

Organisation (Capacity)

However keen you are, you can't organise an event on your own – you need a team. A team can take many forms, from a committee set up for the purpose, or for a longer term approach possibly a company with a Board of Directors or Trustees.

What kind of Team?

Many events are run by a group of volunteers working together, but if you need to make funding applications to public sector bodies or even just open a bank account, you will at least need to draw up a constitution. A constitution is basically a legal document setting out:

- what your group does
- its aims and how it intends to achieve them
- how decisions are made
- to whom your group is accountable.

For a larger event, or an organisation which runs several events during the year, it would be advisable to set up a more formal structure of some sort.

See Constitutions & Legal Status for a range of options.

Roles within the Team

However your team is set up, you should allocate clear roles to each individual within the team, so everyone knows what they are doing and what is expected of them. Aim to choose committee members with a range of expertise, interests, skills and experience to share the work.

Key roles are:

Chairperson – will lead the meetings and be the public representative for the committee.
Secretary – should take minutes of all the meetings and distribute to all members of the committee, whether or not present. These become particularly important if any disputes should arise, as they log all decisions made and any discussions. The Secretary should also deal with all correspondence about the event.
Treasurer – in charge of all financial matters. Payments made by the committee should require 2 members' signatures – this avoids any potential for fraud.

Other roles should be allocated according to interest and ability – for example some members may have particular experience in publicity, and know the right press contacts.

See Committees and Effective Meetings.

You should also consider group dynamics – what sort of people do you want/need on your committee? Examples of type include:

- The visionary – people with ideas
- The motivator – to encourage others to become involved
- The realist – to keep your feet on the ground
- The speaker – to be the public voice for the committee

Passionate about events

north east
england

Organisation (Capacity)

Meetings

Meetings should be held regularly to discuss progress and raise any problems early on. Dates should be fixed at an early stage so members can put them in their diaries. An Agenda should be sent out in advance of each meeting, so members have a chance to prepare any information or questions they wish to ask, and all meetings should be minuted for future reference.

See Effective Meetings.

In addition to general committee meetings, it may be useful to set up sub-committees for particular areas of organisation involving those with knowledge or experience of that area, such as finance or marketing. This can be more productive than involving the whole committee in details about which they know very little.

Outsourcing

Remember you can't be an expert at everything, and if the expertise isn't available within your team, you should consider sub-contracting specific tasks to another organisation. By contracting a PR expert for the event, for example, you could gain far more press coverage than by trying to do it yourselves.

Temporary Assistance

Your organisation may operate at a very low level of resources for most of the year – perhaps just a part time administrator working from home – but you will certainly need extra help at the time of your event. If you are paying people just to work on your event, eg as Site Manager, Box Office Manager, Parking Supervisor – it is better to pay them on a freelance basis, rather than become an employer operating payroll.

Further Information

See Customs and Revenue sheet IR56 about being employed or self-employed [LINK <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/pdfs/ir56.htm#4b>]

Charity Commission
www.charity-commission.gov.uk

Companies House
www.companieshouse.gov.uk

Customs and Revenue
www.hmrc.gov.uk

Voluntary Arts Network
www.voluntaryarts.org

Other Related Information Sheets

Constitutions and Legal Status
Making Committees Work for You
Effective Meetings

-

Passionate about events

north east
england