

# Event planning checklist

Your checklist will always be a work in progress. As a team, you will continuously adapt your checklist based on what needs to happen before, during, and after your event in order to meet your goals. In the following weeks, you will learn about recruitment and using digital tools. Your checklist will grow as you learn about other aspects of your event. For the moment, use this as a model of what you should include in your event checklist.

## Finding a location

Start by finding a good location for your event. One place to host an event would be your home—a quiet and focused place to listen, talk, and organize. Some other venues could be a local restaurant, coffee shop, or community center, as long as the space is normally available for anyone to use.

### Here are few things to consider If you use a public space:

- Is there a cost? Do they offer a non-profit rate?
- Confirm the venue can accommodate your group well ahead of time
- Do you need access to A/V equipment? Is that provided? Is there an additional fee?
- Does the space fit the number of expected attendees?

## Inviting people to your event

It is important to know your audience goal so you can be strategic in your recruitment for your events. Targeting people you think will be most interested in your event will be more likely to attend. It is recommended to recruit up to 150-200% beyond your goal. For example, if you would like 50 people to attend your event, recruiting for at least 75-100 is much more likely to ensure that the goal of 50 will be met.

### Start by making a list of people you know:

- People you know who are interested in the issue you are discussing
- Previous event attendees
- Partner organizations aligned with the issue
- Other groups who are interested in the issue
  - Faith groups
  - School groups
  - Neighborhood or community organizations

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## Next, start recruiting!

- Post your event on [ofa.us](http://ofa.us)
- Share your event on [Connect](#)
- Create an event on Facebook & share on your social media networks
- Flyer at specific locations (if applicable)
- Call and/or email your list to invite them personally
- Follow up with RSVPs at least 1-2 days prior to your event to remind them

## Speakers

If you are inviting speakers to be a part of your program, be sure to lock them at least 10-14 days ahead of your event. Provide them with an outline and timeline of the program, so they can be prepared.

### Other considerations for a speaking program include:

- Determine Moderator (if applicable)  
*\*A moderator should be chosen if more than a couple speakers and the goal is to generate a specific discussion*
- Have a backup plan for speakers in case someone has to cancel

## Get your ducks in a row

Depending on your event, you may need additional materials, but here is a list to get you started. Be sure to test any equipment you will use ahead of time to verify the sound and quality.

- Agenda / a suggested outline of how your evening could go
- Sign-in sheet for attendees to check in so you have their contact information for the future
- Name tags
- Determine A/V set up (what do you need for your event?)
  - DVD player or computer with DVD player
  - Projector or TV
  - Speakers (internal or external?)
  - Cables/adapters for DVD player and/or computer
  - Microphone (if applicable)
  - Test your DVD and/or A/V equipment
- Determine inventory (a sample list of things might want)
- Beverages (water, soda, alcoholic and non-alcoholic options)
- Ice
- Cups
- Snacks/food
- Plates
- Napkins
- Serving dishes
- Serving spoons
- Flowers
- Determine staffing needs

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- Set up
  - Check in
- Clean up
- Social media
  - Photo/video: Lock in a photographer if you're securing a professional  
If not, determine who will be photographer for the event

## The big day

### Be prepared before your first guest arrives!

- Set up your space early
- Have all equipment ready to go—like computers, speakers or microphones
- If you have them, set out refreshments and snacks for your guests
- Print out your materials and ask people to sign in so you can have a record of all the guests who attend—it'll help you follow up with folks after your event.
  - Share your photos and thoughts on FB and Twitter using #OFAFellows
- Make sure you are ready with your predetermined call to action

## After the event

### Don't forget to follow up—we want to hear all about your event:

- Post to Connect
- Remember to tell the story about your event to those who don't know anything about it. Tell us all the great things, like a snapshot of the people who attended. What was your favorite anecdote from the evening? What do you think made it a success. And don't forget to post photos!
- Thank your attendees via email or cards
- Log your attendees information into your own chapter lists
- Follow up with those who committed to get involved

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