Event Planning

First things first

As your group considers which events to sponsor, it's easy to get swept away with enthusiasm. Every student knows, however, that it's easy to over stretch your time and budget. Here are some questions that group members should discuss- make sure that a majority of the group members are engaged in the conversation.

Does this event complement the purpose of our group?
What does this event say about us?
How much planning will it take?
Who is willing to help with it?
How much will it cost?
What other people/groups on campus might be willing to help?

Event information

Record keeping can help you be more organized in the present and can help those in the future. Keep track of what you did so that students who come later can replicate your program. Include some of the following information for each event so that your work doesn't get lost.

Title of Event:

Date: Time:

Location:

Name of performer/speaker:

Agent/Contact person:

Phone number:

Cost:

Other people you worked with (on campus or off-campus organizations):

Attendance (#):   Was this what you expected/hoped for?   Y   N

Also include these documents in this section of the binder:
Advertising- copy of flyers
Floor plan/set-up information
Event registration form
Pictures of the event
Contracts with the performer/speaker

Event to-do's

This list represents tasks for a variety of program types. Not all of them will apply to your event - Use what's useful and disregard items that do not apply to your event. If you have a student space, you may want to hang this list up so that everyone knows who's doing what and when it's done.

Effective event planning involves setting deadlines. Use the "backwards planning" method to determine dates by which tasks must be done. Give yourself extra time in case something goes wrong. For details see the "backwards planning" page later in this section.

Get people in your organization to volunteer to complete the tasks. This makes people more involved in the process and more likely to support your efforts. It also gives them ownership and pride in the event.

Make to sure check the item off when it is done.

Task	Date to be done	Person responsible	Done
Research costs of event (don't forget associated costs like SU cleaning- see event budgeting sheet)			
Present funding requests to Senate and other sources			
Reserve room (SU manager for SU, Student Activities for other rooms)			
Check the reed online calendar for important conflicts the date of your event			
Register Event (think about room set up, description of your event, A/V needs, CSO needs, catering needs, etc.)			
Get band/speaker to sign contract (you can get a standard contract from Student Activities – you'll need it to pay your band/speaker)			
Brainstorm other student groups that might want to co-sponsor or participate – contact them			
Arrange for A/V or sound (Jim Holmes for A/V services and Sound Kollektiv for the SU)			
Contact Michael O'Brien/CSO's (if you're concerned about possible problems, are having a major event with alcohol, or are having lots of off-campus guests)			

Fill out Structure Approval Worksheet for building outside (Student Activities)			
Reserve hotel for guest(s)			
Coordinate transportation for guest (to-from hotel, to-from airport, to-from hometown)			
Design and construct decorations			
Get Fire Permit for bon fire (Student Activities has info on this)			
Coordinate/re-confirm with performer/band			
Advertise (Quest, At-Reed, flyers, Student Body Info)			
Recruit people to take tickets and watch the door			
Recruit clean-up assistants			
Get check to pay speaker/band after event (find out ahead of time when the Senate Treasurers cut checks)			
Pay others involved (SU cleaners, Sound Kollektiv, etc.)			
Evaluate your event and put report in this binder!			
Other:			

Backwards planning

When you're preparing for an event it's often easiest to plan if you start at the event date and then work backwards. Use a calendar to set your event date and then go in opposite order to determine when you need to start your preparations. The benefit of backwards planning is that you always have an accurate idea of when you actually need to start. There will be fewer last minute surprises along the way.

Here's an example:

Concert is on the 1st. So think backwards about when things need to happen.
You'll want to advertise the week before the event so that means Friday for At Reed and Tuesday for the Quest. That means info to At Reed by Thursday and to the Quest by the previous Friday.
If you want to post flyers the 27th, you'll need to design and copy them earlier.
If you need a check by the 1st you'll need to get the request by the previous Tuesday.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 • senate funding request	3 •finalize contract	4
5	6 • reserve SU • register event	7 •finalize with Sound Kollektiv	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24 • notice to Quest • design and copy fliers	25
26	27 •post fliers & banners	28 •Quest ad •Request check from senate	29	30 •email At Reed	31 •At Reed notice	1 •Concert

Event Evaluation

Even though it's difficult to think about taking one more step after you've completed your event, it's important to complete an event evaluation. This can help you remember details and improve your next event. Evaluations will also help people in the future learn from your successes and mistakes. Make sure that a number of group members are able to give input on this form.

Event title:

Date: Time: Location:

Attendance:

Description:

What went well:

What we would do differently next time:

Would you recommend that this event be repeated in the future?