

# The Cambridge Ambassador Programme

You, Your Event, Your City

## Top Tips for a Successful Event

If you're employing the services of a PCO then most of these scenarios will be covered, but if not, here are some top tips to consider...

### Accommodation

- Check that the venues can offer a range of accommodation options that will suit all budgets and tastes.
- Visit the venue/hotel before your event and ask to see a room of every type, stay over if possible to experience dining and breakfast.
- If you set up an online booking facility for your delegates make sure room descriptions are explicit, so delegates know exactly what to expect.
- Venues and hotels will be able to help you with descriptions and room facilities, as well as images to post on your conference web site.

### Audio Visual

- Check what the venue offers as standard, most academic venues have the latest AV equipment, but if you need special lighting, audience voting panels etc. you may need additional equipment.
- The venue or your PCO will have contacts for companies they have worked with in the past and they may be able to get you preferential rates!
- Check to see what AV support is offered by the venue, if you think you'll need additional technicians for support at the event make sure you budget for this.
- Hold a rehearsal with the AV technicians to make sure everything is in place before the event begins.
- Always have a back-up, save your presentations to disc, memory stick etc and make several copies. If possible send a copy to the venue in advance for the AV technicians and give a copy to a colleague just in case you get held up on the day of the event.

### Catering

- Ensure that you meet with the catering team at your chosen venue to decide on menus and advise on any special dietary, or cultural requirements well in advance of your event.
- Agree a way of identifying guests with special requirements for the duration of the event.
- Agree minimum numbers with your chosen venues, you can always increase numbers if the event is popular and capacity allows.
- Consider the different cultures of your delegates - Will they prefer to eat early or late? Will they like cooked breakfasts or continental? Would they rather eat on the go, or enjoy a more leisurely meal? The catering staff at the Colleges are experienced in the different palates and customs of all cultures and would be happy to give advice to ensure your event is a success.
- Have catering points in, or close to exhibitions and poster sessions to encourage footfall and keep your sponsors happy.

#### Meet Cambridge

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### Delegates

- Make sure name badges are clear and easy to read and that you have a supply of spares!
- Colour code organisers badges, so delegates can find help quickly and easily.
- If WiFi is available for delegates use during the event, or at their accommodation ensure delegates know where to obtain passwords/codes especially if they will need different passwords at different venues.

### Finance

- Always over estimate!
- Compare delegate package prices with paying separately for room hire, catering etc.

### Feedback

- Give your delegates an incentive to provide feedback.
- Check social media using keywords during the event to allow you to monitor delegates, experiences and react quickly to any negative comments.

### Press & Publicity

- Brief photographers and journalists clearly in advance of your event to avoid any confusion on the day.
- Make sure any speakers you film, or photograph have given their consent and post notices throughout the venue to advise delegates that filming and photography may be in progress.
- Consider having a film of your event made to extend the reach of your conference beyond the actual event. The film could then be made available on your conference web site and social media channels and used to help promote your organisation to potential members.

### Social Media

- Give your event a hashtag as soon as it's confirmed and begin to Tweet! It's a free, quick and easy way to publicise your event.
- Make sure all your delegates know what the event hashtag is and put it on all of your literature. Delegates can then start to follow the hashtag and begin to network with other delegates before the event begins.
- Create an event community on Facebook and LinkedIn to allow delegates to start the dialogue before the event begins.
- Social media is a powerful tool for events, but if you're not sure about using it, or don't have the time then it's best left to the experts, as it will require careful monitoring before, during and after the event.

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### Signage

- Agree your signage with the venue in advance as permission may need to be obtained for any signage on public highways and footpaths and the use of logos etc.
- Sign your route frequently – too many signs are better than too few!
- Get someone other than yourself to walk the routes to test your signage.
- Check your signage everyday and have extra signage ready to replace any signs that are damaged or missing.

### Venue

- Allow time for event set-up, and budget for this when booking the venue.
- Check about parking and access arrangements for any delivery vehicles in advance in case passes or permits need to be issued.
- If you will require stationery, flip charts and pads etc. check that they are included, or budget to pay extra.
- Choose a venue that can provide good areas for networking – delegates often say that networking opportunities at conferences are very valuable.

If you are planning an event talk please do contact us to tell us your ideas. We have a wealth of contacts and resources to help you save time and money!

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