

The Costume Society's Events Planning Guide from the Programme Sub-committee (Jan 07)

This guide to organizing an event for The Costume Society will be of help in answering many of the problems that individual events present. The Programme Sub-committee Co-ordinator should be referred to in all cases where an event poses questions that this guide does not address.

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EVENTS PLANNING GUIDE

1. THE CHECK LIST

i) Organizers

Once you have agreed to act as Event Organizer (EO) you will need to select a member of the Sub-committee who will be your Event Organizer Support (EOS). This person will, in the event of your being unable to continue with the organization or unable to be present at the event, be able to take over. He or she will require to be kept up-to-date with all information on the event, including all copy letters, memos, e-mails et cetera.

A table of expenditure should be kept; receipts should be obtained whenever possible. Major expenditure should be agreed with the Programme Co-ordinator.

ii) The venue

Visit the proposed venue (see section 2) and check all available facilities (see 10. Technical Survey). If adequate for our purposes the venue should be booked by formal letter confirming dates, times, facilities required, equipment to be supplied or to be hired and source of hiring (see 5 and 6).

iii) Speakers

The speakers can now be contacted. This should be done by telephone and confirmed by letter. Copies of all letters and e-mails must be retained on file.

When speakers have agreed to participate a formal letter confirming the booking must be sent (see section 7).

iv) Costing

The event should now be costed so that the Sub-committee can agree the ticket prices for the event. All events are intended to cover costs and hopefully create a small contingency fund (see section 3).

v) Publicity

When stages i) to iv) are complete contact the Programme Co-ordinator with the above information before proceeding further. Then, with the Programme Coordinator's advice, inform the Newsletter Editor and the Webmaster (see section

8). You will also need to select someone to write a report for the newsletter and possibly for the journal.

vi) Duties

With the support of the Sub-committee assign the following tasks:

- a. Chairmanship of the event.
- b. Greet speakers and ensure that they know who is handling the technical side of the event, where they sit, and that they receive hospitality. It is important that bottled water and glasses are available on the podium.
- c. Arrange hospitality for speakers, selected Officers, Sub-committee members and EO and EOS. The number should be kept to the minimum.
- d. Reception, registration, ticket sales and programme hand-outs on door.
- e. Introductions and votes of thanks unless all to be dealt with by Chairman.
- f. Liaison with the technician or with technical support from our member/s.
- g. Display publications, et cetera.
- h. Delegate writing of a report for the newsletter and possibly for the journal.
- i. Any other items that the event and venue suggest as necessary.

EO and EOS will need to agree and produce a list for an event.

vii) Finance

Payment for venue charges may be required up front. If so always request an invoice. This may be paid by cheque by the Treasurer (who will require the invoice), or by the Costume Society's Visa Card held by the Treasurer and the Programme Co-ordinator; the paid invoice should be given to the Treasurer.

Always keep a record of such transactions for your own file.

viii) Speakers' fees and travel claims

Speakers are usually paid on the day. If the Treasurer will not be attending, arrange to have the cheques for the speakers' fees sent to you in advance. Provide yourself with envelopes in the speakers' names for the cheques and include complimentary slips with the thanks of the Society. Speakers are asked to provide travel claim forms for expenses; these will be paid with their fees or, if the Treasurer is not attending, will be paid after the event. The Treasurer will need speakers' names and addresses.

ix) Safety measures

Several days prior to the event contact the venue manager, hire services (if you are dealing with these independently) and the speakers to ensure that all is well and will be in attendance at the event.

x) After the event (see section 9)

Each event is unique, has its own problems and answers. This check list is a guide. The Programme Co-ordinator is available to offer support and guidance and your EOS is there to support you.

2. SELECTING A VENUE

Prior to your visit, study the Technical Survey (see section 10. Addendum) very carefully. Write a personal list of what you and your EOS think will be vital and compare it with the Technical Survey. Venues can be very expensive and it is important that you ascertain what is included in the price. Do not assume that everything that you see or anything you will need is included in the hire charge. Do not assume that quoted prices are inclusive of VAT and service charges. They are usually NOT.

Take a copy of the Technical Survey with you when you make the site visit and very carefully check against all relevant items. Ask for brochures and price lists for the venue and study these carefully after the visit.

When booking the venue write a formal letter confirming dates, times of access, timing of actual event, equipment needs, equipment being provided and equipment to be hired and by whom and from where, and to whom the final invoice should be sent. The letter should clearly state that invoices/s sent to you should be addressed to The Costume Society. You are representing the Society and not responsible for payments.

3. COSTING AN EVENT

If the event is a joint event with another society, museum, gallery, university or

organization it is vitally important that it is agreed in advance how costs are to be shared and how profits are to be allocated. This should be agreed in writing by both parties.

A venue may involve dealing with as many as four different departments each requiring separate invoicing and payment, for example:

Management/hire of lecture space and facilities
Technical hire of technician and facilities
Curator/education
Event content
Catering
All refreshments

As a registered Charity the Society is exempt from VAT within specific guidelines. Organizations should be made aware of our status as an Educational Charity. The Programme Co-ordinator has a VAT Exemption Guide and this should be used. It does not guarantee exemption; the subject is a difficult one. If charged VAT inadvertently or through oversight we have no legal way of recovering the amount paid. If you need advice refer to the Programme Co-ordinator.

The following items are relevant to creating a costing for an event. Some will have to be estimated but use real costs in all possible instances:

- a. Venue, equipment and facilities, including VAT as applicable.
- b. Refreshments. Speakers and EO and EOS and some committee members need to be considered. Delegates will need to know if the ticket price includes refreshments or is an option.
- c. Speakers' fees and travel costs - ask that Apex fares are used or stipulate a mileage charge, agreed with Treasurer and Programme Coordinator.
- d. Technician
- e. Publicity
- f. EO and EOS administration expenses (stationery, travel for initial visits and follow-up visits as necessary), photocopying, telephone, postage et cetera (receipts should be presented whenever possible).

Add the above amounts, plus a nominal sum for contingencies, divide by two thirds of estimated ticket sales. The following categories of delegates are normally catered for: members, non-members and students. A realistic ticket price has to be arrived at and you may have to tailor the event in order to make the pricing viable. The ticket pricing must always be discussed and agreed with the Programme Co-ordinator, who will need to see your estimates. The Coordinator

will liaise with the Treasurer as necessary.

Not all events produce a surplus; some have to be supported by the surplus generated by other events. The society is a registered charity with the stated aim of Education in Dress. While the society is non-profit making, any surplus generated from events is used to support the journal and the society's administration and awards.

4. THE EVENT

BE EARLY BE PREPARED HAVE A LIST OF ASSIGNED DUTIES

Smooth running of the event depends upon you (the EO), your EOS and teamwork. Always have your files with you, including telephone numbers of venue manager, speakers and others who are directly involved with the event. Your list (see section 1.vi - Duties) must be closely observed. Speakers will need to be reminded if they are to take questions at the end of a lecture or be reminded that they are to take part in a forum and at what time in the programme.

One month before the event check the number of tickets sold from the person responsible for ticket sales

If the number of tickets sold have only reached 50% of the maximum recommended group size consult with the museum / venue / lecturer and the Programme Co-ordinator if the event can take place. Two weeks before the event the final decision will be taken if the event will take place or cancelled.

If it has been decided to cancel the event you then must inform all persons involved that it has been cancelled, including the person responsible for ticket sales.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

The Costume Society letter heading must be used on all correspondence at all times. Supplies of letterheads and complimentary slips are available from the Secretary. Envelopes should be purchased and charged for.

6. WRITING LETTERS

Copies of all letters, memos and e-mails should be kept on file. When writing on behalf of the Costume Society the following guidelines should be observed:

- a. Use the society letterhead at all times and the society's name on e-mails.
- b. Check that you have the correct spelling of the title, name and address of the recipient.
- c. Use the recipients' correct qualifications and job title.
- d. State title of event, date and venue in bold above text.
- e. Be brief and businesslike.
- f. If setting up a meeting offer several dates and confirm the date and time in writing.
- g. List the people who will attend with you and their roles within the society.
- h. Indicate the value to the recipient or institution/business of working with the society.
- i. Express gratitude for support of the society
- j. Below your signature write your name and your role in the society.
- k. Add "On behalf of Programme Co-ordinator" and the Programme Coordinator's name.

If in doubt on any matter consult the Programme Co-ordinator.

7. BOOKING LECTURERS

Before contacting a lecturer ensure that you have the authority of the Programme Co-ordinator and know what fees and expenses can be offered. When writing to confirm a booking, the following guidelines should be observed:

- a. Use the Society letterhead at all times and the society's name on e-mails.
- b. Check that you have the correct spelling of title, name, qualifications and address.
- c. State title of event, date and venue in bold above text.
- d. State timing of event and time of lecture.
- e. State length required to speak and if questions or a forum will be offered.
- f. Query audio visual requirements.
- g. Offer hospitality and query dietary needs.
- h. State the society's hopes that the speaker will attend the entire event and not just a session.
- i. State the fee and travel costs and, if driving, pence per mile offered.
- j. Enclose a travel claim form obtainable from the Programme Co-ordinator.
- k. Offer travel directions and maps.
- l. Request written confirmation with lecture title and brief CV for publicity.
- m. Express gratitude for support of the society.
- n. Close with your signature and type your name and role in the society and event.
- o. Add "On behalf of Programme Co-ordinator" and Programme Co-ordinator's name.

If in doubt on any matter consult the Programme Co-ordinator.

8. PUBLICITY

This should be discussed with the Programme Co-ordinator and at the Subcommittee in conjunction with the PR Officer.

THE NEWSLETTER AND THE WEBSITE

The Newsletter Editor requires advance information and has set deadlines to which you must adhere. Please use the following format; examples can be (seen in the current issue of the newsletter and on the website. The text is required on paper and, if possible, on disc (and by email). The same should be sent to the Webmaster.

Format for newsletter entries and website -

Title: Use **bold** text and check all spelling

Date: State day of week, month, year and timing (start and finish)

Venue: Correct title, including location

Speakers: Brief statement – name and job title

Refreshments: If available and if included in ticket price

Tickets available: How many

Booking information: Whom to apply to for tickets. Is an SAE required? The date when booking opens

Brief description of event: 150 words max. This has to sell the event - so make it exciting and scholarly

Event Organizer: Your name, address, telephone and e-mail (email only for website)

Picture: This is essential (hard copy or a scanned or electronic image as a .jpg or .tiff).

Use the spell check before finalising!

The Editor can produce a notice from the above that will feature in the Newsletter and in the Calendar. The Webmaster can create a page for the Events listings on the website. Please check the information when it appears in the newsletter and website – notify the Editor/Webmaster if there is an error or details have changed.

Not all events require additional publicity but some may. Additional material required may include maps, meeting place, travel arrangements, transport suggestions, reading lists, full programme details and suggestions on eating places. The EO and EOS may need to produce a hand-out; sufficient copies must go to the person distributing tickets. Such information is also relevant for the Website, in which case documents must be in Word or Acrobat format – a file with a name ending “.doc” or “.pdf”). The Webmaster will need to receive this information as an attachment by email. The flyer may also be needed for

circulation in hard copy; such items are costly to produce in quantity and only to be used when absolutely necessary.

The contact details for the Newsletter Editor and the Webmaster are included in your listings of Executive Committee and Programme Sub-committee members and appear in the website's executive area.

9. AFTER THE EVENT

i) Reports

In advance of the event you will have selected someone who will write a report on the event. The newsletter Editor will suggest a word-count. A report for the journal is usually more detailed than that published in the newsletter. The journal Editor usually requests reports and indicates a word-count.

ii) Thanks

Letters of thanks are very important. In agreement with the Programme Coordinator, decide who should write these letters and to whom. If the EO will not write all these letters personally, the writers will need correct names, titles, addresses et cetera of all to be thanked.

iii) Archives

Any information that you think should be archived should be sent to the Archivist. Files on the event should be handed to the Programme Co-ordinator and will be retained for at least three years. The information contained may be of use in planning future events.

10. TECHNICAL SURVEY (Addendum)

This should be printed out/photocopied for use on visits to venues. It is hoped that it covers all eventualities. If you note an item missing please let the Programme Co-ordinator know immediately.

The following check list will help in asking all-important questions on the first visit. Check what is included in the hiring charge and what has to be hired from the venue or hired in from outside.

THEATRE

Capacity, seated fire regs. control no.

Tiered seating/level floor plan	Tiered/level
Disabled access	Yes/No
Lifts to upper levels	Yes/No
Black-out facility	Yes/No

Stage Yes/No

Stage Height _____

Display space Yes/No

Display materials tables/screens Yes/No

Security light levels variable for slide presentation Yes/No

AUDIO VISUAL

Technician support included Yes/No

If No, can it be provided? Yes/No

Illuminated stand lectern with AV control panel Yes/No

Front/back projection Front/Back

Fixed screen Yes/No

Screen size/es available and screens in situ _____

Carousel projectors x 2 (may need dual projection) Yes/No

Rotary magazines available Yes/No

Dual projection (2 x projectors + 2 x screens) Yes/No

Laser pointer Yes/No

Overhead projectors available Yes/No

Video/Computer/AV

DVD/Video player available DVD/Video

Monitor and projection available Yes/No

Lap-top computer generated presentation possible Yes/No

Lap-top available at venue Yes/No

Sound

AV system installed Yes/No

Hearing loop installed Yes/No

Microphone available (lapel preferred) Yes/No

Stand microphone available Yes/No

Cassette/CD player available Yes/No

FACILITIES

Telephone for office use Yes/No

Parking (for event organizers) Yes/No

Parking (for ticket holders) Yes/No

Transport/connections map available Yes/No

Catering facilities Yes/No

Public space for social purpose plus a private space Yes/No

Cloakrooms, attended or not Yes/No

Adequate toilet accommodation Yes/No

Disabled toilet facility Yes/No