Local Leadership Event Organizers Workbook

Your Handy Guide to Starting Your Own Local Community's Multi-Organization Conference

Table of Contents

I. Why

- I. Defining the Purpose of your Event....04-05
- II. Integrating Best Practices....06
- III. The 10 Principles....07

II. Who

- I. Who Coordinates....08-09
- II. Who Gets an Invite....10
- III. Who Presents....11

III. When & Where

- I. Choosing a Weekend....12
- II. Choosing a City and Finding a Venue....13

IV. How 14

- I. Phase 1 - Foundational Planning
  - I. Legal Structures & Considerations....15
  - II. Budget & Finances....16
  - III. Venue & A/V Considerations....17
  - IV. Expect the Unexpected: Crises & Cancellations....18
  - V. A Note on Going Digital....19
- II. Phase 2 - Pre-Event Prep
  - I. Attendee Communications & Volunteer Coordination....20
  - II. Choosing Content & Making the Schedule....21-22
  - III. Meal Logistics....22
  - IV. Accommodations and Art/Decor and Swag....23
  - V. Off-Site/After Hours Events....24
- III. Phase 3 - During the Event
  - I. Orientation, Ground Rules, & Brain Breaks....25
  - II. Icebreakers....26-27
  - III. Leave No Trace & Sustainability....27
  - IV. Going with the Flow....28
- IV. Phase 4 - Post-event Wrap-Up
  - I. Follow-up Email & Debrief....29
  - II. Planning Cycles....30

V. What

- I. Types of Sessions....31
- II. Keeping Content Fresh & Relevant....32
- III. 50 Suggestions for Panel Topics....33-34

VI. Appendix & Resources....35-37

VII. Tips for making your event Hybrid/Virtual....38-40

What is LLEO?

LLEO stands for Local Leadership Event Organizers. It's a group of people who coordinate Burner conferences on a local level to help strengthen their regional communities and develop a shared set of best practices.

Mission Statement:

To bring seasoned regional conference organizers together to empower our collective communities. To do this we will nurture meaningful dialogue, develop skills, promote knowledge exchange, cultivate relationships, and engage leaders to enhance growth, and inspire participation and collaboration.

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01 Why Run an Event?

Defining your Purpose & Setting Clear Goals

Mission Statements

As with any event, writing a Mission Statement is an important first step in helping to clarify your objectives and goals. Creating a Mission Statement begins with defining your purpose. It should be a clear, cohesive, 2-3 sentence statement that summarizes the major overarching goals of your event or organization.

Here are some potential goals for a regional conference to keep in mind as you prepare:

- Standardize best practices/cultural expectations across your region
- Help identify ways you can share resources across events and communities in your region
- Offer tools to individual events to help solidify their own identity and set of best practices
- Cross-pollinate "partner" burns in your region that can work together to develop and grow
- Create new pathways to fresh leadership roles and solidfy succession planning
- Forge new connections amongst the wider community to share knowledge and ideas

In addition to a Mission Statement, writing out a desired timeline/trajectory can be helpful in crystallizing your goals. Making a list of how you hope to grow in the upcoming years (affectionately referred to as succession planning) can be a powerful aid in achieving those goals.

Here are some example of mission statements below to help you get started:

ANZLS (Australia & New Zealand Leadership Summit) 2018 Event

"To facilitate meaningful dialogue, skill-sharing, knowledge exchange and relationship building between Burning Man Regional Contacts, community leaders, artists, theme camp leads, Burner community association groups and regional event organizers in the Australian & New Zealand region."

Burning Man Project

"The mission of the Burning Man organization is to facilitate and extend the culture that has issued from the Burning Man event into the larger world."

Catharsis on the Mall (sanctioned regional burn in Washington, DC)

"Catharsis on the Mall exists to create accessible spaces for healing. We do this by expanding the bounds of expression, connection, and inclusion in public and civic places, through direct engagement in participatory art, political action, holistic modalities, and sacred practice that restores ourselves and our communities, fostering social change."

Why are you choosing to organize a regional Burner conference? What are your personal goals as an organizer?

Here are some personal qualifications you may have and some traits you may look for while searching for people to help co-produce the event:

- Extensively involved in producing regional burns or community events
- Significant leadership experience within Burning Man or BWB
- Relevant default world experience

Don't forget that many times, the burnerverse is much wider than any of us realize. Even if we think we "know everybody" at our local regional burn, rest assured there are a ton of capable, excited folks who would likely be a great addition to the Planning Committee, so be sure to cast a wide net as you coordinate the Planning Committee.

Initiative & Availability:

- No one else was qualified/interested /available
- Do-ocracy in motion
- Interested in gathering people together to learn

What will make this substantial investment of time and energy satisfying for you?

- Learn new skills
- Expand community footprint
- Promote your event(s)
- Recruit new leaders

Make sure to check out the list of **Burning Man Leadership Qualities** in the Appendix!

Why would other organizations attend and contribute?

It's important to have a clear idea of what your conference offers its participants- the "if you build it, they will come" model may seem appealing, but can have mixed results. Look at the specific orgs that operate in your area and how their needs may differ, then determine if you can service a broad array of participant orgs or if you need to be more specific.

Reasons smaller orgs may attend your event:

- Learn from the experience of others
- Figure out how they can scale up
- Hear best practices
- Learn how to protect themselves as organizers

Reasons larger orgs may attend your event:

- Network with other leaders in similar roles
- Discuss policy/practices to compare notes
- Enhance their regional image
- Connect with Burning Man Project coordinators

Smaller organizations will likely be focused on absorbing knowledge and experience, while larger ones may be more mindful of networking and connections. This means that while a single large organization may be a fountain of information for your smaller groups to learn from, they may not be interested in joining if there are no similar-or-larger groups to interact with.

If you are in a region with one or even no larger organizations, you may need to recruit some Burning Man Project representatives or other volunteers to ensure you have a compelling program of information.

Similarly, large organizations may be able to help their leaders with attendance costs while smaller ones may not. Consider financial assistance to the smaller operations that you think may make good participants.

Always be sure to collect feedback at the end of your conference to find out what the attendees' expectations were and how the actual experience compared.

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Best Practices are Important!

Standardizing a set of best practices across all burns ever is a) impossible, and b) ignores the different needs, circumstances, values, & goals that each community may have, including physical location, size, years in operation, local laws, etc. However, developing a shared set of best practices across your local regional events can help you better utilize the hard-won experience of other orgs, and help create a strong training foundation and succession planning outlook. The 10 Principles can be a great guiding foundation, but some other best practices exist that you will also want to consider!

Measuring Success

- Volunteer Strain - are you putting too much on your volunteer base, or are you alleviating the burdens and making it as easy as possible to contribute?
- Participant Health - are you keeping your attendees safe and your insurers/governments comfortable?
- Participant Enjoyment - are your people having a good time and engaging as community members? Note that this is completely distinct from "participant health" because while they may occasionally go hand-in-hand, they will often be in opposing directions.
- Growth - are you trying to make each event larger and more ambitious than the last, or cultivate a loyal and intimate community?

Facilitate Community/Skillshare

- Art - painting, sculpture, music, etc. Incorporating art is essential to any burn-adjacent event.
- Practical Skills - welding, construction, etc.
- How do you bring this to the conference? How do you bring this to the greater community year-round?

Networking vs Education/Training

- Are you here to get to know other Burners/leaders individually and forge connections?
- Are you here strictly for information and training?
- What are others coming for?

The 10 Principles

Radical Inclusion
Anyone may be a part of Burning Man. We welcome and respect the stranger. No prerequisites exist for participation in our community.

Gifting
Burning Man is devoted to acts of gift giving. The value of a gift is unconditional. Gifting does not contemplate a return or an exchange for something of equal value.

Decommodification
In order to preserve the spirit of gifting, our community seeks to create social environments that are unmediated by commercial sponsorships, transactions, or advertising. We stand ready to protect our culture from such exploitation. We resist the substitution of consumption for participatory experience.

Radical Self-reliance
Burning Man encourages the individual to discover, exercise and rely on his or her inner resources.

Radical Self-expression
Radical self-expression arises from the unique gifts of the individual. No one other than the individual or a collaborating group can determine its content. It is offered as a gift to others. In this spirit, the giver should respect the rights and liberties of the recipient.

Communal Effort
Our community values creative cooperation and collaboration. We strive to produce, promote and protect social networks, public spaces, works of art, and methods of communication that support such interaction.

Civic Responsibility
We value civil society. Community members who organize events should assume responsibility for public welfare and endeavor to communicate civic responsibilities to participants. They must also assume responsibility for conducting events in accordance with local, state and federal laws.

Leaving No Trace
Our community respects the environment. We are committed to leaving no physical trace of our activities wherever we gather. We clean up after ourselves and endeavor, whenever possible, to leave such places in a better state than when we found them.

Participation
Our community is committed to a radically participatory ethic. We believe that transformative change, whether in the individual or in society, can occur only through the medium of deeply personal participation. We achieve being through doing. Everyone is invited to work. Everyone is invited to play. We make the world real through actions that open the heart.

Immediacy
Immediate experience is, in many ways, the most important touchstone of value in our culture. We seek to overcome barriers that stand between us and a recognition of our inner selves, the reality of those around us, participation in society, and contact with a natural world exceeding human powers. No idea can substitute for this experience.

02 Who Plans It, Who Is It For, & Who Presents?

Who Coordinates the Event?

First things first, you'll need to establish the Planning Committee and define roles in advance. During the first few years you will likely have just a few people doing multiple jobs, however it is best to have all tasks defined individually to help with succession planning and general organization.

Here are some basic roles you'll need to consider:

- Facilitator : to coordinate and run meetings
- Treasurer(s) : creating the budget, handling incoming payments, settling vendor accounts, managing the bank account, and balancing the books. It's a good idea to have at least two or more people with access to the financials.
- Legal Point Person : signing contracts, establishing legal structure, gathering necessary permits for insurance, etc.
- Social Media Point Person : promote event online, handle email communications with attendees
- Communications Point Person : coordinate with Burning Man Project & Burners Without Borders
- Social Shepherd : at least one designated person who lives in the chosen host city that will help with on-site coordination of meals, after-hours events, etc.

Don't bite off more than you can chew! Technically, 1-2 people *could* do it all, but we've all learned by now that the old adage is true: many hands make light work. Additionally, it's a good idea to have the Planning Committee be comprised of folks that represent as many different burns as is reasonable. To host a truly effective regional conference, you want representation from as many different local events as possible.

Who is the conference entity?

Who is signing contracts, getting insurance, and shouldering the legal responsibility? This isn't something that you'll necessarily need to figure out year one, two, or even three, but eventually you'll likely want to consider forming an entity to help protect the organizers from any legal liability. An LLC is generally fairly easy and cheap to form, and provides plenty of legal protections. For more information on legal structures, see page 15.

How often, when, where and how do you meet?

Decide how often and when you're going to schedule meetings. **Doodle** is a great tool for honing down meeting times, plus it's free! Check out the recommendations for planning cycles on page 30, but ultimately you'll need to figure out what works best for your Planning Committee.

How often you need to meet will depend on how many attendees you plan to have. Obviously the larger event the more details there will be to coordinate. Just remember the key to guiding any event to success: **slow, controlled growth.** It's always a good idea to start small. Many burn events have bitten the dust over the years by trying to grow out of their skin too quickly. Be sure to establish a strong foundation and then grow at a reasonable size you can handle, which hinges on solid volunteerism and keeping folks engaged and interested.

If your entire Planning Committee is local you might opt to meet in person, however, ideally you'll have folks from different parts of the region coming together to help plan the conference, so you will probably need to look at some digital solutions:

- Google Hangouts - free to anyone with a consumer-level Google account
- Google Meet - must have a GSuite account to access
- Zoom - free with limitations (you must have an upgraded account $15/mo to host meeting with more than three participants longer than 40 minutes)
- Slack - a powerful co-planning tool with taskboards and messaging function, it's a phone and desktop app for Android, iOS, Mac and Windows

Some Planning Committees choose to blast meetings out to everybody (anyone that is invited to attend is invited to participate in the planning). Other events may find it more simple (especially as you're just starting off) to keep the Planning Committee to just a few set, dedicated members.

2018 MALC (Mid-Atlantic Leadership Conference)

Who Gets an Invitation

Determining who to offer an invitation to during the first few years can be tricky business. Unfortunately, events such as these don't tend to fare well with a full open invite. To remain constructive and effective, there needs to be a reasonable number of attendees, otherwise things can easily get out of hand.

First you'll want to decide on what the reach of the "region" you're trying to capture actually looks like. This will likely be determined by the physical geography and saturation of the regional burns around you. For instance, Texas is so large and has so many burns it might serve them best to host a regional conference that only includes Texas burns. SERT (the Southeast Roundtable) includes burns from all of the states east of the Mississippi River and south of the Mason-Dixon line. California is so spread out that it might serve that region better to do a Northern California-area event (which could include the San Francisco Bay Area, Oregon, Washington, Reno), and a Southern California-area event (LA, San Diego, Vegas). The Planning Committee will need to agree on which cities/states/burns to include, and what ultimately works best will be unique to each event.

Once you decide on which geolocations to include, you'll need to decide on the minimum and maximum number of attendees you're willing to consider. Capacity is often determined by:

- Venue restrictions
- Ability to feed/house
- Organization strength/experience of the planning group

Then you'll want to begin making a list of possible invitees. Here are some good places to start:

- Regional Contacts (RCs) and Meta Regionals from your region
- Current regional burn producers and/or board members
- Well known community leaders
- Aspiring event producers
- Established burn event team leads

Don't forget - you make the rules! This can be as inclusive and wide reaching as you want it to be!

Set a maximum number of attendees per organization?

It might be a good idea to consider setting a cap on how many people get an invite from any singular burn. It doesn't have to be a hard line, but it wouldn't be a very constructive conference if you had 15 people from only one event and no one else. We recommend 3-4 people max per burn, ideally those from the current board or rising members (remember - succession planning is important!)

As with anything that includes an invitation process, there needs to be a nuanced and sensitive approach, as well as with coverage on social media. Making the first few years invite-only and then expanding into a wider net of folks as you grow is totally fine. Growing organically will come naturally, and regional conference events can be a great way to find strong new event and team leads for regional burns. Eventually you might consider letting attendees invite a handful of new folks each year, or as you grow you might even find that an open invite works well for your event. Having it be a paid/ticketed event will help weed out those who are actually invested from those who just want the recognition of being a "community leader" without actually contributing.

Who Presents

Choosing who will present and on what topics is one of the most challenging pieces of the puzzle (more on content in **chapter 5 - What**!) There are two main ways to source presenters:

- Open up a submission form where people nominate themselves to present, or
- Conference organizers can approach community leaders or those with well-developed skillsets and hope they might agree

Each method has it's own set of pros and cons, however to keep the presentations interesting, you will want to ensure that there are a variety of different topics, session types, and presenters.

We recommend sending out the **Pre-Conference Content Questionnaire & Speaker Submission Form** about 3 months out from the event to start gathering ideas. The entire list of invitees should be able to submit suggestions for topics. If sent with multiple-choice options, the form will help you easily identify the topics the community wants to hear about the most. The form can also call for folks to self-nominate to be presenters. If someone is particularly skilled or knowledgeable in a certain area, they will likely happily agree to host a panel or session on that topic.

If you're having trouble getting the amount of presenters that you need to cover all the proposed topics, it might be a sign that you need to dial back content offerings. Quality over quantity!

Burning Man Project and Burners Without Borders Members as Presenters

There are some resources that Burning Man Project can offer as well to help boost content. Once your event hits around 50+ people, Burning Man Project (BMP) and Burners Without Borders (BWB) might be available to send folks out to host a special session. For instance the Burners Without Borders folks occasionally attend regional conferences to facilitate "microgrant" sessions wherein conference attendees get to vote on pre-submitted community projects and then the chosen projects receive their requested stipend.

If a BMP or BWB representative isn't able to join you in person, there's a good chance someone might be able to offer a session via Skype or Zoom! Contact the LLEO team (lleo@burningman.org) to inquire about options.

Don't forget that you'll also need volunteers!

Having folks volunteer to help manage meal times, monitor Leave No Trace efforts, do the notetaking and timekeeping during sessions, etc., will be monumental to your events success. A call for volunteers can be included in the pre-conference questionnaire!

Don't forget to consider some extra special **swag** for your organizers, presenters and volunteers!

03 When & Where Do We Host it?

Choosing a Weekend

When it comes to choosing the best time of year and the specific weekend to host your event, ensuring there are no conflicts of interest with other regional events is of utmost importance. Out of respect for fellow regional burn organizers, do some research (make a spreadsheet about it!) to ensure that none of your potential weekends overlap with anybody's hard earned events. If you can't find any suitable weekends because there are just too many regional burns happening around you, consider shaving down the size of your potential attendees and trying again.

Early spring or late fall are often ideal, as those times likely overlap with less pre-standing events. You may not be able to avoid every single event, but try to make sure you're being as considerate as possible for the people you're trying to gather and local event producers.

Don't forget that Doodle is a great tool you can use to survey your participants availability! We don't recommend sending it out to EVERYONE, but you can certainly use it for 10-20 key people that you hope will attend that might bring some strong ideas or presentations to the table.

Make sure to schedule your **planning cycles** out far enough to give attendees ample time to plan for making it. We recommend giving attendees at least 60 days notice of the chosen date to allow time to request off work, make travel arrangements, find lodging, etc.

Weather is always an important consideration. Take into account hurricane, tornado, or any other possible storm season. Having an event cancel last minute because of a severe weather event is rough. That said, realize that certain weather patterns like rain, snow, etc., may not be foreseeable and your event may need to be flexible enough to deal with challenging conditions.

Multi-Regional Summit (Sacramento, Reno, Tahoe) 2019

Choosing a City

When you're first starting off, the conference will likely be held in the city that you - or any member of the main organizers - hail from, as accessibility and familiarity is key. However as you grow from year to year, you'll likely want to move around to different cities that a contingent of attendees come from. This will help encourage inclusion, create new connections throughout your region, and give new folks a chance to partake in the planning. Wherever you decide to host it, be sure that you have at least 1-2 anchors there who are willing to be the "Social Shepherds" for the group and do some of the local/on-site organizing.

You may need to opt for a city outside of your immediate setting if amenities such as an airport or rideshare (Uber, Lyft, trains) are needed by your expected attendees.

Finding a Venue

A good place to start is by putting out a call to the local community to see if anyone has personal connections to a potential venue. Going with a Burner-owned establishment is always a great idea if possible, so always tap into your immediate community first. Burners are very resourceful, and if you can find an "in" with a community member you will likely have an easier time during planning and perhaps even get a friendly rate for the venue rental fee.

If nothing formalizes with local requests, here are some good ideas of places to start looking:

- Community centers
- Local theaters
- Event venues or nightclubs
  - Make sure there is no conflict with their operating hours
- Art collectives or makerspaces
  - Ensure there won't be a ton of distractions

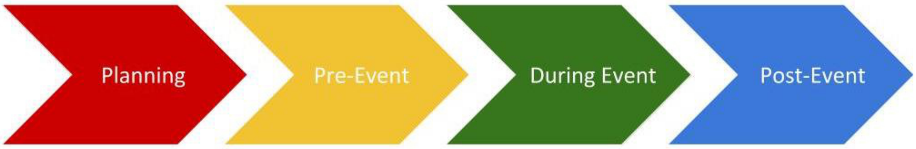
Things to Consider:

- Cost
- A/V needs
- Capacity/seating availability
- Chairs/tables
- Parking
- Will you need any permits or insurance? Is that feasible for year one or two?

If people will be travelling to your event, look for a venue near places to stay and/or nightlife for post-conference social time!

04 How Do I Do It?

There are four key phases to any successful event:



Phase 1 - Foundational Planning

- This is the phase where you discuss things like how many people you want to invite, options for where it might be held, and how many days you want the event to go.
- It basically consists of everything you do *before* you approach details such as potential attendees, speakers, schedule, etc.

Phase 2 - Pre-Event Prep

- This is where you get the word out about your event, gather interest, and use that interest to generate content based on who's attending.
- This stage also includes logistics such as meal planning, scheduling, programming and venue details, now that you know how big and diverse your event will be.

Phase 3 - During the Event

- The actual weekend of the event, where your attendees are on site and are needing to be herded through the programming without getting derailed.
- Key aspects here will be rangering discussions to keep them from being heated or going over time, as well as making sure that food, snacks, and other details have been handled.
- Make sure to document your event so those who couldn't make it can also enjoy the programming.

Phase 4 - Post-Event Wrap-Up

- Congrats, you did it!
- Now you just have to follow up and make sure everyone is satisfied, including attendees and vendors.
- Always do a debrief no more than 1-2 weeks after the event with your planning team to write down what went well and what needs improvement - that will be your best roadmap to success for future years!
- Also make sure you send a feedback form to all attendees asking for input, suggestions and thoughts from the event.

PHASE ONE

Foundational Planning

Legal Structures & Considerations

As with any event, an unfortunate reality that must be considered is liability. During the first few years, operating under a legal structure isn't a necessity, but as you grow it's highly advised. Beyond simply protecting your individual assets in the unlikely event of an incident, many venues may not allow rentals without insurance, and event insurance is easier to obtain as a legal business entity. When determining your business entity type, your team must weigh the costs and benefits of each type.

If you intend to operate year-round as a community organization, you may be interested in forming a 501(c)3 non-profit in order to more easily accept donations, receive nonprofit discounts, and take advantage of grants and other opportunities afforded to nonprofits. You will need to have a board of directors, regular meetings with recorded minutes, and most likely an attorney to help set up your entity, as well as a certified professional accountant (CPA) to help with bookkeeping and taxes. The requirements to maintain status as a non-profit aren't simple, but they can be well worth it.

If the organization hosting the conference is more decentralized and the intention is to simply operate one or two events per year, it might be advantageous to keep the business administration aspects more simple, and you might consider establishing a Limited Liability Corporation. LLCs tend to be quite simple to file at the state level, can be approved quickly, and typically cost much less to form and maintain than a 501(c)3, while still providing a great deal of security for organizers.

One of the most important things you can ask your community members with legal experience is when you should consider consulting a professional attorney- venue contract review, permitting, and liability review may all be worth a paid hour or three from an expert. We encourage you to reach out to your community to solicit tax and legal professionals (who ideally are Burners) to make sure you not only select the appropriate structure, but also set everything up correctly, and to help ensure you understand the ongoing requirements to maintain your entity type.

Budget & Finances

Once you have your business structure in place, you will need a way to accept money from event attendees and send it to vendors. The first step is to determine who will be on the treasury team. It is recommended to have at least two people act as the team, and likely no more than three. Having multiple sets of eyes can help with accountability and checks and balances. The fewer hands with access to funds, the better, but be sure to provide reporting access to multiple company representatives for transparency.

The treasury team will be responsible for the entire budget and financials of the event, however the **Budget worksheet** in the Appendix section can be a huge help! You just plug in your costs and the number of attendees and the worksheet does the math for you. Don't forget that there is also a need for financial transparency, so the treasurers should be expected to create a post-event full financials report to share out with the community.

The treasurers can expect to handle tasks such as:

- Creating the budget
- Accepting and handling payments from attendees
- Settling vendor accounts such as venue rental, equipment rental, catering, etc.
- Getting a liability insurance policy underwritten for the event (may be required by venue lease or not, but could be important in case accidents befall your attendees)
- Reimbursing individuals for event-related expenses

The most simple way to get started is a PayPal account, plus you can request a debit card to pay vendors that don't accept PayPal. Once you progress to needing an actual bank account, check with your local credit union first. Local banks are more likely to offer small business banking programs without fees.

Consider extraneous expenses for event and participants (including parking, non-event food and beverages, transportation, and lodging,) As with any sort of event planning, there are ALWAYS unforeseen costs. These can be anything from taxes, fees, gratuity, chair rental, A/V rental, parking, and more. It's wise to always budget a cushion of 15% extra in the proposed budget for anything unexpected that might pop up!

Multi-Regional Summit (Sacramento, Reno, Tahoe) 2019

Venue & A/V Considerations

When considering venues you'll need to take into account any audio/visual needs you'll have. During the first few years the event might not be big enough to merit any special gear, but as you grow you'll want to consider using a projector, speakers, a microphone, etc. Even in a smaller venue with less than 25 people or so, presentations are always more effective when paired with visual aid. The ways in which people absorb and respond to the information presented to them can be significantly more impactful if presented with things that appeal to the senses.

Plan to have a point person in charge of A/V needs. You don't necessarily need to hire a tech person (however perhaps in a pinch the venue will have an option for you) but there is a good chance that within the community members attending, at least a few of them have audio or visual experience. A projector, a small set of speakers, and a microphone can go a long way towards bulking up the legitimacy and appeal of the presentations. It's much easier for participants to stay engaged and focused when they aren't straining to hear.

Also consider getting a photographer or videographer to document the event. Again, it is likely that someone on the attendee list has experience within this realm. Burners are a talented and resourceful crew of folks, so try to lean on the community first and foremost. Also remember that you can always just take a few pictures with your phone, because as your event grows it'll be nice to have a historical record of how the event evolved over the years.

SERT (Southeast Roundtable) 2019 in Atlanta, GA

Unforeseen Crises & Cancelling Your Event

At what point are you past the deadline to produce a decent event? Producing events is hard. We all know this. It takes a ton of time and effort and planning, and many times, unforeseen obstacles just formalize out of nowhere. So many times things just don't go as planned. So what is the ideal planning cycle of a conference? Again, this is heavily dependent on how many folks are attending. Obviously planning a 15 person event is much different than coordinating for 75.

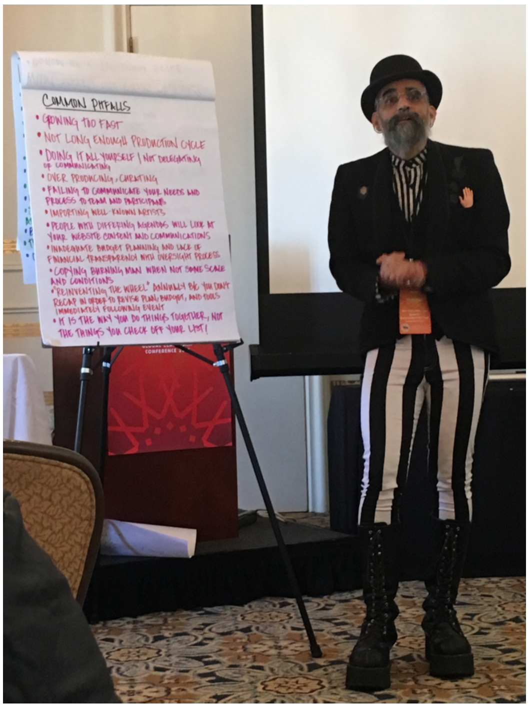
So what do you do in the case of a crisis or cancellation? As event producers, we all know that sometimes, things just happen. Venues fall through. Extreme weather happens. Hell, sometimes there's even a global pandemic that shuts down all travel and gatherings. The best way to avoid true catastrophe in the event of emergency or unforeseen obstacles (worst case scenario is full cancellation of the event) is to never commit to spending more than you can afford to lose. The best way to ensure your success is this: slow controlled growth. We'll say it again: the safest way to ensure success is slow, controlled growth, and by never spending more than you can afford to lose. For your first event, don't try to blow it out and have a 100 person conference, but rather start with 20 people and see how it goes. The next year raise the cap by 10-15, and in 5 years shoot for growing to 100. The rate at which you scale should be directly correlated to the level of interest and volunteer base you cultivate, plus the amount of financial cushion you can set aside.

The approach should be akin to that of starting and growing a burn. It's never a good idea to establish an event where there are too many participants and not enough coordinators/staff/volunteers. A surefire way to drive any conference or burn event into the ground is to assume you have the internal infrastructure to coordinate a huge event when you don't. There must be a solid ratio of volunteers to attendees to ensure success. Likewise, the risk is much more significant when you try to take on a huge debt in hopes that it works out, only to have something go wrong. Don't forget that in the early years, the financial liability for many events falls onto the shoulders of individuals instead of protected organizations such as LLCs or 501(c)3s, which likely means YOU. Instead of putting a ton of personal money on the line, scale up safely with slow, controlled growth, ensure your financial tactics are safely working after a test period of 2-3 years, and set aside a little of each event's profits as a cushion for an emergency such as nonrefundable venue cancellation.

A Note on Going Digital

Obviously 2020 brought with it some new and unexpected... lets call them "challenges." Burner events of all types were forced to postpone, cancel, and find new and creative ways to go digital in the face of Covid-19. One thing that 2020 made clear is that it's a good idea to always have a backup plan or an alternative approach. As you work on establishing an LLEO event, be sure you work on putting a plan into place for how to connect with your community both digitally and in-person. If 2020 showed us anything it was that having the ability to swiftly and efficiently shift to online virtual meetings and events can be a huge asset.

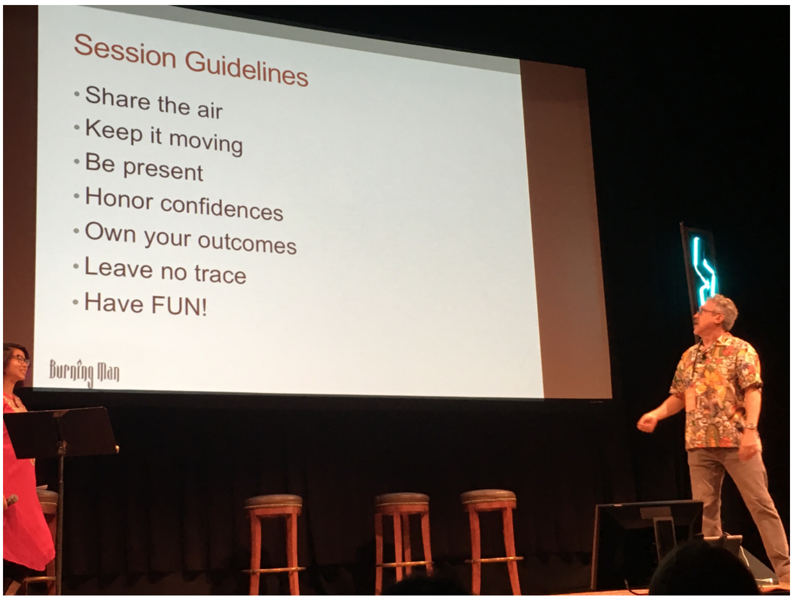
We don't necessarily recommend trying to produce your very first Burner leadership conference digitally (unless you're feeling super confident... then go for it!) but once you get established, the transition to virtual events will be significantly easier.



2016 Global Leadership Conference

Stephen Raspa (left)

Stuart Mangrum (below)



PHASE TWO

Pre-Event

Attendee Communication & Volunteer Coordination

Communication with attendees is key! Plan to send out content surveys beforehand, and feedback surveys afterwards. Sourcing your attendees for content will be a major key to success, because ultimately the conference mimics a burn - it's for Burners, by Burners, and success depends on interest and engagement. The content needs to be pertinent, interesting and engaging. In the **What** section you'll find a huge library of session ideas that you're welcome to adopt and tweak for your conference, however any content delivered is going to be stronger and more well-received if the person leading the session is passionate about it. When it comes to developing the session schedule for your upcoming conference, we recommend sending out a Google form (2-3 months in advance is good) that surveys the community for topics they'd like to discuss, and invites anyone who would be willing to lead a session to nominate themselves. Please trust this is easier than trying to convince people to do it during crunch time! Feel free to copy and paste our **Pre-Conference Content Questionnaire & Speaker Submission** ideas into your own Google form!

A common first step is to ask potential attendees for theme ideas. Use tools like Google Forms or any other feedback solicitation systems you prefer. Make sure to have a definitive end-date for submissions, then remind attendees throughout that period to submit their ideas. If one theme concept doesn't speak to your event leadership team, look for repeated suggestions to craft your theme around. This will help your event to best relate to as many attendees as possible. Once your theme is finalized, announce it to your potential attendees. If you haven't already done so, this is an ideal time to at least begin creating an email list of potential attendees – tell them to subscribe to keep receiving updates, including when and how much to pay for admission.

Volunteer Coordination

- Determine volunteer needs
- Send call out inviting the community to help
- Do a volunteer orientation
- Show appreciation by doing something special for volunteers. Acknowledge in program/ closing speech, or perhaps a small gift?

Communication and Documentation

- Announce dates and location
- Call for content
- Design a program
- Create website (optional) and do online registration

Pre-and Post-Event

- Pre-event newsletter/social media to get people excited
- As your event grows in size, the planning, logistics, and content agenda typically become more complex. The best way to simultaneously share the workload and make sure attendees are engaged is to solicit feedback and ideas early and often
- Post-event editing might be a budget expense!

Conference Schedule & Content Considerations

How many content tracks do you have and how do you plan them out? Deciding on the ultimate form of your session schedule will depend heavily on how many people are attending your conference. If you have any less than 75, then one singular track will likely be plenty effective. Once you start nearing 75-100+, then you might want to consider going multi-track, where you offer more than one session per time slot, thereby giving folks a choice of which option suits them best, which will likely keep them more engaged. In addition, smaller groups can lead to a more productive learning environment, especially during group discussions or breakout sessions, and gives each person a better chance of being heard individually. One strong tool Burning Man has used in the past for multi-track events is called Pathable, as it can help participants choose and keep track of their schedule.

What does the basic daily schedule look like? Check out the handy **Scheduler Tool**, where you can set your own session and break length to see how the day might go (just don't forget: start and end at a reasonable time, and incorporate lots of breaks with a solid chunk for lunch!) It's important to balance work with play, and a ton of community-building at regional Burner conferences happens outside of the sessions as much as during them!

As mentioned, breaks are essential! We all know what it's like to sit through a 2-hour meeting that just drones on and on and on… and even though a conference full of your amazing Burner community all-star members does increase the appeal, it doesn't necessarily mean that it's easy. Scheduled breaks between sessions and a lunch can go far when it comes to keeping people engaged. Keep a cooler full of cold sodas and water. Remind people to stretch, and perhaps even add 5-minute group stretch sessions, with each session focusing on a different part of the body!

It's common that for programming, a Saturday and Sunday work best for most, with optional events on Friday night. We've found that the most ideal schedule is this: kick off Friday night with some casual social time at a bar, restaurant or otherwise. Saturday will be your longest day, and hours can likely be 9am-5pm. Sunday you might want to end a little early for those who need to travel home, so consider running from 9am-3pm, with the option of having a **"Parking Lot Session"** on Sunday from 3-5pm, for the folks that can and want to stay late.

With a theme in place, it's time to start building your content and agenda. If you're planning an intimate event, conversation prompts may be all that you need. If your event is large, you will need to plan for one or more days full of content (likely 8 hours or more). Plan for each session to take less than an hour so participants are able to stay focused. Build in buffers via breakfast, lunch, beverage or bathroom (bio) breaks between each session – longer than you would anticipate is recommended as the last session may have run long and you'll need to use some break time to get back on schedule. With a rough schedule in mind, you should now know how many sessions you need to fill.

Reach back out to your attendees for content ideas. It may help to suggest some categories – such as art, community service, regionals, local community events,– to help get the creative juices flowing. Like with your theme submissions, use a Google form and have a solid deadline, then promote it. Once submissions have closed, work through your submissions to see if you have adequate content for your event. If you do not have adequate content, either your event team members will need to come up with their own ideas, or you'll need to reach out personally to members of the community to encourage them to share on a topic they're familiar with.

Once you have your planned agenda – planned because things happen and something may need to shift – promote it back out to your group of potential attendees. This is the ideal time to begin accepting payment for admission. People who have paid are more likely to begin making travel plans and attend. With a comprehensive agenda, they have the confidence to invest in your event.

If you have so much content that you are considering either cutting sessions or adding days, consider the option of having multiple simultaneous tracks. A suggested delineation would be to offer a community leadership track and an event operations track. The entire day doesn't need to be split in two, you could simply break for part of the day and retain some common sessions for all attendees.

Meal Logistics

Meal logistics is an important element when considering how to maximize the smoothness of the event. Getting the conference catered can solve a number of problems, including having to cut out huge chunks of time so people can go off-site to eat, and ensuring that out-of-towners who may have flown in don't have to worry about transportation.

It's not essential to get every meal catered, but handling breakfast and lunch on the two main days of the conference (likely Saturday and Sunday) will go a long way in adding to the convenience and the perceived value of the ticket cost. Breakfast can be a simple continental setup (fruit, breads/pastries, juice/coffee/tea), and lunch should be something healthy with a good amount of options that can suit a number of dietary restrictions (think Mediterranean, soups/sandwiches/salads, or a build-your-own-taco-bar).

Consider these steps when you're figuring out how, when and what to cater:

- Identify a volunteer to lead meal logistics
- Determine the meals/refreshments to be provided (How many people? Full catering? Snacks and sodas only? etc)
- Make sure to consider special dietary needs:
    - Gluten Free
    - Vegetarian/Vegan
    - Autoimmune Protocol
    - Religious
    - Keto, FODMAPS.
    - Dairy free
- Calculate a budget request per person (include tax and gratuity where applicable)
- Get budget approved by Planning Committee
- Order food *at least* two weeks out and make sure you reconfirm a few days out

The Appendix section has a handy **Meal Planning Tool** that allows folks to fill in their dietary needs and it will do some math to help you determine what of any certain type of food to order (or steer clear from).

Encourage folks to bring their own cups, but as the organizer you'll probably need to provide the plates/plasticwear.

Also, don't forget to come up with an LNT plan!

Accommodations

It's a good idea to employ a system to help participants secure low/no cost accomodations for the event, and one great way to do that is by encouraging a housing share where local Burners can offer up their guest room or couch to those traveling in. You can use the handy **Housing Share** document (linked in the Appendix) to see who has space, and who needs it! Another good option is to coordinate with a local hotel to offer a block of rooms at a discounted rate. You could also consider using services such as AirBnb (just be aware that opens up a whole new can of worms, including who is going to coordinate, pay, and carry the liability), but in a pinch it's an option.

Finally, one great option to consider when searching for venues is to consider finding something like a scout retreat or overnight camp facility that offers cabins as part of the rental.

2016 Global Leadership Conference

Art/Decor & Swag

In true Burner fashion, making the space look great is recommended (but not essential). There's no need to go above and beyond, however adding some Burner-themed or Burner-created art can always help set the mood. Burning Man posters, art created by community members, a BWB screenprinting station, or a community painting can be fun ways to add to the theme and inspiration. You can invite local artists to share their creations at the venue or even live performances if time and space permits. You can also create space for regional groups to communicate their presence by having tables that display legacy swag or extras up for grabs.

Speaking of swag, a good sticker or patch is always appreciated by Burners! During the first year or two when you're operating in the red, there's no need to spend money on extras/non-necessities such as swag, but as you grow and cultivate a community and identity of your own, it'd be a good idea to develop a logo and then offer participants some swag as a small token of appreciation for attending. Stickers are easy go-tos, but if you have the numbers and budget you can always look at things like patches, bottle openers, or even mini pocket notebooks!

After-Hours Events

Community building doesn't just happen in the lecture hall. Coordinating a variety of off-site/ after-hours events can be an incredible way to facilitate stronger connections. After all, Burners do love their social gatherings! For the duration of the conference itself, encourage participants to remain sober and engaged, but make sure you balance it out by offering some fun evening social activities, including post-conferences cocktail hour and dinner. Be sure to do some groundwork and call ahead to make arrangements for a group of your size. It's best to appoint one particular person to be the "social shepherd" - one person who is local to the area and familiar with the restaurant/bar offerings who can do the legwork to plan and confirm evening events.

Make sure to make it clear in your programming that these after-hours events are completely optional and are not a specific part of the event itself. It might even be a good idea to check with your insurance to confirm if they will (or won't) cover claims resulting from incidents at after-hours outings.

2014 Global Leadership Conference

PHASE THREE

During the Event

Orientation

It's always a good idea to open up the conference by introducing the hosts. Many times not all of the conference attendees know each other, so getting introductions of some key players taken care of at the beginning can help break the ice. You might want to even consider introducing the keynote speakers and some of the panelists or presenters. Opening up the meeting space is important to lay some ground rules as well.

If possible, offer your keynote or plenary speakers the chance to familiarize themselves with the space and A/V aspects before they speak. Any time before the sessions begin is fine, just a chance for them to get comfortable in the room and make switching over audio and video gear as smooth as possible.

Ground Rules

It's important to establish some ground rules early on with the participants to ensure that everyone has an enjoyable time where they feel heard. Luckily, rules don't HAVE to suck the fun out of everything! They can actually enhance your experience if it leads to a more productive and streamlined event. Most importantly, it's important to embrace the **10 Principles** on and off playa, especially during community-based events. Check out the **ground rules from the ANZLS 2018 conference** for some guidelines that can help establish a successful and productive meeting.

Brain Breaks

We can generally only absorb so much information delivery at a time. The body and the brain are connected- we need to move our bodies to keep our brains active. In between sessions, consider quick and simple "brain breaks" to keep the blood and oxygen flowing to the brain! Shakedown, dance break, yoga stretch - the possibilities are endless. Make it quick and fun! Here are some examples of exercises you can prompt attendees to do to help:

Reflection

Taking time to reflect on new information helps to process and retain insights. Consider holding time for a reflection routine at the end of a session, pausing to discuss after introducing big ideas, or providing space throughout the conference for ongoing discussion and reflection.

Connect-Extend-Challenge

How does this connect to what you already know?
How does this extend your thinking?
What challenges do you see or questions do you have?

3-2-1 Bridge: 3 Takeaways, 2 Questions, 1 Analogy

- **I/Q:** Insights and Questions
- **Plus/Delta:** What would you keep the same? What might you change?
- **Wows & Wonders:** What about this makes you say "wow"? What does it make you wonder?

Icebreakers

Intentionally creating opportunities for participants to connect sets the tone for the entire event. As you design your opening activities, think about the big ideas and themes for the event. How might you introduce essential questions to guide the event? How can you create "thick air" around the core themes you will be exploring and invite participants to engage with them?

Continuum Icebreaker

- Establish an imaginary line from one end of the room to the other, creating a continuum. Each end represents an extreme position.
- Provide a series of either/or prompts. For example, coffee or tea? Participants place themselves physically along the continuum somewhere between the extremes. Are they coffee or tea drinkers, or somewhere in the middle.
- Start with fun prompts to get familiar with the idea and move into prompts that relate to the big ideas of the session. Chocolate or vanilla? Winter or Summer? Hippie or raver? Sunrise at Bubbles & Bass or 2am at Camp Question Mark? Leadership style: from the front or from behind?
- You can also provide statements to agree or disagree with: "Burning Man was better last year," or "Consent should be the 11th principle," etc.
- Invite people at either end to share why they chose that position, or if someone is standing alone, ask them to share.

Microstorytelling Icebreaker

- Find a partner (ideally someone you've never met) and create a secret handshake.
- Respond to a story prompt, one minute each (Example: Tell the story of how you first discovered the burner community, or of one of your favorite memories from a burn)
- Thank your partner and find a new one. Teach your new partner your secret handshake.
- Respond to a second story prompt, one min each. (example: Tell a story of a time you felt inspired by someone in your local Burner community)
- Thank your partner and switch once more, if time allows.
- Share out with the whole room a few things you heard from your partners.

**Neuroscience note: connections on the outside build connections on the inside - activities that include eye contact, touch, presence, in a playful situation, can maximize impact.*

That's Me! Icebreaker

- Respond to a series of questions by standing up enthusiastically if they apply to you. So the host stands at the front of the room and asks questions such as:
    - Do you serve on the Board of a non profit or LLC in your community?
    - Are you an Event Lead?
    - Are you a Regional Contact?
    - Which state do you represent? (list the states)
    - Silly questions (Do you like chocolate? Have you ever been a professional clown? Have you ever been skydiving? What was your dream job when you were a kid?)
- Look around and make eye contact/acknowledge others who share the same thing. (this helps identify who you might want to connect with further later, as well)

**By "speaking with your body" you are able to both physically and cognitively respond to the question being asked, providing multiple sensory pathways to deepen connections.*

Common Ground Icebreaker

- Begin by creating an imaginary line across the length of the room, with one side being the "yes" side and the other the "no" side. Gather everyone on the "no" side of the line. Call out a series of questions.
- Those who can answer “yes” to the questions, step to the "yes" side of the line; the remainder stay on the "no" side.
- During the activity, you may request more details - for example, asking each person on the "yes" side to name the musical instrument they play.
- This activity can also be done in a circle, with those answering “yes” stepping into the center, or across a whole room, with people standing up to answer “yes.”
- Possible opening questions. Start with general, fun questions, and move into questions relevant to the upcoming content):
    - Do you speak more than one language?
    - Do you sing or dance?
    - Do you write poetry or lyrics?
    - Do you play a musical instrument?
    - Do you consider yourself to be an artist?
    - Have you traveled outside the United States?

Mid-Atlantic Leaderhip Conference 2016

Debbi Arseneaux

Have a Leave No Trace Plan!

Leave No Trace is one of the cornerstones of the Burning Man principles, and should be one of the main tenets of each good Burner’s personal philosophy as well. Just like any venue we use for an event or burn, after a Burner leadership event the goal should be to leave the venue in as good or better shape than when you found it. LNT should be easy given the fact your event will be full of dedicated Burner superstars, but it’s easy to slip up, especially when people start to feel comfortable. Constant reminders of LNT after sessions is a good practice to employ.

Sustainability should also always be at the forefront of consideration when deciding on a venue, so if possible try to ensure the venue offers recycling. Alternatively, you can appoint a person to handle recycling. Before the event, you can also advocate for ways to reduce the event’s carbon footprint, such as encouraging people to BYOCups and utensils, carpool, and doing paper-less programs. Keep in mind that folks bringing their own cups/plates/reusable utensils only works well if you have easy access to a sink.

Going with the Flow

As with any event, going with the flow is essential to your happiness with the event. Unexpected obstacles ALWAYS arise to some degree, and it's important to roll with the punches. Expect sessions to go over time and pad some extra minutes to allow for that (worst case scenario you eat up all your break time, best case scenario folks have plenty of time between sessions to stretch, socialize, use the restroom, and cleanse their palate for the following session). There's a possibility that one or more of your scheduled presenters suddenly can't make it, so it might be a good idea to have a backup session or two planned in case that happens. Have a plan for if something goes wrong with one of the caterers. Handling as many details in advance will help ease the stress and tension during the actual event, but just plan to be prepared.

Being prepared doesn't mean that you're readying yourself for every crisis possible, rather it means that you've done your due diligence to plan ahead for some possible unexpected obstacles that might pop up. The more prepared you are the easier it'll be to drop into a back up plan and keep things running as smoothly as possible.

Also, be prepared to build out time for **Parking Lot Sessions**. Parking Lot Sessions should be added at the close of the entire event (so likely Sunday afternoon). Pad an extra hour or two for those ideas and conversations that crop up that didn't get proper coverage during the event. Most likely, your event will be inspirational and spark a ton of great conversation, leading to some new ideas worth exploring. In addition to having someone recording these ideas, it's a great opportunity to give folks a chance to continue the conversation of some key takeaways in an informal setting.

SERT 2018 in Knoxville, TN

PHASE FOUR

Post-Event Wrap-Up

Debrief Follow–Up

Doing a timely debrief is one of the most valuable resources you can create for yourself. Year one you're working from blank slate (except for this handy booklet!) but in future years your best roadmap to success will lie in the notes you gather immediately following the event you produce.

Get together with your Planning Committee no less than a week after the wrap of the event and discuss how it went. What went great? What could have gone better? What didn't go at all, and where could you add or take away sections to improve? How could the schedule be tweaked to make it flow better or be more effective overall?

Identify gaps where content training may be appropriate. Anything you can make note of that will most certainly be forgotten during the 6-month gap of no planning sessions needs to be written down! Once it comes time to pick back up on meetings you'll be grateful to past-you for making comprehensive notes about what current-you should do to create the best event possible!

Another important element to a debrief is to solicit the feedback of your attendees. Don't be afraid to prompt them to share the good stuff and the hard stuff with you, and don't take it personally. Just be proud knowing that you stepped up to fulfill an important role in your local community and that you did your best, knowing that experience and working out the kinks is essential to any process. You can create a Google Form (to be submitted anonymously or not) and ask your attendees what they loved and what could have been done better. This might also be a good time to encourage anyone (especially those with strong feelings) to step into a leadership or planning role to help!

Invite participants to share learnings with community members, and post your post-event wrap up, blog, photos, videos, and of course transparency report for the greater community to see. Letting the community know how awesome the event was will likely drum up even more interest in future attendance.

Planning Cycles

6 months out
Establish Planning Committee and start having monthly calls
Discuss possible locations and possible dates

5 months out
Determine primary participants (RCs, community leaders, event producers)
Finalize a location and start discussing possible venues (via the main contact person/Planning Committee member that resides there - remember you do NOT want to host an event in a city where you have no points of contact)

4 months out
Try to have date and venue locked down (contract signed/insurance or COI pulled)
Circulate an informal "Save the Date"
Work on housing options

3 months out
Switch to bi-monthly calls
Formal invite goes out with registration link and payment info
Send out a **content solicitation and speaker interest form**
Start planning rough schedule
Gather ideas for off-site/after-hours events

2 months out
Determine expanded participant attendance availability (event leads, community members)
Start planning catering meals
Flesh out schedule and start locking down speakers/facilitators
Work on A/V needs

1 month out
Switch to weekly calls if need be
Increase event-level caps if extra space available?
Finalize/re-confirm with facilitators on their attendance and proprosed topics
Make reservations for off-site/after-hours events

2 weeks out
Double-check about A/V needs and other venue-related infrastructure

1 week out
Confirm with caterers
Confirm with any standing reservations
Last double-check on all to-do and needs list stuff

05 What Do We Talk About?

Types of Sessions

Sessions can take a variety of forms:

Instructor-led : If you've decided to have a session covering something like perimeter safety, specific community service projects, or an art project, you might have one person presenting to the rest of the group.

Instructor + Q&A : For some topics, you may have one person leading the session, but it is predominantly a question and answer session with attendees. For example, if you have someone experienced with building effigies, they may start with a presentation then address specific build questions from attendees. If you include this type of session, be sure that your presenter is prepared to fill the time in case there is a shortage of questions from the audience.

Panel discussions : These sessions take the form of a moderator asking a panel of other speakers about a specific topic. One example could include event safety where panel members include Medic, Ranger, DPW, Fire, and Perimeter leads. Another example would be a panel filled with people who have worked on community events and the moderator questions them about their experiences. Another great panel concept could be to discuss community Code of Conduct and Consent Committees, where panelists share what has and has not worked.

Workshops : A great example of a workshop are the BWB community action grants. Instructions for the project are given, materials distributed, then the the group divides and works on the project. Leave time at the end to present out. You should consider running these as two-part exercises as they are difficult to complete in less than an hour.

Breakout Groups : Have the participants split up into smaller breakout groups of 4-10 people (depending on the size of the event) for more focused discussions.

Additional workshop ideas include: event radio training or practicing consent scenarios all the way from the incident through receiving and delivering reports. For more excitement, practice basic event medical knowledge and fire safety procedures if you have instructors available. If you are offering workshops with limited supplies – radios or fire blankets, for example – encourage pre-registration so you can either cap the session or bring more supplies.

How to Keep Content Fresh and Relevant

One of the big challenges to producing the same event every year with a large number of the same people is: how do we keep content fresh and relevant? This is a hard one, since surely the same content is relevant from year to year, however to encourage engagement it is important to keep things fresh. The truth is that every city, state and region experiences their own unique set of resources and challenges. Therefore, it's important to be open to introducing relevant topics to your community, and the best way to do that is to simply poll your community members and see what they think! Don't forget about the **Pre-Conference Content Questionnaire** template, created to help you poll your community about topics that feel most relevant to them. You can either make it an open call (where they fill in the blank with ideas) or you can pre-fill options and have people rank them in order of importance. Either way, the conference attendees will surely have a more enjoyable and engaging time if the content is relevant and new from year to year.

Below, find a list of 50 possible topic options you can use, craft, and personalize for your own event!

2013 Global Leadership Conference

50 Suggestions for Panel Topics

Media Relations and Storytelling for Regionals

Legal Entities 101

Ranger Training

Environmental Compliance, Sustainability and LNT

Community Grants both for and outside of Burns

HR & PR

What Happens when the 10 Principles Don't Mix?

Effective Project Management and Delegation

Succession Planning

Best Practices for Building a Volunteer Culture

Engaging the Community Around Your Burn and Giving Back

Decentralizing Community: Do-ocracies

What Exactly Are Temporary Autonomous Zones?

Where to Draw the Line: On Art, Radical Self-Expression, and When to Ban Someone

Burners Without Borders Civic Ignition Grants Workshop*

Keeping Your Communities Engaged Year-Round

Media and IP

Fundraising, Foundation Support and Crowdfunding, Oh My!

Acculturation: Burning Man for Beginners

Social Media 101: Maximizing Your Effectiveness

Liability, Risk Abatement and Worst Case Scenario

Teaching the 10 Principles, or How a Burn Educates Itself

Fire Safety and Best Practices

RCs & Sanctioning

Planning Committees: Some Best Practices to Forming and Running your BOD

Supporting Conflict Resolution from Start to Finish

Consent, Creating Consent Culture, and Community Accountability

The Process of Arts Grants

Community Growth & Development

Event Safety & Emergency Response Planning

Scaling: The Power of Slow, Controlled Growth

BMHQ News*

Contracts, Contracts, and Even More Contracts!

Radio Infrastructure for Events: Effective Communication and System Planning

Budget, Reporting, Accounting and Transparency

Social Change and Value System Memetics

Racial Justice, and Radical Racial Inclusion**

Building Community Skills and Helping People Find their Place

Ticketing Best Practices & Planning Cycle Timelines

Digital Burning in the Era of Covid

Medical Services 101

Effective Lost & Found Practices

Kids at Burns

Cross-burn Collaboration and Pollination: How Do We Help Each Other?

Vendors, Contractors and Service Providers: Getting the Best Bang For Your Buck

A Leadership Skills Workshop on Listening

Beyond the Burn Community: Getting Involved in your Greater Local Community

How to NOT Burn Out your Volunteers

Keep the Community Going: Planning Events Beyond Regional Burns

Film Screening

* If a BMHQ or BWB person can't make it in person, consider Skyping them in for a session!

** Ensure this is willingly and enthusatically led by a BIPOC (Black or Indigenous person of color)!

06 Appendix & Resources

Click on the links below for some helpful worksheets and interactive planning tools to help! FYI - these are set to "Read Only," so you'll need to download them and re-upload your own copy into your personal Google Drive to edit!

- Budget Planner -

- Housing Share Guide -

- Meal Planning Tool -

- Scheduling Tool -

- Example Pre-Conference Questionnaire and Speaker Submission Form -

- Other Helpful Worksheets -

Burning Man Leadership Qualities

Collaborative - A great leader collaborates with all key stakeholders on any issue.

Actively Listening and Communicating - A great leader actively listens to others ideas and communicates timely and important information.

Accountable - A great leader is accountable, reliable and follows through on commitments.

Self-Aware - A great leader is self-aware of their abilities and others.

Patient - A great leader is patient with themselves and others.

Appreciative - A great leader shows appreciation to everyone who contributed to a particular project or idea.

Acts with Integrity - A great leader has personal integrity and is honest, ethical and professional.

Emotionally Intelligent - A great leader is in touch with their emotions, strengths, weaknesses, drives, values and goals and recognizes their impact on others. An emotionally intelligent leader also displays empathy for others.

Comfortable in the Grey Areas - A great leader has the ability to navigate issues that do not have a clear-cut solution by using intuition, collaboration and mindfulness.

Looks for Greatest Benefit vs. The Immediate Goal - A great leader is focused on the maximum benefit for the community, as opposed to personal or short-term gains.

Perceives the Big Picture - A great leader is focused on seeing the largest possible perspective of any particular project, and communicates this vision to others on the team.

Leads by Example - A great leader is someone who leads by example. And is not afraid to get their hands dirty in the process.

Leaves Ego Behind - A great leader is in it for the greater good and not for personal gain.

Leads outside of the organisation, in the community - A great leader is one who embodies these values even when they are not on duty.

Open to New Ideas - A great leader Is someone who is open to new ideas.

Curious - A great leader suspends assumptions and judgment and brings inquiry and curiosity into everything they do.

Fun!!! - A great leader knows how to make work fun for everyone involved.

ANZLS Ground Rules

- Leave No Trace
- Speak from your own perspective
- Have fun!
- Listen generously
- Share the air
- Be on time
- Be present
- No mobile phones/laptops
- No intoxicants during the day
- Keep this confidential
- Advance notice of recordings

The Last Minute “Don't Forget to Bring“ Checklist

____ Some kind of scratch paper/ledgers

____ Pens

____ Easel/Giant Notepad/Sharpies

____ Duct tape

____ A/V gear (projector, speaker, microphone)

____ Paper plates/napkins/utensils/cups

____ Coolers for ice

____ Computer for note taking

____ Watch for time keeping

____ Trash cans/recycle bins (if not provided by venue)

YOU GOT THIS!

(And don’t forget that you have any questions, you can always email us - lleo@burningman.org!)

07 Considerations for making your event

Hybrid or Virtual

Step I – Determining if a Hybrid/Virtual meeting is appropriate (or essential)

Consider this criteria to determine if you should go hybrid or fully virtual:

- Non-Optional Circumstances
  - Worldwide Pandemic (or similar event that pose a widespread health concern)
  - Significant risk of not having a usable population of attendees
  - Geographic Limitations (multiple countries/hemispheres, etc)

- Discretionary Decisions
  - Pros:
    - Wider group of potential attendees
      - Easier and more inexpensive to attend
      - Easier to balance attending with work/family/life competing needs
    - Less to plan
      - No need for a venue, catering, accomodation planning, etc
    - Can use recorded sessions as content
  - Cons:
    - Potentially less interest from attendees (virtual meeting burnout)
    - Less organic networking (limited to conference programming)
    - Harder to control attendance
    - Less engagement overall

Some thoughts on adjusting goals:

- A virtual event may try to replicate the original goals as set forth at the beginning of your planning process, or it may require re-evaluation of what you hope to achieve.
- Some goals, such as cross-pollinating volunteer/expertise bases may become less likely while others such as disseminating best practices may get easier by more tightly controlly attendee experience.

Moderating considerations:

- Online meetings may require more systematic moderation than in person ones. While it's easy for the host to mute all participants, yielding the floor and allowing spontaneous discussion from dozens to hundreds of individual attendees can derail schedules very quickly.
- Review your conference provider's options, such as diverting presenter questions into a chat box to be answered as able, or potentially having each org designating a single "speaker" to represent them.

Regarding content:

- This is one thing that doesn't need to change too much, as you can keep this fairly consistent as to whatever you're trying to accomplish. Check out the 50 Ideas for Topics on pages 33 and 34!

Step II – Identifying Key Roles & Responsibilities

Virtual and Hybrid events will require 3-4 unique roles over and above what's needed for the in-person portion, and should be dedicated to the online portion to prevent overstretching your base when possible.

- Event Coordinator/Lead (may be same as in-person segment)
  - Oversees event and makes sure all tasks are organized and done

- Audio/Visual Lead
  - Determines platform (Zoom, Skype, Google Meet, etc) to use
  - Ensures any on-site microphones/cameras/screens are set up
  - Makes sure on-site resources have online access
  - Troubleshoots ad hoc issues

- Scheduling Lead
  - Determines Content and timing of discussions (Run of Show)
  - Recruits and trains moderators
  - Works with submitters and presenters on guidelines for content

- Hosting Lead
  - Determines process for online invitees
    - How many orgs to invite
    - Who to invite
      - With an online or hybrid event, you have the ability to invite a ton more people! Just make sure that you don't go over your platform limitation.
    - Attendee cap (overall & by org)
    - Notes on how this changes from the in-person to the virtual/hybrid option
  - Outreach and coordination
  - Follow-up/feedback from attendees

Step III – Use the Tools at your disposal!

Covid-19 Event Considerations

A live document that is maintained and regularly updated by the Regional Events Committee and is contributed to by the community in an ongoing manner.

Taking Your Town Hall Online: A Toolkit for Regional Contacts and Regional Groups

Whether your leadership gathering is done in a town hall-style format or not, there are great tips applicable to any kind of online leadership gathering in this toolkit. Get tips on getting the word out about your leadership gathering, how to be a great speaker or moderator, using participant agreements, managing questions and answers, technical Zoom tips, and much more.

A Guide to Taking Your Event Online

This document, created by the Virtual and Interactive Events team at Burning Man Project, offers excellent tips for producing an online gathering, including a comparison of frequently used platforms for hosting your event. It includes a list of additional helpful resources including a free tutorial on hosting online events and a content creation toolkit.

Template - Run of Show for an Online Gathering

This simple template offers anyone creating an online gathering a tool for structuring the flow of your event to help it run smoothly and make sure you have the necessary people and timing in place for success. An example gathering is included to see how the template could be used. Use this template as a starting point and customize it to fit your gathering's needs.

Sample Production and Run of Show Master Document from the June 6, 2021 Regional Network Forum

This document offers an example of how to plan the production and technical flow of an online leadership gathering using the 2021 Regional Network Forum as an example. Compare what was going on behind-the-scenes with what the participants saw by watching any of the Regional Network Forum videos (links inside) with this Run of Show document open.

You'll see here that there's no one "right way" to do it. Get creative, make it your own, and if you need any help just shoot us an email!

lleo@burningman.org