or events similar to yours?

STEP EIGHT:

Determine your program. What will happen at the event? What will the flow of the event be? Will there be speakers? Will collateral marketing material or digital video be shared? How about a performance?

STEP NINE:

Create a follow-up plan. How will you thank guests, volunteers, sponsors, internal team, etc?

STEP TEN:

Create an evaluation plan. What are your measures of success? What information are you really interested in learning? How will the collected data inform future events, programming?

STEP ELEVEN:

Now that you have planning underway, move forward on implementation of your great event. This gives you the framework you need to continue with your additional planning steps, such as creating a project logic model, action plan, budget, and volunteer recruitment strategy.