



# Event Guide

Nice that you are thinking about organising an event around Existential Risks! This mini-guide is meant to support you but please feel free to reach out to [info@existentialriskobservatory.org](mailto:info@existentialriskobservatory.org) if you like any more information, want to brainstorm together or anything else we could help you with. And if you have any feedback, please send it our way too! Note that the length of the three phases really differs per event, but the final phase is usually in the month to the run-up to the event.

## *The Before Phase*

### **Step 1: Why do you organise the event?**

In this step, you want to make sure you define your **ultimate goal** for the event. Do you want to raise public awareness? Gather volunteers? Gather group members? What would you like to accomplish when the event goes well. In combination with the main goal, also write down your **objectives** – this can be quantitative goals that come out of your event.

### **Step 2: Who, what, when and where do you want to organise the event?**

Here you define your time frame – this can be either an exact **date**, or in a certain amount of weeks/months. You also want to determine the scope – how many **attendees** are you planning for? And will it be local? What kind of demographics are you looking for? This automatically means that you will very likely decide the **location** of the event (which city or country). You should create a shortlist of venues that you are looking at, and send emails to see their availability as well as price. Also think about the type of event you want to organise – will it fit in an evening? Or do you need two full days?

### **Step 3: The Budget**

Before you do anything else, you need to create a **budget** for yourself. With the list of event venues (or maybe you do it for free at your university) and the number attendees in combination with the amount of days you want to event to last, you will now create the budget before doing anything else. It is easy to get swept up in ideas, promotion flyers and your teammates, but this is a crucial step. In the budget, make sure to calculate for the venue costs, marketing and promotion (including materials if needed), a budget for your speakers (ranging from a speakers fee to a present depending on your activity) and a post for miscellaneous costs. This budget will be a basis and helps you make decisions about how crazy you can go. It is of course not static and will be adjusted along the way too, but make sure you always refer to your maximum budget. When it comes to funding, you can check it online, or give it a think if you know someone who would be willing to sponsor you, or maybe can even give you the venue for free for example. Or maybe you can promote the event to be part of a bigger event someone is already organising (and paying for). Think also whether you want to charge for entry, or whether it will be free for attendees to come (of course, paid entry will create some obstacles for some people)

**Based on these three steps, make sure you have realistic expectations of what you can do. This is by no way meant to scare you, but it is good to know you are not running out of money or time, and that you can go through with organising the event.**



## *The During Phase*

### **Step 4: Details, details, details!**

In this step, you are going to finalize all the details. Here are things that you should think about:

- **Team building!**
  - Who can help me organise the event? Is someone I know good at planning/scheduling? Or designing? Do I know someone who has that helicopter view of what is going on? And someone who is a star at social media and communications? Don't be afraid to also ask friends if they know someone. Make sure you clearly communicate the time investment in this to the people that agree to help you, and whether you have budget to compensate them for their time.
- **Pick your venue!**
  - After doing the research it is time to choose your venue. In order to be inclusive, make sure you check whether the venue is disability-friendly.
- **Promotion time!**
  - Make sure you spend some time on deciding the name, a potential theme, colours and everything else you can think of. This does not have to be big, but an attractive title for the event does a lot of attraction by itself. Also include your marketing tactics in here! Do you want to do online promotion, or also offline? Should you do a little promotion speech in front of your fellow colleagues/students? Something like that might also really help with the framing of your event. Do you have budget for social media ads? And if so, who are you targeting?
  - Also think about media for your promotion. This can be your local newspaper (a lot of them have space for these kind of things online), but you can of course think bigger too! There is bigger piece on getting media to cover your event or your topic at the end of this guide.
- **Programming.**
  - This is where you create the agenda. If you have a small event this might be easier than a big event. Do you do a debate? Think about a moderator and good speakers. Or is it more a talk with a keynote speaker and a Q&A afterwards? Are you organising workshops? It usually works best if your event has some interaction in it, as people are keen to participate in one way or another.
  - Don't forget to reach out to your speakers – the earlier you ask people, the more likely they can make space in their agenda for your event. Don't be afraid to aim high.
  - In this day and age it is sometimes recommended to think about live streaming or recording. This will of course influence your budget, and some speakers might be a bit more reluctant to be filmed, so make sure you think about that too!



## *The Final Phase*

It's already looking so good! You are probably pretty hyped up by now as you have just managed to build a whole event. Do not forget to confirm the venue, the speakers, take another good look at your budget and the objectives you have. Make sure you remind attendees really close to the actual date – something could have come up in the meantime and they might just forget to tell you. Also don't forget to check in with the venue about microphones, drinks and other small things that make or break your event.

Do another check of your marketing guide – what do you want people to know and promote on the day itself? What should their take-aways be? And do you have an action point for your attendees after the session? This could be subscribing to a list, them organising their own event or anything that you can think of. Make sure you give this some time – it would be such a pity of all that effort if you did not give participants some ideas or food for thought at the end of the event. And don't forget to let us know you are organising the event!

## **CHECKLIST**

### *Before Phase*

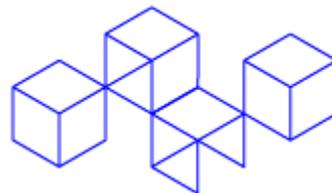
- Main goal
- Objectives
- Timeline and date
- Attendees make-up and numbers
- Location and venue list
- Budget
- Funders

### *During Phase*

- Team members
- Venue chosen
- Materials developed (offline and online)
- Speakers list
- Agenda or the event

### *Finals Phase:*

- Confirm venue, speakers and attendees
- On the day logistics.
- Attendees take-aways
- ENJOY THE EVENT!





### **Optional step: Your event and the media**

When it comes to promoting your event, you can of course think about reaching out to the media. What you could also do is write a more informed piece on the topic you are trying to cover with your event - so not a promotion of when the event is, but more around the theme and why people should care (and if they want to know more, they can come to your event!). Make sure you do your research - which newspapers have space for events, and which ones have space for an opinion piece? Would you write that opinion piece by yourself, or maybe with your potential speakers for a bigger impact? Do not hesitate to reach out to journalists - they are often looking for content and your idea might inspire them too! We often managed to publish something by going for it. In Dutch we say: "You automatically have no if you don't try, so try and you might as well get a yes!". If you are afraid to write a whole piece first, just give a journalist a call, or write a mini-pitch that you can send. Sometimes it works to promise exclusivity to a specific newspaper, but it is up to you if you like to do that. And don't hesitate to reach out to us - we might be that second pair of eyes that you need to look at your article.

