Non-Profit Event Planning Checklist

Up to 1 Year Before

- Select event date
  - Check the Non-Profit Community Calendar (www.ngcf.org/nonprofitcalendar) on other potential events
  - Request event to be added to Non-Profit Community Calendar
- Add event date to organization website and social media
- Select and book venue
  - Evaluate parking
- Sign contracts – Save copies
- Recruit event committee and chair

6+ Months Before

- Establish event goals and objectives
- Get cost estimates *(e.g., room rental, food & beverages, equipment, speaker fees, travel, etc.)* and create a budget for overall event
- Set sponsorship prices and ticket prices
- Update Website and Social Media details
  - List all event details including dress attire
- Create invite list
  - Send save the date cards
- Assign committees within main committee
- Evaluate and create a decorations plan with committee
- Identify and confirm speakers/presenters/entertainers
- Identify and contact sponsors/partners
- Create rain date plan if event is outside/partially outside

3-4 Months Before

- Finalize presentation/speech topics
  - Get bio information, photo
- Investigate need for any special permits, licenses, insurance, etc.
- Determine and arrange all details re menu, A/V equipment, registration set-up, parking, signage, etc.
- Review security needs/plan for the event with venue manager
- Develop draft program
- Create draft event script (e.g., MC, speaker introductions, thanks, closing, etc.)
- Request logos from corporate sponsors for online and printed materials
- Develop and produce invitations, programs, posters, tickets, etc.
- Determine VIPs and create invitation & tracking document (e.g., spreadsheet)
- Confirm date and time with all vendors
- Do an on-site walk thru
  - Order invites/rsvp cards
  - Finalize decoration plan

2 Months Before

- Send invites/ rsvp cards

2 Weeks Before

- Have all committee chairs meet and confirm all details– and ensure back-up plans are developed for any situation (e.g., back-up volunteers as VIP greeters, additional volunteers for registration or set-up, etc.)
- Finalize event script
- Brief any/all hosts, greeters, volunteers about their event duties and timelines
- Final seating plan, place cards, etc.
- Provide final registration numbers to caterer
- Make print and online copies of any speeches, videos, presentations, etc.
- Final registration check, name badges & registration list
- Determine photo op and interview opportunities with any presenters, VIPs etc. and confirm details with interviewee and media
- Have the florist/decorations committee prepared with numbers of tables and areas to be decorated

The Day Before

- Confirm media attending
- Ensure all signage is in place
- Ensure registration and media tables are prepared and stocked with necessary items (e.g., blank name badges, paper, pens, tape, stapler, etc.)
- Ensure all promo items, gifts, plaques, trophies, etc. are on-site
- Get as much sleep as you can

Event Day

- Ensure you have copies of all instructions, directions, phone numbers, keys, extra parking permits for VIP guests, seating charts and guest lists with you
- HAVE FUN and ENJOY!

Immediately After

- Financial status: gather all receipts, documentation, final registration data, etc. and update budget
- Send thank-you notes and acknowledgement letters to: Sponsors, Volunteers, Speakers/Presenters, Donors, the Media
  - *In your thank-you notes, be sure to remind the recipients of the event's success – and how they contributed (e.g., dollars raised, awareness - number of participants, etc.).*
- Conduct a Post-Event Survey – Save your notes.
- Reach out to event participants – thank them for participating and promote your organization.

We hope you found this checklist helpful in getting started with event planning. Use this as a starting point to identify or assign activities to various volunteers or staff; or print this off so you can literally check-off items as they are assigned or accomplished.