

EDI CHECKLIST FOR EVENT PLANNING

This checklist was created to help you to think about equality, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility in any entrepreneurship event you organise. However, this is not an exhaustive list and is meant to provide small actionable steps you can incorporate today. While we all want to provide the best experience for every participant, we recognise that some elements are harder to control or carry out and may require more time and effort. The key is to keep moving forward, incorporating as many suggestions as possible, and working towards more equitable and accessible events.

PURPOSE

- Understand why you are organising this event, and who it is for
- Ensure the event you want to organise will serve the needs of the audience you want to attract

TYPE & FORMAT

- Decide whether it will be an online, in-person, or hybrid event
- If your event is online, explain how to join and participate (for speakers and attendees) in the event
- Consider hosting a pre-event 'tech training sessions' for attendees if it is a new platform
- Enable accessible tools/add-ons for any online platform, including captioning (e.g. in MS Teams)
- Consider if your event timings are appropriate for the audience and understand challenges for attending (e.g. caring responsibilities). Athena Swan friendly work hours are Monday to Friday 10 am – 4pm
- Check if the proposed event date is on or near any religious, spiritual and/or statutory holidays

FONTS & GRAPHICS

- Use common and pre-installed fonts that are at least 12-point sans serif font – small or italic scripts may be challenging to read
- Use graphics that depict a range of people and are representative of the audience you want to attract
- Include all details such as date, time, location, contacts, and accessibility for speaker and attendee invites

PROMOTION

- Circulate your invite or advert widely to attract people with diverse experiences, viewpoints and backgrounds – share details with relevant groups (eg on Facebook and LinkedIn)
- Use multiple methods and channels to promote your event (eg social media, websites, printed posters)
- Allow enough time for invites to be circulated so that accessibility requests can be made and arranged
- Make sure that all the attendees receive an agenda for the event, including scheduled breaks, duration, and any accessibility options

EVALUATION

- Ensure that the participants are invited to provide feedback or submit ideas for future events – provide alternate methods of collecting feedback (eg via email) for those who may not be able to access your primary form

DIVERSITY

Organisers/Planning Committee:

- Ensure they understand the purpose and the audience you are trying to engage with
- Bring in others with expertise or life experience of the topic to advise or consult if you need more support

Speakers:

- Invite speakers, panellists, or judges with diverse characteristics or backgrounds (eg gender, ethnicity, sectors or disciplines). Consider checking out BME Staff Networks and LGBT+ Role models within the university

Audience:

- Reach out to your target audience using a variety of methods (see Invites and promotion) – EDI networks, Oxford University Clubs and Societies, Oxford Talks, BIPOC STEM Network are all great places to start

REGISTRATION

- Provide multiple options for people to register for the event where possible (e.g. Eventbrite, by e-mail, or by phone) and if possible avoid allocating all tickets on a first come, first served basis to ensure those who are not able to respond quickly do not miss out
- If it is a paid event, consider giving discounts on tickets to attendees with accessibility issues or those from minority groups
- Avoid using unnecessary dress code guidelines (e.g. suits for men, cocktail dresses for women)
- Only collect personal information, which is essential, and explain why you need any data collected
- Include an optional pronoun field upon registration and consider including these on nametags
- Ask for accessibility or dietary requests in separate free text fields (not generic lists) to capture detailed or complex needs (e.g. "Please share with us any accessibility-related measures you require for this event"). Find out more about disability support offered by the university here.
- Include clear directions on how to get to the event with a map and written directions
Provide detailed contact information for making any enquiries

VENUE & CATERING

- Ask about and choose a venue based on how they meet various accessibility needs, including mobility, acoustics, catering, and lighting. Most Oxford University venues outline these
- Consider the appropriateness of your venue to your speakers and audience (e.g. religious buildings or pubs)
- Provide clearly signed and gender-neutral toilets where possible
- All food should be clearly labelled for dietary restrictions and servers should be clear on allergens in the food they are serving; consider using local or university caterers as most of them are accessible.
- Dietary restricted meals should be served at the same time as other meals (not early/late) where possible