

SAMPLE EVENT PLANNING CHECKLIST

(ON-CAMPUS EVENTS)

This Event Planning Checklist was developed to assist staff and faculty when organizing lectures, readings, panel discussions, symposia, workshops, meetings, conferences, and other academic or social functions. Not all items on the Checklist will be relevant to every event, but each section provides essential considerations to ensure seamless execution.

Questions or Assistance: Please direct inquiries to the Events Management Office (EMO) at ext. 2669 or via email at smithevents@smith.edu.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS WHEN SCHEDULING EVENTS

Consider other events that may be occurring at the College on the same day to determine if attendance at your event may be impacted in ways that you may not intend. Consult the Calendar of Events to learn about other events already scheduled.

Consider whether your event will conflict with religious observances.

Consider the topic/subject/guest speaker/author to determine if there is the potential for interruptions/disruptions/protests.

1. General Event Information & Administration

Event Contact Person

(Usually the Chair of the Organizing Committee)

- **Name:** _____
- **Address / Office Location:** _____
- **Telephone Number:** _____
- **Email Address:** _____

Type of Event

Select	Event Category	Select	Event Category
[]	Conference	[]	Reading / Book Signing

Select	Event Category	Select	Event Category
☐	Lecture	☐	Symposium
☐	Meeting	☐	Workshop
☐	Meal / Reception	☐	Panel Discussion
☐	Reading	☐	Other:

Committee Organization & Budgeting

- **Committee Members:** Compile member list including phone numbers and email addresses.
- **Meeting Schedule:** Set up a routine meeting schedule for planning and status updates.
- **Distribution of Responsibilities:** Assign specific roles (e.g., publicity, catering, speaker liaison, tech).
 - Event organizers are responsible for ensuring adherence to college policies, including, but not limited to: [Policy Governing Time, Place and Manner of Expressive Activity](#), [Smith College Policies Regarding Alcohol](#), [Discrimination and Harassment and Equal Educational Opportunity Policies](#) and employee, student and faculty Codes of Conduct.
- **Funding Source:** Identify funding sources and obtain budget approval.
- **Accounting & Cost Allocation:** Establish specific accounts required for expenses:
 - Travel and transportation
 - Entertainment and catering
 - Production, A/V, and sound/lighting
 - Accommodations and lodging
 - Speaker honoraria
 - Poster design, printing, and promotional materials
 - Floral arrangements and room decor
 - Labor and staffing (student ushers, facility staff)
 - Office supplies and badge materials
 - Professional photographer
 - Accessibility accommodations (interpreters, equipment)

2. Space Reservations & Logistics

All physical space requests must be placed through **25Live** using your Smith College login credentials.

- **25Live Basics & Space Selection:** [Refer to the 25Live documentation on the Smith website](#) for tutorials and available campus locations. Contact the *Events & Scheduling Systems Administrator* in the Events Management Office (EMO) for assistance navigating 25Live or choosing appropriate spaces.
- **Capacity Verification:** Verify room capacity to ensure it safely accommodates anticipated attendance.
- **Weather Contingencies:** Establish a rain location or severe weather plan for all outdoor events.
- **Resource Requests:** Submit all room setup requirements as resource requests directly within 25Live. Reach out to the *Senior Associate Director of Event Operations* in EMO for advance event setups, setup diagrams, or specialized equipment (tents, electrical/plumbing hookups, outdoor signage consultation, etc.).

3. Accessibility Access & Accommodations

For accessibility questions or TTY information, contact the **Accessibility Resource Center (ARC)** at ext. 2071 or email arc@smith.edu.

- **Access Notice on Announcements:** Include an inquiry notice on all invitations and publicity materials:
 - *"Please list any accessibility accommodations needed."*
 - *"For accessibility accommodations, please call the Accessibility Resource Center: 413-585-2071."*
- **Physical Venue Checklist:**
 - Ensure full wheelchair accessibility to the building, room, and stage.
 - Provide a lowered podium or adjustable lectern.
 - Set up lowered tables (vs. high counters) for registration and check-in desks.
 - Designate a special seating section for guests needing accessibility accommodations.
 - Reserve accessible hotel rooms and arrange accessible ground transportation.
- **Communication & Catering:**
 - Schedule Sign Language Interpreters or real-time communication assistance.
 - Prepare alternative formats for all printed materials (large print, electronic formats).
 - Ensure clear allergen listings are present on all food displays.
 - Request assisted listening devices through ITS for events with attendance

exceeding 50 people.

4. Speaker & Special Guest Management

Speakers and Panelists

- **Invitation & Logistics:** Send formal invitation, confirm honorarium, and designate Faculty/Staff hosts as campus escorts.
- **Documentation:** Collect speaker CV, high-resolution publicity photo, lecture title, background reading materials, and signed audio/video release forms. Gather speaker contact details and representative information.
- **Travel & Lodging:**
 - Book travel arrangements and reserve hotel accommodations.
 - Arrange airport/train station transportation: [Request a vehicle through Facilities Management](#) or hire local transport (Michael's Buslines at 413-583-6392).
 - Coordinate campus shuttle transport through Facilities Management Customer Service at **ext. 2400**.
 - Secure parking passes through Campus Safety at **ext. 2490** or **parkingdecals@smith.edu**.
- **Event Execution:**
 - Identify an individual to introduce the speaker/panelists and moderate discussions.
 - Create event scripts as needed (contact EMO at ext. 2669 / smithevents@smith.edu for guidance).
 - Identify an event disruption protocol speaker and consult Enterprise Risk Management for preparedness guidance.
 - Process honoraria, expense reimbursements, and send formal thank-you notes post-event.

Special Guests

- Manage invitations, guest lists, and specialized escort/lodging needs.
- Arrange ground transport, shuttle service, and parking decals via Campus Safety (ext. 2490).
- Perform post-event follow-up.

5. Invitations & Registration

- **Invitation Design & Distribution:**

- Involve the Communications & Marketing Department in the design and distribution of invitations for campus-wide events.
- Include a campus map (downloadable PDF guide or print map from Communications & Marketing).
- Specify response deadline, contact person details (Voice and TTY), dietary restriction requests, and accessibility needs.
- Distribute internally as appropriate and archive extra copies for records.
- **Registration Table Setup:**
 - Reserve tables, chairs, and table linens.
 - Prepare name tags, pens, pencils, event info packets, and promotional gifts/swag.
 - Set up an Information Table, trash/recycling receptacles, and coat racks.

6. Catering, Dinners & Receptions

- **Catering Options:**
 - **Smith College Catering:** Email catering@smith.edu or [complete forms on the Dining Services Catering page](#).
 - **External Caterers:** Review and comply with all college policies and guidelines for external vendors.
- **Menu & Dietary Planning:**
 - Collect guest dietary restrictions and allergen information in advance.
 - Require caterers to explicitly label all allergens on food displays.
 - Tally final guest counts and meal choices for served dinners; create a seating chart and submit final numbers by catering deadlines.
- **Dining Logistics:**
 - Confirm chair count per table and total dining tables required.
 - Arrange linens, place cards, floral arrangements (obtain cost estimates via Smith Catering), and coat racks.
 - Designate a Host/Emcee, set an evening schedule/timeline, and ensure podium and microphone are in place.
 - Hire a photographer if required.

7. Publicity, Media & Technical Needs

Publicity Channels (Request via 25Live)

- Consult Communications & Marketing in advance for public relations guidance.
- Submit announcements to *The Gate*, *eDigest*, Smith News & Events Calendar, 5-College

calendar, local media calendars, and social media platforms.

Audio, Visual, Sound & Layout Requirements (Request via 25Live)

Category	Specific Requirements & Notes
AV Equipment	Projectors, slide equipment, music playlists, guest Wi-Fi login setup, Zoom equipment for virtual attendees or presenters, and digital/printed posters.
AV Technical Support	Request technician assistance (start of event or full duration) at least 3 weeks in advance . <i>Note: Recording and livestreaming are not handled by internal ITS and must be contracted with an external vendor.</i>
Sound & Lighting	Podium with microphone, lavalier/countryman microphones, panel microphones. Advance equipment may require contracting with external AV vendors (consult ITS or EMO).
Staging & Room Layout	Water bottles/glasses for speakers, panel tables with linens/skirting, stage chairs, podium floral spray, Smith banner, bulletin boards, chalkboards, and easels.
Reserved Seating	Press section, VIP reserved front seating, and Accessibility section (interpreter visibility; contact ARC at ext. 2071).

8. Staffing, Safety & Emergency Management

- **Departmental Staffing:**
 - Facilities Management staff (request via 25Live / EMO ext. 2669).
 - Dining Services (ext. 2300) and Campus Police (ext. 2490).
 - Communications & Marketing for external press support.
 - Student Ushers, Greeters, and Volunteers (post student positions on Workday, contact Student Employment for help).
- **Large Events & Permits:**
 - Notify EMO (ext. 2407 / smithevents@smith.edu) of crowd size estimates for large-venue events (e.g., John M. Greene Hall).
 - Request Fire Department and Campus Safety details in 25Live; confirm with EMO

- and Environmental Health & Safety (EHS).
- Contact Environmental Health & Safety (EHS) for Northampton Fire Department (NFD) permits.
- Contact Campus Safety (ext. 2490) to evaluate the need for officers or Northampton Police detail for street traffic.
- **Event Safety Best Practices:**
 - Have an emergency exit plan and communicate to attendees at the beginning of the event
 - Share the campus safety number with participants at the beginning of the event so they know who to call in an emergency
 - Event safety plans are required for any event open to the public and/or tickets are required. Please consult with the Director of Emergency Management to create an event safety plan.
 - Event organizers are responsible for ensuring adherence to college policies, including, but not limited to: [Policy Governing Time, Place and Manner of Expressive Activity](#), [Smith College Policies Regarding Alcohol](#), [Discrimination and Harassment and Equal Educational Opportunity Policies](#) and employee, student and faculty Codes of Conduct.
- **[Emergency Management](#):**
 - Consult the Director of Emergency Management for guidance on preparedness best practices.
 - Request Campus Safety support for large-scale events, public events, or events with potentially contentious subject matter.

9. Post-Event Wrap-Up

- Send thank-you notes to supporting departments, staff, and campus partners.
- Compile and share debrief notes with planning partners and committees to inform future event planning.