



How to

HOST AN EVENT

Panda Ambassadors



Host an event to bring your community together around an idea or activity. It's a great way to meet new people face to face and to get your message out.

Step 1. Decide what kind of event you want to host

Panda Ambassadors have hosted documentary screenings, networking events, yoga classes, crafting sessions, and more. Decide what kind of event you want to host based on what you want to accomplish and who you want to attract. Do you want to introduce people to a few basic concepts of environmentalism and WWF's work? Do you want to have a meaningful discussion about a certain issue? Do you want to get to know people who are already active in your local environmental community? Do you want to teach people something that will help them lower their emissions or be a smarter consumer?

For your first time hosting an event as a Panda Ambassador, try thinking of a fun activity that will pique some interest within your community.

Step 2. Plan out the logistics

You've got your *what*, *who*, and *why* figured out, so now it's time to work on the *when*, *where*, and *how*. Run through the event in your mind and make a list of everything—including people and experts—you'll need to make sure it's a success. If you'll need certain experts or people for your event, contact them before you do anything else and make sure they are willing and available to help.

The nature of your event should dictate where you hold it. How big does the space need to be? Do you need seating? Tables and chairs? Open space? What other special equipment do you need and is it already in the space?

For students, there's probably a perfect place on campus where you can host your event, and all it may require is requesting the room for the night.

For others, consider local community or rec centers, libraries, or local businesses or restaurants that could reserve a room for you or stay open after hours for a special event. Once you have a well-formed idea of your event, make a list of possible locations and start contacting owners and managers. Tell them that it will be a free community event that you're presenting in your capacity as a World Wildlife Fund Ambassador. Let them know what you want to accomplish, how many people you're trying to attract, and any space or equipment needs you have.

Be sure to plan your event as far in advance as possible—at least a couple of months out for your first event. This will give you plenty of time for promotion and preparation. The more flexible you can be with your date, the more likely you are to get the space you want.

For the *how* of the equation, make a plan for any materials, equipment, or expertise you'll need. If you want to host a documentary screening, for example, you'll need permission to show the film (this shouldn't be an issue, as most documentary filmmakers encourage the public to hold screenings; just check the documentary website for more info). You'll need to arrange for a projector and screen or a large enough TV, speakers loud enough for your audience, comfortable seating, and maybe some snacks. You also might want to invite the filmmaker or subject matter experts to discuss the film after the showing.

Step 3. Contact WWF

Once you have the basics of your event planned, fill out a [project submission form](#) to let us know what you're thinking and what supplies, materials, and support you could use from WWF. We'll look at your information and get back to you in a couple of days.

Step 4. Promote your event

Decide who the perfect audience is for your event—think about what places they go, what websites they look at, and where they get their information. Those are the places you'll want to promote your event.

Creating an event page on Facebook is always a good place to start, but don't stop there! You might want to post some physical fliers in or around your event location. Contact local blogs and community websites and ask them to include your event in their calendars. Ask local environmental, civic, or school organizations to promote your event in newsletters and on their websites.

Come up with an invitation list—including local VIPs if appropriate—and invite them to your event. Talk to them in person, send them an email, or consider sending a formal invite through the mail.

Step 5. Prepare and Practice

While you're promoting your event, work on your detailed plan for how the session will go. Collect your materials and confirm (and confirm again!) with your experts and special guests.

If possible, schedule a run-through of the event in the actual space. This will help you spot potential technical or logistical issues before your event.

On the day of the event, arrive early with a few friends to set up everything in advance and quickly test any technical equipment or prepare materials.

Step 6. Make the most of your event

Hosting an event takes a lot of hard work and can be stressful, but don't forget to enjoy yourself. You've prepared everything; you've got this! Stick with the plan and have fun. Interact with your attendees and thank them for coming. If you hit any bumps in the road, roll with them. Improvise solutions and keep the event moving.

One thing you'll want to do, either formally with a sign-in sheet or informally as you talk with people one on one, is to collect attendees' contact information. This is so you can invite them to future events or let them know about other WWF engagement opportunities.

Step 7. Thank anyone who helped

After the event, send a thank you to anyone in your community who helped make your event a success. This includes your subject matter experts, the owners or managers of the space, anyone who helped with preparation or on the day, and any VIPs who attended. Sending a real thank-you card in the mail is the best option. Let them know how much you appreciated their time and help, and that you'd love to keep working with them on future projects.

Step 8. Share your experience

Log on to the Panda Ambassador Facebook group and let everyone know how it went. Was the attendance level what you were expecting? Did people seem to enjoy it? What would you do differently next time? What worked particularly well? Share your experience and see if you can answer questions from any Ambassadors who are planning a similar event.