

# Event Planning Guide

Alberta Culture Days



# Starting Points

Alberta Culture Days is all about having fun. Don't try to plan an event that's beyond your resources or skills, or that will take you too far out of your comfort zone. Give yourself a challenge, not a headache.

## Start small & simple

Small and simple are best, especially if you've never planned an event like this before. An easy way to do this is to turn an existing event into an Alberta Culture Days event. You could invite an artist or musician to a regular meeting, arrange for a tour of a museum or relocate a get together to a cultural hot spot. You could reschedule a previously planned cultural event so that it occurs on the Alberta Culture Days weekend. Concentrate on achieving a little and learning a lot, and you'll be sure to make the most of your Alberta Culture Days experience.

## Talk to people

Your greatest source of information is people who've planned similar events in the past. Talk to them and make new connections in your community. Approach local societies, libraries, schools, local community presenters or municipalities to pool resources and venues. Visit the National Culture Days website for more tips and planning resources in the toolbox.

## Set goals & identify resources

Set up a working group and develop a plan that shows who is responsible for what, the steps involved and deadlines for completing those steps. Develop a rollout plan for the event, showing what happens, at what time, involving which people and resources. Be detailed about this—it lets you rehearse things mentally well in advance of the event, and uncover and prevent many problems.

## Create partnerships

Depending on the size of your event, you may need support with planning and presenting. Leverage your resources by partnering with another community or group. Partners may include:

- cultural groups,
- associations,
- libraries or literary groups,
- educational and public institutions,
- local businesses, religious groups.

Identify and contact businesses or associations that match your event theme or idea. Create a role for local youth. Offer promotional opportunities to businesses or associations in return for support.



# Creating Your Event

Define who, what, where, when, and how for your event.

- Who do you want to attend your event?
- Who do you want to perform or speak?
- Will you need volunteers? Where and when will the event be held?
- How will you organize the activities?
- How will you promote the event?
- Consider a working group to share tasks.

## Other things to consider:

The key to making events inclusive and accessible is to think about the many barriers that can exist for people with disabilities, and address them at the planning stage.

Whenever possible, **visit the site of a potential venue**. Think about people with different disabilities who may attend your event, and the barriers they could encounter when they arrive.

**Choose a theme** for your event—a clear theme will help set your event apart from others in your community, and prevent duplicating activities.

**Set clear objectives**. In order to understand whether you made the right moves, you need to have clear objectives. During the event you'll know what is important and after the event you'll be able to measure your effectiveness.

It is important to **understand your stakeholders**. Who is going to benefit from your event? Who do you need to contact to ensure the event can occur? Do you need to get permits? Do you want to invite special guests, such as your MLA or MP, your mayor or reeve, municipal councilors or educators?

**Develop a budget**—this will provide you with a financial “blueprint” for the event. The budget should be specific, and include expenses such as printing, permits, insurance, speakers, food, supplies, etc. Maintain good records, keeping track of everything. Also, expect the unexpected, extra expenses will come up—so plan ahead.



# Promoting Your Event

Identify your objectives and key audiences and think about the most effective way to communicate to those audiences. There are many tools and tactics you can use. Choose the ones that work for your budget, the resources you have, your partnerships and your time frame. Here are a few things to consider when promoting your event:

**Identify your audiences.** Your target audiences can include the media, arts and cultural organizations, local businesses, industry volunteers, school or youth groups, multicultural groups and the public. The type of event you plan will determine your audiences.

**Set your objectives**—decide what you would like each audience to know about your event.

**Develop a communication plan.** Include the kind of promotions you are going to use to reach your audiences, how you are going to distribute information, who should receive the information and when things need to be done.

**Determine your resources.** If your plan will require more resources, look for sponsors or partners or adapt the plan.

**Contact the media with the details of your event.** If you plan to use the media as part of your promotion, assign one person to be the media contact.

**Look outside traditional advertisements.** There are ways of promoting activities without paying for advertising. Promote your event through social media channels, face to face (radio / tv morning shows), print materials (posters, postcards, etc), signage, cross promotion with businesses on their websites.

**Use interesting visuals to highlight your event**—are any special guest appearing that can take part in the activities? Are there cultural landmarks? Can you share photos of the performances or interactive activities taking place?

Click [here](#) for more resources to help with your event promotion.



# Event Day & Wrap Up

## Be prepared

Prepare a to-do list of everything you need to make sure the event runs smoothly—including how you see the activities unfolding and point of contact list. It's a good idea to have snacks and refreshments available if it's a longer event. Have fun with things like decorations—find new and interesting ways of celebrating how you see culture. no matter what size of event you're planning, having a basic first aid kit will ensure you are prepared for any accidents that might happen.

Don't forget to take pictures and videos and tag Alberta Culture Days on Facebook but make sure you have made people aware that photos will be taken and posted.

## Permissions

Under provincial privacy laws, you must get written and signed permission from every person who appears in your event photos or video to use their image. you must also specify conditions - how you will use the image (for example, to publicize the event or your organization), or to whom you might release the image (for example, to local media). You can use a standard form that people sign and date on the spot. You should have extra copies of the conditions for people to keep.

For any person under age 18, you must have written, signed permission from their parent or guardian. It is not necessary to get signed permission from every person in the crowd at a large public event. To be on the safe side, go by the rule that if a person is depicted clearly enough to be recognized, you must get their permission to use their image.

## Evaluation

One of the most ignored, yet important, elements of project planning is evaluation. If you want to determine how successful an event is, you'll need to collect feedback from participants. Create an evaluation form to hand out (and, if possible, collect) at the end of the event. To encourage participation, your evaluation form should be anonymous and short.

## Feedback

We would love to know more about how Albertans are celebrating Alberta Culture Days. Please share a brief note about what you did and how it went at [AlbertaCultureDays@gov.ab.ca](mailto:AlbertaCultureDays@gov.ab.ca).

