

BIG EVENT STARTER KIT

A big community event can be an excellent way to celebrate Mental Health Month and raise awareness of the importance of mental health and wellbeing, but you may not have organised an event of this scale before.

Used in conjunction with our small grants starter kit, this guide goes through some processes and planning specific to large events.

Included in this kit are a number of templates which you can use to help plan your big event: [The Event Brief Template](#); [Event Planner Template](#); and [Event Compliance Template](#). These templates can be downloaded and filled in as part of your big event planning.

INVESTIGATE

After you've determined that you want to put on a large event, it's important to investigate what is needed to ensure everything goes well. This might include investigating appropriate spaces, other organisations to partner with, and relevant event compliance guidelines. We have included some of these guidelines in this kit, and they can be used as a starting point for your planning.

Risk: Risk assessment is an important part of putting on any event, but for big events can be a bit more complicated. It's important to keep re-checking risks throughout the entire planning process. We've included a risk-assessment template in this document, which you can use for your own event.

Event compliance: some activities have specific legislation relating to them, whilst others have general guidelines. Making sure your event complies with these is an essential part of running an event.

Examples of activities which have compliance guidelines and/or legislation:

- Responsible service of alcohol
- Food safety
- Workplace health and safety (WHS)
- Environmental regulations including noise and waste
- Security and crowd control, including street closures
- Fireworks
- Ticketing
- Entertainment
- Use of temporary structures
- Public liability
- Impact management

We have included a template which you can use to investigate the event compliance needs specific to your event, which is included at the end of this page.

FORMULATE

Planning a large event can take a lot of work, going through things carefully, and planning in advance will make sure everything runs smoothly. Before approaching other groups or organisations, make a list of what you need from them, and what your event is offering. Will there be stalls? In that case are you providing tents and/or tables, or will the stall holders provide those? Will stall holders pay a fee? Will you be having live music? Will you need food trucks?

These details might change but having a plan will help make sure essential things aren't forgotten or missed.

Where:

If you're running a large event on council property – a public park for example - you will need to apply for this well in advance of the event. Councils vary, but generally require the application 16 weeks prior to the event. Also be aware that your event might require DA approval, which isn't as scary as it sounds, it just can take a long time – up to 14 weeks – so make sure that you leave enough time for that.

Who:

If you're planning an event held on council property, it can help to look into a partnership with the council. If they aren't already planning their own event for Mental Health Month, this is a great opportunity for them to get involved.

If you're thinking of having an event where organisations and groups can host stalls, get in touch with them early on so they can plan.

Partnerships and sponsorships can be a really important part of making an event happen, and approaching potential partners early can get them on board, but also give you a chance to approach other organisations if your first choice falls through.

How:

A "projected budget" helps you determine a budget for the event without committing any money. You can use this to determine the maximum amount you can spend on any aspect of the event. Your final budget may vary from this, but you will have a baseline expectation.

This is also the time to plan for event legislation compliance. Compare what is required with what you want to do.

When:

Big events take big planning – in addition to the 16 weeks that a council may need to process your event application, leaving yourself enough time means that if something goes wrong, you have enough time to find alternatives prior to the event.

The small grants starter kit has a "Timeline worksheet" you can use to help with this.

COMMUNICATE

An essential part of a big event is making sure things run as smoothly as possible. We have included some event-planning templates and checklists which you can adapt for your own event.

An event brief is the key document in communicating to people involved in your large event.

A well-written event brief makes sure that everyone involved knows where they need to be, when, and what they need to bring.

The master event brief can then be edited for different people involved – so the main event coordinators will get a copy of the master, whereas a stall holder might just get a version with the event coordinators' phone numbers, what time they need to arrive, and where they need to set up.

We have included an Event Brief template at the end of this guide which you can use for your own event.

EVALUATE

Evaluating a big event happens throughout the whole process. Keep going back to your initial idea and plan and make sure you're on track. Consult your planned timeline and budget regularly and check that you're complying with relevant legislation. Your risk-assessment will also need to be checked and updated regularly. It can help to set specific dates in your timeline for progress checks.