SO YOU
WANT TO HOST A CONFERENCE

Smith College
Office of Student Engagement
START WITH THE OSE

If you are planning a large conference, it is important that you come to Campus Center 106, the Office of Student Engagement (OSE) at least 6 months before the event and with the Director about your idea. Starting with the OSE will help everyone involved understand what you are looking to do and get you started on the right foot.

You will leave this first meeting with a plan, a list of things to do and a follow-up meeting so you and a member of the OSE staff can check in with one another throughout the planning process.
As soon as you have decided to move forward with an idea, request your spaces using 25Live, https://25live.collegenet.com/smith. Even if you don’t have all the details, request the spaces knowing that you can update your reservation as the pieces come together.

Know that once you have submitted the space requests it is **NOT CONFIRMED** until you have heard from the Office of Student Engagement Reservations Coordinator.

This process can take from a few days to a few weeks so request the spaces as soon as possible.

Student reservations for the fall can be submitted the first day of classes in the spring and spring reservations can be submitted the first day of classes in the fall.

Any request for classroom space will be held until **AFTER** classes for that semester have been scheduled. Please consider a non-classroom space if your event is early in the semester.
FUNDING

If your conference will include a big-name speaker, don’t wait to submit a separate SGA Universal Funding Form for the honorarium before you submit the budget for the remainder of the conference. In order to make a speaker an offer, you will need to know what you have to work with.

When creating a budget, remember to include not only the cost of the speaker, band or artist but also custodial charges, food, crowd control, hotel and travel accommodations and publicity costs. A detailed, realistic and organized budget is key when applying for funds to support your event. If non-Smith students are being charged for the conference, make sure you include these numbers as sources of income.

Recognized organizations can apply for funding for programs and events through the SGA Universal Funding Application. The applications can be accessed via the SGA webpage with a link to The Smith Social Network. Applications are due by Monday at 5pm. The SGA Finance Committee will meet on Wednesday and comment directly on the application you submit on the Smith Social Network. Descriptions of both the ORC Discretionary Fund and the Sawyer Fund are available on the SGA page, www.smith.edu/sga/funding.php. Apply early as funds are limited.
Is food appropriate for your event? There are options when it comes to catering. Students can use Campus Catering by booking an event on the Dining Services webpage, www.smith.edu/diningservices/catering_booking.php or they can contact an outside caterer to help meet their needs. Events happening in the Campus Center MUST use Campus Center Catering or seek approval via email to the Campus Center Cafe Manager to allow your organization to go with an outside caterer.

If you are bringing in or using ANY on or off campus services – artist, catering, WOZQ, speaker, faculty panelist, etc. – whether you are paying them or not, you must request a contract.

All contracts, including zero-pay contracts, must be requested through the event registration form in the Social Network, socialnetwork.smith.edu. Please request contracts at least two weeks before the event.

Need something more to make the event happen? The OSE can give you contact information for lights and sound companies, places to rent equipment and local resources that will help. Remember – all of these extras cost money and will require you to include them in your budget request. Request a contract or an invoice so the bills can be paid.
Once you have confirmation of your space through 25Live, you must register your event in The Smith Social Network, socialnetwork.smith.edu. Here you will request contracts, banner space, cash boxes and a meeting with a member of the OSE staff to talk about your event.

Depending on how many contracts you are requesting, it might be easier to organize your needs and track progress through a Google Sheet that has been shared with the Director of the OSE. In your meeting, you should come up with a system that is going to work for both of you so contracts won’t be delayed.

Once your event is registered and approved, it will be available for everyone to see on their mobile device through the corq app, corqapp.com
RESOURCES AND SPACE NEEDS

Just because you have reserved the space doesn’t mean that we will know what you need or how you want the room set-up. Remember:

- Go into your 25Live reservation and add resources – tables, chairs, laptop, screen, easels and tech equipment for each room that you have requested. Resources are limited so request what you need as early as possible.

- Tell us how you want the room or space set-up – lecture style, conference style with chairs around tables, round tables for a dinner. Without the set-up, we are guessing how you are actually using the space.

- Not sure of what you need or what your options are? Stop by the OSE! We are happy to walk you through a set-up and give you options for the space you reserved.
When thinking about your event, remember the people that you will need in place to make it happen.

- Do you need folks to take tickets?
- Do you need folks from your organization to stay after to help cleanup?
- Will Crowd Control be required?
- Are you in need of Campus Police coverage?

In some instances, additional staffing will be required at an additional cost to your organization. Get in touch with folks early and have a plan in place so you aren’t scrambling the night of the event to get everything taken care of.
PUBLICITY

The key to any event is great publicity and there are some things to think about early.

- Did you add an event description to your 25Live reservation?
- Did you request the resource “Publicity – local media calendars” in your 25Live submission?
- Did you make a flyer to post in approved spaces* around campus?
- Did you save a jpg of your flyer and attach it to your event registration to get it on the flyer board and the screens in the Campus Center?
- Did you reserve banner space in the Campus Center?
- Did you submit your event to e-digest, www.smith.edu/e-digest?
- Are you using Facebook or Twitter?

Lastly, grab some chalk from the SGA Office, CC 206 and hit the pavement! Chalking* is a great way to engage your organization members and can go places flyers cannot – sidewalks, driveways, etc.

*Please remember to check out the publicity policy to ensure that you are chalking and flyering in legal places around campus,
www.smith.edu/sao/handbook/policies/chalking.php,
www.smith.edu/sao/handbook/policies/postinginfo.php
PAYING THE BILLS

As soon as the contracts are in and the invoices have been collected, it is time to get those bills paid.

- Event organizers are responsible for working with the organization treasurer to get the bills paid through The Smith Social Network Finance.

- Once you submit the Purchase Request Form on The Smith Social Network, the treasurer must come in to sign the original request before it goes to the Controller’s Office for payment. Depending on the time of year, the Controller’s Office can take anywhere from 2-4 weeks to process a check request.

Any questions related to The Smith Social Network Finance or paying a bill should be referred to the OSE, CC 106.
WRITING IT ALL DOWN

Remember that after the event is over you need to evaluate. Taking the time to talk about the event and writing down some notes is important for the success of all your future events.

Making a folder in The Social Network under Documents and uploading your evaluation notes means that next year’s event planners will move forward with the wisdom of the previous year’s planners.

Evaluating the event will also help with the budget request for an annual event. Having some data about the number of people in attendance, actual costs and how people felt about the event can help as you put together the next SGA Universal Funding Form application.