

# 5 How to organise an event

Events are held in our communities and in our memories. Events include festivals, carnivals, rodeos and encompass a diverse and colourful mix of community cultural expression. They might go for one day or a week and take a year or months of planning.

Arts Nexus is committed to supporting and developing events in regional Queensland. To support festival and event volunteers we've developed a free online information service. Visit Festlinx at [www.festlinx.org/](http://www.festlinx.org/)

## Concept

A strong, compelling theme or concept will ignite community imagination and passion. Its worth spending time on developing. Workshop your ideas and consider all the ways your event concept can have resonance, for example, through a memorable brand, merchandise, banners, t-shirts.

## Project plan

Detail your project in a plan. Using a project or business plan template is helpful as it will encompass all the financial aspects of your proposal, as well as the vision and mission statement of what you are trying to achieve. Factor in a timeline, preparation of resources, marketing and promotion. Incorporate risk management requirements, compliance with legislation and policies, delivering and evaluating your event.

## Will it work?

Consider the type of character of venue needed. Consider booking fees, resolutions for the site usage, consider your events' feasibility. Can you determine what costs and resources are involved in delivering your event? Are you sure you can achieve the funding?

Form an effective volunteer committee to steer the project, get the right skills on board (see Arts Nexus sheet 4 Governance). What other professionals do you need on board? Consider artists, marketers, co-ordinators and technicians, attendants and support staff on the day.

## How

**Timeframe;** working back from the scheduled dates for the event, identify what needs to happen: Festival theme, contracting of artists, design of marketing material, promotion and publicity, setting up, packing up and cleaning up.

**Funding;** do you have the resources needed to stage your event well. If not, what funding is available and when do you need to have applications submitted. Is sponsorship and other in kind support available?

**Logistics;** wherever large groups of people congregate there are a range of responsibilities to ensure their safety and well being. Consider risk management, safety strategies and insurance required. Also consider compliance matters relating to use of venue/site, where alcohol licenses are required, other licenses for example blue cards wherever event personnel are to be working with children.

**Marketing;** Good, strong visual identity will be a key to building your events identity and recognition throughout the community and beyond. Ensuring everyone has the same message will support these efforts. Posters, flyers and web sites are a great way to get the news out there. Community radio is a powerful tool for promotion. Think of as many ways to create a buzz either through word of mouth or more formal marketing strategies. Buddying up on other organisations' marketing can often be an efficient way of broadening the reach of your market.

## Managing your event

Event management requires considerable vision, forethought, research, planning and action.

Have good systems in place to manage and monitor the event, including; effective bookkeeping, documentation, filing and management committee procedures.

You also need to sustain your event. If you want it to be an annual occurrence, illustrate how you intend to improve its delivery, or add to the products, or services it offers its audience. This includes managing the resources, people, financial resources, and processes to deliver your event. Participants need to be stimulated and interested in your event, and it needs to be fresh and engaging each time it is held.

## Community support

Events are more likely to be funded if you can demonstrate community support. Letters of support or a report on your market research are a good way to illustrate this. Generally funds cannot be granted retrospectively or outside round dates.

## Links and resources

- Arts Queensland [www.arts.qld.gov.au/funding/](http://www.arts.qld.gov.au/funding/)
- ArtsYakka [www.artsyakka.com/](http://www.artsyakka.com/)
- Community Partnerships through Australia Council [www.australiacouncil.gov.au/](http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/)
- Creative Communities [www.arts.qld.gov.au/arts/creative.html](http://www.arts.qld.gov.au/arts/creative.html)
- Events Queensland [www.qldevents.com.au/](http://www.qldevents.com.au/)
- Festival Cairns [www.cairns.qld.gov.au/cairns/services/community\\_services/FESTIVALCAIRNS2009.htm](http://www.cairns.qld.gov.au/cairns/services/community_services/FESTIVALCAIRNS2009.htm)
- Festivals Australia [www.arts.gov.au/arts/festivals\\_australia](http://www.arts.gov.au/arts/festivals_australia)
- Festlinx [www.festlinx.org/](http://www.festlinx.org/)
- Our Community [www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au)



## Checklist

- Have you got a solid idea you can achieve?
- Are you realistic in terms of what is involved to bring your event to reality?
- Can you create clear objectives?
- Have you got a detailed project plan?
- Have you developed a sound business plan?
- Have you got an appropriate support network of people around you?
- Can you establish good governance of your event with a well-formed, organised management committee?
- Have you tested your market by research? (if your concept has no target market you risk poor attendance)
- Will you market your event with a strong brand?
- Have you researched all avenues of promotion?
- Have you sought sponsorship to strengthen support for your event?
- Can you communicate well with your project team and sponsors?
- Have you paid attention to risk management issues?
- Have you complied with council regulations and permits?
- Have you evaluated your event to see what can be improved on?

## Telephone Advisory Service

Got a creative idea? Looking for help to grow it? Arts Nexus can assist you to develop your creative ideas into real ventures, find funding, write grants and manage your project. Contact us today on 07 4051 4433 or [admin@artsnexus.com.au](mailto:admin@artsnexus.com.au)

References [www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au), [www.qldevents.com.au](http://www.qldevents.com.au)

*Disclaimer: this information is correct at time of printing August 2009. Details are subject to change.*



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