

Things To Think About Pre-Event:

When coordinating an event, you want to establish a targeted audience while manifesting objectives, goals, and a code of conduct. Extended periods of time devoted to brainstorming is crucial to develop a well put together agenda that can assist in incorporating content that's corresponding with DEI topics. Topics that can be explored may include:

- Gender Identity
- Racial Identity
- Religious Identity
- LGBTQIA+ Community
- Disability Inherence
- Classroom/Workplace Discrimination
- Historical Discrimination
- Issues concerning Social Justice

When student-led organizations seek to organize and propose events, they may want to consider strategies pertaining to promotion, catering, choice of venue, hosting guest speakers, gifts and appeals, and registration. When conducting such a selection, it's important to consider the following.

Promotion:

It is essential to use visuals and language that are for the intended audience and ensure inclusivity. Demonstrating comprehensive language is the key structure of effective trust and relationship building. However, advertising dialect that may come off offensive or degrading will not connect with your audience and oftentimes will dismantle trust.

To exclude the formation of biases, use methods of promotion that captures a wide range of identities and viewpoints when communicating to your intended audience. When dealing with differences, it should only be broached when that topic is applicable. Ensure you are tactful and sensitive with the usage of labels. Steering away from labeling individuals is vital as it is well preferred, however, when there are no other alternatives, refer to the audience by what they prefer to be called.

Incorporate questions regarding the needs of accessibility and possible concerns of diet or nutritious levels when pertinent.

Choice of Venue:

When selecting a venue, try to steer clear of days that have any religious or cultural significance. Once a location is secured, confirm that all restrooms are accessible for all genders. Establish a location where accessibility needs are satisfied. This includes ramps, elevators, signs that are easily legible, seating for people who may be hard of hearing and/or have low vision. whenever relevant, request a designated room that can be utilized as a "quiet room".

Speakers Invitation and Preparation:

When assembling a formal proposal, include language that pertains to DEI topics or issues that you want to implement in your program. After your proposal has been approved by the spokesperson, request demographic material to better illustrate the DEI Initiative and the construction of an inclusive environment. Such demographic material may include a brief bio and headshot, gender pronouns, age, languages, ethnicity, race, education, employment, and/or material status.

When arranging your event, seek your spokespersons preference when incorporating questions/feedback from the intended audience. This can include pre-submitted questionnaires, anonymous submissions via apps, and have multiple open mics scattered among the audience. This influence will create the establishment of multiple outlooks being incorporated into your program.

With the ability of sensitive DEI related topics materializing, be sure that your speaker is prepared and comfortable to engage in such discussions. To best ensure the discussion is presented in a thoughtful and educational approach, plan and set specific rules, boundaries, and guidelines pertaining to the conversation ahead of time. The grounds of such dialogue is to educate; therefore, kindly ask the members of the audience to be mindful and respectful of contrasting thoughts, opinions, and perspectives.

When discussing sensitive topics, know when to propose confidently. An example of this may be stating “moving forward, I would like to take some time to offer to keep the pre-existing discussion off the books”. If any disturbance is coming from the audience, politely ask the participant to discontinue their behavior and failure to do so would result in dismissal.

During the Event:

In the course of your program, you want to assure that all materials, signs, and equipment are legible and accessible for all parties (cultures and individuals who may have disabilities). Obtain designated areas (rooms, seating, tables, etc.) to be sensible of the needs of accessibility.

After the Event:

In conclusion of your event, you can follow up by providing a post-event survey that solicits the assurance of inclusivity. Such questionnaires, on a 5-point scale, may be used:

- “Was there a diverse influence present throughout the event”
- “Was there diverse representation amongst the Guest Speaker”
- “This program was accessibility inclusive and these needs were met”
- “This program has allowed me to be more DEI aware”

Express gratitude to your spokesperson, intended audience, and/or supplier by delivering “thank you” remarks. Assert recognition by acknowledging their contribution to the atmosphere and of the program and ask for future references.

References:

Diversity, equity, and Inclusion Event Planning Checklist. (n.d.). Retrieved January 26, 2022, from https://www8.gsb.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/files/Dean_DEI%20Checklist_FY21.pdf

Event guide: Centering diversity, equity and inclusion. (n.d.). Retrieved January 26, 2022, from https://www.childrenandnature.org/wp-content/uploads/DEI_EventGuide.pdf

Marin, G. (2021, October 27). *Diversity & inclusion in events: 6 strategies to improve event planning.* InEvent Blog. Retrieved January 26, 2022, from <https://inevent.com/blog/event-planning/diversity-inclusion-in-events-6-strategies-to-improve-event-planning.html>