Event in a Box

Everything you need to know to organize an event for Peer Review Week

To help you organize your own event during Peer Review Week, we have created a handy toolkit. Whether you want to organize a workshop, seminar, or networking social event, we hope you'll use our suite of resources to help with your planning and promotion.

And don't forget, if you are organizing an event, let us know so we can help you promote it -- email us at peerreviewweek@outlook.com.

Organizing an event

If you would like to get involved in Peer Review Week and organize an event for your community, there are a range or formats you could use depending on your budget and objectives. Before you start, you may want to consider the following:

Objectives

What do you want to achieve from holding the event? Do you want to engage and create debate around peer review? Do you want to learn about peer review or do you want to create a social environment for discussions? There are benefits to holding all kinds of events, whether they are formal or informal, long or short; just ensure that you are selecting the type of event that best aligns with your desired outcomes.

Audience

When organizing your event, make sure you consider your target audience and what they would like to get out of the event. Do you already have access to this audience or do you need to create a promotional plan to reach them?

Budget

It's important to set and track your budget from the outset. There are a range of events that can be organized for free, and others where you may need a budget for venue hire, catering, AV equipment, or speaker fees and expenses, as well as print promotion or other collateral. You may want to consider seeking sponsorship or funding from relevant organizations.

Get help

Consider creating a working group or committee to help organize your event. Including a mix of people provides you with a range of perspectives, as well as spreading the workload.

Event formats

Low/no cost ideas include:
- Hosting a webinar -- your organization may already subscribe to a service or, if not, there are several free or low-cost options available
- Inviting a speaker to talk to colleagues over a learning lunch
- Organizing a pay-your-own-way informal networking session

For something more formal, consider the following options:

Panel discussion

A panel discussion is a great way to get different perspectives on a specific subject and start a debate. You may want to consider live-streaming your panel discussion, to enable a wider audience in real time, as well as the option to record it for sharing with others afterwards.
Here are some tips for organizing a successful panel discussion:
- Timing: A panel session usually lasts between 60 and 90 minutes
- Number of panelists: Aim for three or four panelists representing diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and organizations
- **Top tip!** Choose an experienced moderator who will keep the speakers and the session on time, facilitate audience questions, and ask their own questions if the audience doesn't have any

Seminar

Seminars consist of presentations and discussions around a specific subject and are often used as an educational tool. Here are some tips for organizing a successful seminar:
- Timing: Anything from a couple of hours to a full day
- Speakers: Invite multiple speakers with a range of perspectives and from different backgrounds
- **Top tip!** Allow time at the end of each presentation for discussion, and assign someone to act as facilitator for the whole seminar

Workshop

For a more practically-focused event, a workshop approach works well, whether you're working with a group of experienced individuals to address a specific subject/challenge/issue, or with a group of inexperienced individuals who want to learn by doing. Here are some tips for organizing a successful workshop:
- Audience: A smaller group is often more effective to enable plenty of interaction between individuals. For a larger group, consider dividing into breakouts for some or all of the sessions

- Timing: Anything from a couple of hours to a day or more -- remember that people are often more energetic in the morning, so plan energizer sessions and exercises for later in the day
- **Top tip!** Include plenty of activities for participants, as well as group discussions that include everyone. Follow up after the session with learning points and additional materials for attendees

Networking reception

Networking receptions are a great way of gathering like-minded people to informally discuss a specific topic and make professional connections. You'll be expected to serve refreshments appropriate to the time of day. Here are some tips for organizing a successful networking reception:
- Timing: When will you attract the most people? For example, a networking breakfast can be a good idea at a conference. Networking events typically last a maximum of two hours
- Format: Consider having a speaker or facilitator to welcome people and raise talking points for your attendees to discuss with each other
- **Top tip!** To enable people to make connections, distribute a participant list beforehand so delegates can prepare a list of who they would like to speak to