

Queensland events guide

Staging your event at the
best address on earth

First edition
August 2017

IT'S LIVE!
in Queensland

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Noosa Heads

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Australia

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Disclaimer

TEQ has produced this information in 2017 to encourage, foster and develop events in Queensland. TEQ has endeavoured to ensure the document's contents were correct at the time of publication.

However, TEQ, its employees or agents, accept no responsibility or liability in respect of its contents.

Acknowledgment

TEQ recognises event organisers and organising committees can benefit from practical advice, guidance and tips on the organisation of an event or festival in Queensland.

The Queensland events guide has been designed to assist local event organisers through the various phases of an event's lifecycle.

This document should be read as a companion piece to other event-related information produced by the Queensland Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC), other government agencies and non-government bodies.

Please note, the online version of this document adheres to accessibility standards.

Front cover image: Airlie Beach Race Week Festival of Sailing.



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01

Introduction

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The tourism and events industry in Queensland generates enormous value:

\$25 billion

contributed to Queensland's Gross State Product

One in ten

Queenslanders employed, directly or indirectly

52,000+

tourism-related businesses

Source: Tourism Research Australia, State Tourism Satellite Accounts 2015/16, Tourism Businesses June 2015.

The big picture

Events generate enormous economic and social value for local communities and bring people together to explore Queensland's unforgettable experiences.

Whether they are sporting, arts, cultural, entertainment, lifestyle, business or community events, each celebrates the Queensland story and helps sell our state to the world.

The tourism and events industry contributes \$25 billion to Queensland's Gross State Product (GSP) and employs one in ten Queensland workers either directly or indirectly in over 52,000 tourism-related businesses across the state.

Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ) is the state's lead marketing, destination and experience development and major events agency.

It works collaboratively with government, industry and destination partners to identify, attract, develop and promote successful events in Queensland.

Events support the Queensland visitor economy by driving visitor growth and expenditure - every TEQ dollar of event investment is effectively a dollar invested towards experience and destination marketing.

Queensland's unique events complement the leisure travel sector. Our events are often the deciding factor to travel, especially outside peak holiday periods, while also encouraging greater visitor dispersal throughout regional Queensland.

TEQ's Events Strategy 2025 provides a framework for a sustainable Queensland Events Calendar that ensures:

- government investment is prioritised,
- events are integrated into experience and destination marketing initiatives,
- economic and social outcomes are met,
- events continue to drive growth to achieve superior results against investment objectives.

Events are also one of five experience pillars that drive TEQ's marketing and creative strategy and are unmistakably, quintessentially Queensland.

The events experience pillar and allied hero experiences reflect what is unique and memorable about our state.

At the upper end of the scale, large national and international events often employ full time staff and engage professional event support services.

At the other, local events and festivals mostly rely on local clubs, associations, community organisations, special interest groups and volunteers.

Local community events differ markedly in scale to world sporting championships and international business conventions.

However, fundamental principles apply to all events irrespective of their type, location, size, scope, reach and audience.

This document outlines those fundamental principles and provides practical step-by-step advice to help organisers deliver successful events and festivals in Queensland.

Generically, successful events are well planned and managed, effectively marketed to their target audience and seamlessly delivered.

They achieve their objectives through a professional approach, paying attention to detail and evolving content in a constantly changing world.

Our events - local, national or international, large or small, city or country - and the people like you who run them are all faces of the Queensland brand story, supporting our visitor economy and inspiring the world to experience the best address on earth.

Every dollar of event investment is effectively a dollar invested towards experience and destination marketing.

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Characteristics of successful events

1. Clear objectives and a long-term vision,
2. Strong leadership,
3. Dedicated time commitment,
4. Effective governance,
5. Attention to detail,
6. Strong stakeholder relations and community engagement,
7. Roles, responsibilities and accountabilities clearly defined,
8. Vigilance and review during the event cycle,
9. Consistent event theme, image, branding, public communications,
10. Event plan implementation - milestones, deliverables, timelines, actions,
11. Realistic budget, sound financial management,
12. Post-event review, evaluation, critical analysis,
13. Strategic planning ('looking over the horizon').



Strategic planning flowchart



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Planning an event

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As an event organiser, you have ultimate responsibility to implement appropriate governance and management processes.

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) has produced a range of supporting template documents to assist event and festival organisers.

They cover aspects such as:

- event budget,
- event management,
- marketing and communications,
- risk management,
- event site plans.

Events in Queensland: Best practice guidelines for event delivery in Queensland

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) is the lead agency of the state's public service in Queensland.

DPC provides support and advice to the Premier and Cabinet and leads the public sector in policy coordination and delivering the government's priorities.

One important aspect of DPC's work relates to community engagement and events. The aim of DPC's coordination and event management role is to maintain high standards of safety and security to ensure Queenslanders enjoy the social benefits of special events.

To assist event organisers, DPC has produced *Events in Queensland, Best Practice Guidelines for event delivery in Queensland* which is available for download [here](#).

The DPC document outlines guiding principles for event organisers interacting with the Queensland Government and local government authorities to enable them to successfully plan and manage an event.

While the guidelines are targeted toward medium sized events, they could be used for most event types.

DPC has also produced a range of supporting template documents to assist event and festival organisers. They cover aspects such as the event budget along with event management, marketing and communications, risk management and event site plans.

These templates are provided as support and guidance materials only and can be found on their [website](#).

As an event organiser, you have ultimate responsibility to implement appropriate governance and management processes to ensure your event is managed professionally regarding financial risk, and legal and administrative accountability.



Captain Cook 1770 Festival

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Noosa Food and Wine Festival

Setting objectives and themes

An event's theme, identity and originality are key to ensuring a unique point of difference to underpin ongoing success.

You should have clear objective(s) to:

- run a new annual event or festival,
- launch an enhanced or revamped version of an existing event,
- increase off-peak local/regional tourism or disperse visitation,
- celebrate a community milestone or heritage,
- raise funds for a charity, community service organisation or special cause,
- provide community entertainment and foster community pride.

Event objectives play a major part in generating support from local and state government, local community, sponsors, volunteers and the media.

You should strive to create a strong and unique identity around some aspect of the local area.

An event's theme, identity and originality are key to ensuring a unique point of difference to underpin ongoing success.

Assessing feasibility

When assessing feasibility of a new event, consider:

- what the event wants to achieve,
- number and type of annual events held in the local area and region,
- whether a market exists for the new event,
- who is the target audience and what communication channels are best used,
- if the new event could wholly or partly duplicate, compete with or cannibalise an existing event,
- whether local infrastructure (venues, hospitals, airports, accommodation, hospitality, transport, etc.) can support the event, ensure a positive visitor experience and encourage repeat visitation,
- local community attitudes to the proposed new event,
- seasonal peaks and troughs in the region's annual event calendar and tourism visitation,
- financial and human resources realistically available to plan, fund and deliver the event,
- the capacity of potential sponsors and other funding bodies to support the event,
- seeking professional legal, financial, accounting and event management advice at the outset as a reality check,
- the legal structure of an event organising committee,
- who will be the ultimate guarantor or underwriter to pay the bills should the event lose money.

In some cases, a competitive bid process may be necessary to secure a new event (e.g. regional, state or national sports championship).

In these cases, you should realistically assess whether all the technical, financial, operational and organisational requirements usually set out by the event owner in the bid documentation can be fully met.

Measuring outcomes

Measuring an event's outcomes against its aims, objectives and themes directly relates to future success and sustainability.

The world of events and festivals is highly competitive. That's why it's important to hear what stakeholders and attendees thought about your event, not only the positives, but also things that could be improved.

Measurement allows you to learn from the event experience and take strategic decisions to keep stakeholders and attendees coming back for more.

The importance of post-event evaluation is discussed later in this guide.

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Strategic planning

Organising committees running annual or regular events should continually 'look over the horizon', think long-term and plan beyond the next event.

Event goers are constantly seeking new experiences. There is increasing national and global competition between destinations to attract and retain event audiences and tap into new markets.

In a changing world, long-term strategic planning and constant event evaluation are essential for sustainability and viability.

In a changing world, long-term strategic planning and constant event evaluation are essential for sustainability and viability.

Business plan

Every event should have a business plan, especially if corporate sponsorship or government funding is being sought. A business plan need not be long with 3 - 4 pages sufficient.

Your event business plan should include:

- event name, date, theme, description, objectives, venue, program, schedule and benefits,
- event budget and how it will be funded,
- event governance, organising committee and any sub-committees,
- event workforce, including volunteers,
- event marketing, communications, business and community engagement strategies,
- SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats),
- what success will look like,
- event evaluation and reporting.

Event date

When setting the event date, consider:

- time of year,
- seasonal weather conditions,
- venue(s) availability,
- target market,
- tourism peaks and troughs,
- school and public holidays,
- existing similar and/or local event dates,
- competition from other events,
- event trails or clusters with other towns - joint opportunities for marketing, infrastructure, attendance sharing and keeping tourists in the region longer,
- impact of national or international events to be held the same day (e.g. Melbourne Cup).

Planning lead time

You should make a realistic estimate of the time it will take to plan, organise and deliver your event.

Working back from the event date, as a very general guide, allow the following as a minimum:

- small local events: 6 - 12 months,
- medium scale events: 1 - 2 years,
- large events: 2 years +.

Ideally, planning should start no later than 12 months prior to any event.

Event plan

Good planning and lead time management is crucial for a successful event. That's why an event plan is mission critical.

Your event plan should identify:

- milestones and timelines across the event cycle from beginning to end,
- every task and activity required to plan and deliver the event,
- when each task must be done,
- who is responsible for each task.

Accept it may be necessary to alter the timing and/or sequence of some tasks, responding to changes as the event draws closer. This is typically the rule rather than the exception with events.

Ideally, tasks should be completed at least 2 - 4 weeks before the event as a buffer for unexpected delays.

In the case of larger events, you may need to establish sub-committees with their own event plans as a sub-set of the master plan.

The event plan should be constantly reviewed and considered a 'living' document.

The event plan and any variations should be distributed to your organising committee, any sub-committees and other groups involved with planning and delivering your event.

Another format style typically used in event planning is a Gantt chart, a type of bar chart illustrating a project schedule with start and finish dates for all activities.

Gantt charts show dependency relationships between planned activities. A variety of Gantt chart templates, examples and free downloads can be found online.

Good planning and lead time management is crucial for a successful event. That's why an event plan is mission critical.



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Community and stakeholder engagement

The event plan should include informing and engaging local businesses and community groups to support your event.

Local word-of-mouth is an excellent source of advertising, as is endorsement by well-known local identities.

Along with supporting the event, encourage local businesses to trade around event opening and closing times to attract additional business.

City dressing:

Theming public places and local businesses with event related activations such as street banners, bunting, etc. is another way of ensuring the local community feels engaged, and visitors to a region feel welcome.



Understanding the destination experience

Events engaging with destination branding are likely to promote a strong brand message, emphasising the region's unique experiences.

To deliver Queensland's 2025 events and marketing strategies, TEQ's destinations have developed hero experiences to provide a real competitive advantage over others.

Hero experiences provide tourism operators and event organisers with an opportunity to improve and innovate their products and enhance economic return.

Events feature heavily as themes or attributes underpinning each destination's hero experiences.

You can also use these hero experiences as opportunities to engage with other tourism stakeholders in the region and create beneficial partnerships.

Further information on Queensland's 13 destinations can be found [here](#), including explanations on the brand story, hero experiences, TEQ's campaign/advertising opportunities and contacts.

Events engaging with destination branding are likely to promote a strong brand message, emphasising the region's unique experiences.

Using professional services

A wide range of specialist consultants, including professional event organisers, can assist you with:

- business, communications, marketing and advertising plans,
- applications for funding, grants and subsidies,
- sponsorship submissions,
- social media strategies,
- website development,
- administrative support,
- risk management,
- security,
- catering,
- traffic control and management,
- performers, entertainers and entertainment promoters.

The capacity to employ specialists is budget dependent. For larger events, engaging a professional event organiser can be advantageous.

Consultants are engaged to work in their area of expertise and should not be considered organising committee members.

They usually only attend committee meetings on request for project updates and are not expected to contribute to overall event planning.

A professional event organiser, paid to plan and manage the event, is the exception to this.

Recruiting specialist expertise is not essential and many successful events can be organised and staged without employing consultancy services.

If you are considering appointing a consultant, prepare a consultancy brief that clearly and concisely sets out:

- your event's details and governance structure,
- work required, expected outcomes and delivery timeline,
- consultancy budget or request a quotation responding to the brief,
- outline of the consultant's proposed method to deliver the work, including any sub-contracting,
- requirement for 2 or 3 references (recent relevant work),
- consultant's name, address, website, email, phone numbers,
- closing date for proposals via mail or electronically.

Depending on the type of expertise required, your Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) is a good starting point to identify suitable consultancy firms.

Other sources include local councils, other event organisers, professional associations and personal contacts.

You should set out the separate responsibilities of the organising committee and the consultant in a contract of services that outlines tasks, outcomes, timeframes, lines of communication and commercial arrangements between the parties.



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Establishing an organising committee

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Getting the right people in the right roles is crucial for your event.

Appoint competent, committed people to your event organising committee. Ensure each person is willing and able to dedicate time to fulfill their obligations.

Small committees are often the most effective. For larger events, the committee could include representatives of the community and other organisations involved, along with specialist external expertise.

When forming an event organising committee, try and keep numbers low for ease of management, effective decision-making and communication.

Incorporated Associations that wish to operate nationally should consider registering with the [Australian Securities and Investments Commission \(ASIC\)](#) or converting to a company structure. Professional legal or accounting advice should be obtained to ensure the appropriate structure is being used.

For more information visit:

- [Queensland Government: associations, charities and not for profits.](#)
- [Australian Charities and Non-Profit Commission.](#)

There are also Queensland-based business consultants who can assist with setting up an incorporated body.

Structural options

In Queensland, there are 3 structures you could consider:

(Note - organisations outside Queensland using this document should check legal requirements and implications for incorporated and non-incorporated bodies with the appropriate authorities in your part of the world).

1. Parent organisation or peak body executive committee

Smaller events are often run by a club or association without forming an event-specific committee. The event is integrated with the day-to-day operation of the club/association with the existing committee(s) undertaking the work.

This is the most straightforward structure.



Heritage Nanango Country Muster

2. Unincorporated event committee

An event-specific committee has the advantage in that event operations and financial management are separated from the normal operation of the club or association. Again, this is a simple structure.

However, because an unincorporated committee has no legal standing, it cannot contract with suppliers and may have difficulty obtaining government funding and subsidies.

Most importantly, the liability of members may be unlimited in instances where debt is incurred or legal action taken for negligence or any other reason.

In law, an unincorporated body in Australia is not regarded as a separate entity from its members who may be sued to recover debts and for negligence.

You need to be aware of the dangers of personal liability if an event committee is operated as an unincorporated organisation.

3. Incorporated association

By becoming an incorporated body, a committee, club or association becomes a separate legal identity.

An incorporated association is legally separate from its members and individual committee members, meaning:

- the committee makes decisions,
- the association becomes legally liable for those decisions,
- individual committee members aren't personally liable provided they acted in good faith.

In the case of any legal action, individual members are more protected. With the chance of litigation, it is suggested your event organising committee incorporates as a non-profit body.

Apart from providing more protection for members, an incorporated body can execute contracts, own goods and property and sue/be sued as a separate legal entity.

Most event support programs now require incorporation as part of funding eligibility criteria.

	Incorporated	Unincorporated
Can enter contractual agreements	Yes	No
Can own goods and property	Yes	No
Can be sued as a legal entity	Yes	No
Committee can be sued personally	No	Yes
Registration costs involved	Yes	No
Can access funding and grants	Yes	No
Members may be sued to recover debts and for negligence	No	Yes

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Constitution and by-laws

Most clubs and associations have constitutions. In cases where a stand-alone event organising committee is formed, establish a constitution and by-laws formalising procedures to ensure it operates in an accepted manner.

A basic constitution and by-laws generally include:

- organisation name and objectives,
- executive and sub-committee structure,

- membership categories,
- members' voting rights,
- procedures for resignation and expulsion of members,
- office bearers' positions and duties,
- financial management procedures,
- meeting procedures.

The Office of Fair Trading has online resources regarding the set-up of non-profit organisations, associations and incorporated bodies. Visit www.fairtrading.qld.gov.au

The Queensland Government also has a business and industry portal with not-for-profits and associations information. Visit their [website](#).

Queensland Government laws regarding incorporated associations can be viewed on their [website](#).



Key appointments

You should elect or appoint the right person as event manager or coordinator, given much of an event's success depends on strong leadership and stability.

While every organising committee member plays an important part, the roles of secretary and treasurer are pivotal and can involve a heavy workload.

Persons elected or appointed to these positions must have the necessary commitment, time and skills to fulfil their duties.

Suggested qualities and responsibilities for key organising committee positions are:

Event Manager/Coordinator

Qualities:

- business, industry or government experience,
- excellent organising capabilities, vision, leadership, stakeholder and people management, communications skills, ability to exercise authority,
- thorough understanding of financial matters,
- capacity to understand and deal with issues and problems that inevitably arise with events.

Key responsibilities:

- oversee all aspects of the event,
- manage organising committee and sub-committees,
- act as the event's public face when dealing with sponsors, funding agencies and stakeholders.

The person appointed must have authority to make urgent decisions, including day-to-day issues, to ensure event planning and delivery remain on track.

Treasurer

Qualities:

- sound financial background, experience with financial control, accounting and budget management,
- methodical, organised, eye for detail, trustworthy.

Key responsibilities:

- set, manage and constantly review the budget,
- ensure the event is financially viable and does not trade insolvent.

Secretary

Qualities:

- methodical and organised, eye for detail,
- good communication and stakeholder management skills.

Key responsibilities:

- correspondence and records management,
- prepare meeting agendas, meeting minutes, monitor follow up actions,
- distribute all meeting papers and documents,
- working relationship with event manager/coordinator,
- ensure meeting quorum,
- knowledge or experience of committee procedures.

An event's success depends on strong leadership and stability.

Persons elected or appointed must have the necessary commitment, time and skills to fulfill their duties.

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Sub-committees

You may require sub-committees depending on the type and scale of your event.

Sub-committees are generally chaired by an organising committee member who reports back on their work to the main committee.

On some occasions, an external person with special expertise could be asked to chair a sub-committee. In those cases, appoint a main committee member to that sub-committee.

Your event plan will drive the best sub-committee structure for your event, which could comprise:

Finance and Administration

- financial and budget management,
- risk management,
- contingency planning,
- audit, accounting, invoicing, bank accounts,
- contract management and compliance,
- procurement and tendering,
- office and records management,
- insurance and taxation
- legal services (if required).

Event Program

- event program and schedule,
- event venue(s),
- event participants (e.g. athletes, entertainers, judges, officials, etc.),
- specialised event equipment (e.g. for a sport field of play).

Event Operations

- transport,
- security,
- accreditation,
- liaison with councils, police and regulatory authorities.

Marketing and Commercial

- marketing,
- sponsorship and fundraising,
- branding, look and feel, logo,
- ticketing,
- advertising,
- merchandise and licensing.

Communications and Community Engagement

- communications,
- target audiences and channels,
- issues management,
- key messages,
- collateral and publications,
- social media,
- website content,
- community relations (including schools program),
- media management.

Venue Operations

- utilities (including back-up power),
- security (internal and external),
- temporary event overlay (design, install, remove),
- temporary seating, scoreboards, video screens, wayfinding,
- parking,
- spectator services, information booths,
- first aid and medical,
- cleaning and waste management,
- food and beverage, catering,
- furniture, fixtures and equipment,
- equipment storage.

Event Services

- accommodation,
- event workforce (including volunteers),
- health and medical,
- language services (if needed),
- technology support (for IT systems, laptops, etc.),
- website construction and maintenance.

Protocol Services

- hosting VIP's and dignitaries,
- official hospitality and events (opening/closing, dinners, receptions, prizes, etc.).

A duty statement for each sub-committee member should be prepared. Roles and responsibilities need to be clearly articulated, all required tasks allocated and the document distributed to all involved.

Reporting and communication

Ensure good communication and regular reporting throughout the event cycle.

Once you've finalised the organising structure and appointed the event coordinator and other office bearers, establish reporting systems and lines of communication to keep everyone informed.

Sub-committee chairs should report to the main committee through the event coordinator.

Regular communication should be maintained between the various sub-committees and the main committee.

Set organising committee and sub-committee meeting frequencies, dates and times as early as possible in the planning process. Prepare a meeting schedule and distribute it to committee members.

Ensure good communication and regular reporting throughout the event cycle.



Chinchilla Melon Festival

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Succession planning

Organising committees of successful events are always thinking ahead and planning beyond the next event.

Many committees are volunteers, therefore sustainability is crucial.

Succession planning ensures a smooth transition should committee members or key staff change.

Consider the following points:

1. Committee elections

Only put half the number of committee positions forward for election each year. This ensures committee experience is maintained and allows new members time to become familiar with event issues rather than an entirely new committee starting out 'cold'.

Many committees are volunteers, therefore sustainability is crucial.

2. Keeping event documentation archives

Keep comprehensive records of all documentation associated with an event, particularly annual events. This is an important part of event management and management succession.

File all event documentation as hard copy and/or electronically. Be aware of the responsibilities that come with online storage of private, confidential or sensitive documentation.

Typical event archives include:

- agendas, minutes, documents and action sheets from main committee and sub-committee meetings,
- budgets and audited financial statements,
- event plan, all planning documents, progress reports, final report,
- asset register, permits and licenses,
- policy and procedures manual, workforce training manual,
- correspondence,
- mailing lists (Customer relationship management [CRM], databases),
- sponsorship and funding applications,
- equipment hire records,
- documentation used for competitive events (e.g. scoring and judging sheets, start lists, results sheets, certificates, copies of medals/prizes),
- media releases and press clips,
- online/social media accounts and passwords,
- event evaluation and statistical data,
- post-event report and sponsor reports,

- acquittal of funding to government agencies,
- list of committee and sub-committee members, staff and volunteers,
- examples of invitations,
- tickets and accreditation passes,
- form letters,
- event letterhead,
- printed collateral,
- event program.

The secretary is usually responsible for maintaining these records and ensuring they are passed on to an incoming committee.

Transfer of knowledge from past events is invaluable and avoids the need for a new committee to 'reinvent the wheel'.

Transfer of knowledge from past events is invaluable and avoids the need for a new committee to 'reinvent the wheel'.

3. Policy and procedures manual

When committees or staff change, you should have a policy in place, so everyone clearly understands why the event is being held and the roles and responsibilities of all involved.

This manual should not be a large document, the more concise the better. It is the foundation for future committees and event operations and should include:

- strategic vision and objectives,
- organisation structure,
- committee election policy,
- organising committee and sub-committee roles and responsibilities,
- financial management policy,
- procurement policy and procedures,
- risk management policy,
- sponsorship policy and procedures,
- procedures for handling emergencies,
- media, online and social media policy.

Review the policy and procedures manual after each event.



Abbey Medieval Festival

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Budgeting and financial management

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Organising an event is more than just 'putting on a show'. Events must be treated as a business, requiring accountability and transparency.

Your organising committee must be fully aware of its financial responsibilities, especially if government funding (public money) is provided.

Budgeting must be realistic and measurable. Estimated income should be conservative and all costs taken into consideration.

A typical event budget comprises 3 main elements:

- cash income,
- goods and services provided as value-in-kind (VIK),
- cash expenses.

The budget provides direction and is a vital management tool to achieve the event's objectives.

A finance committee would usually develop the budget and then allocate funds to other sub-committees, which prepare their own budgets and submit them to the finance committee for approval.

For organisations holding annual events, previous financial records provide a foundation to develop a budget.

Estimating income and expenses for one-off or new events can be challenging, so take a systematic approach when considering realistic income and expenses.

Income

Keep income targets realistic, develop multiple income streams and ensure they are evenly distributed.

If your event income is only from one area (i.e. ticket sales) and this income is not achieved, there will be significant implications for your budget bottom line and the event's success.

If you have multiple income streams (pre-purchase tickets, walk-up tickets, merchandise, licensing, food and beverage, etc.) your event has a better chance of success.

Make an estimate for goods and services provided as VIK. This refers to products or services given in lieu of cash.

For example, a printing company may provide paper, a car company may provide a vehicle and a technology company may provide laptops, rather than donating cash.

The finance committee should continually monitor the budget and exercise effective control over expenditure.

Establish systems to provide monthly reports of budgeted income and expenditure against actual figures. This ensures action can be taken, if necessary, before problems occur.

Where actual expenditure exceeds the budgeted amount, the reasons why this occurred and how the budget will be brought back into line should be identified and stated in monthly reports.

Keep income targets realistic, develop multiple income streams and ensure they are evenly distributed.

Expenses

Make a detailed list of all expected costs and, where possible, obtain firm prices and quotes.

Include goods and services tax (GST) in all budgets and projections as required.

For more information about GST, please visit the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) [website](#).

Once expenses have been estimated, add a contingency (preferably 5% to 10%) depending on the size of the event to cover unexpected costs that will inevitably occur.



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Financial management

Funding for local and regional events is often provided by community groups and government agencies. This makes accountability and transparency all-important.

Sound financial management and the need to keep detailed financial records are mandatory for your event. They allow you to monitor the budget and ensure accurate financial statements detailing income sources and the way the funds were expended.

While small events may need just a simple accounting system, large events can require more sophisticated systems.

Consider opening an "event only" bank account where startup cash flow is banked and used for all subsequent income and expenditure. This will assist with bookkeeping.

Computerised accounting systems make accounting and financial management a relatively easy task.

Irrespective of the scope of the financial records required, get advice and assistance from an accountant or the club/association auditor to set up systems, to allow the provision of information and financial statements in accordance with standard accounting procedures.

Consider other best practice points for efficient financial management and control:

- allocate dollar values for any donated or contributed goods and services. These 'in-kind' contributions may only be available for one event. Therefore, the actual costs of the goods or services should be accounted for in the budget for subsequent events,

- try and have as many costs as possible charged during the latter stage of the planning process or preferably post-event,

- aim to have income such as sponsorships and funding paid as early as possible to generate cash flow,

- properly receipt all cash income,
- online banking will keep a consistent record of outgoing payments and income received and can be cross-checked with the budget to ensure accuracy,

- budget for online payment system fees (e.g. percentage fees that PayPal deduct from income),

- invoices received by email should be printed and stamped with the date of receipt. Check correct amounts are shown on invoices and items or services have been delivered. Check payment terms and ensure accounts are paid on time,

- don't make payments without an invoice, account or other proof of expenditure (i.e. copies of docket),

- pay expenses provided for in the budget promptly and ratify at the next finance committee meeting. Costs not allowed in the budget need finance committee approval before payment is made,

- promptly record receipts and payments in the accounting system to ensure financial records are always up to date,

- for the purchase of small items, maintain a separate petty cash record with proof of expenditure required for all purchases,

- present a monthly financial report to the organising committee showing:
 - income and expenses for the month,
 - comparison of actual income and expenses for the year-to-date (YTD) with the budget amount, so income and expenses can be monitored,
 - current financial position following reconciliation of the bank statement.
- incorporated committees are required to forward a copy of the end-of-year financial statement to the relevant state department or authority. These requirements can vary and should be clarified by the treasurer to ensure the appropriate financial information is supplied.

Sound financial management and the need to keep detailed financial records are mandatory for your event.



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Asset register

A statement of assets and liabilities is required as part of the end-of-year or post-event financial statements.

As general good business practice, keep an up-to-date asset register showing:

- description of each asset,
- purchase price and date purchased,
- where the asset is stored,

- contact name and telephone number of the person or organisation holding the asset,
- whether the asset is available for hire to other organisations and, if so, the charge and what deposit is required.

Consider decreasing costs by hiring or sharing resources from local groups at a rate that may be significantly less than professional hire companies.

Consider decreasing costs by hiring or sharing resources from local groups.

Government funding programs

Depending on the type of your event; funding, grants, subsidies or other assistance may be available from local, state and federal government agencies.

Various assistance programs available in Queensland are set out under 'Potential sources of assistance' in this guide.

Be aware that government event support agencies have finite budgets and continually receive funding requests, so allow ample time for a response to an application for support.

Some agencies require applications to be submitted a significant amount of time in advance, so take note of submission deadlines.

For information about obtaining Australian Government grants visit www.business.gov.au/assistance.

For Queensland Government grants visit www.smartservice.qld.gov.au/services/grants.

For information regarding Tourism and Events Queensland funding visit www.teq.queensland.com/events/events-support.

Depending on your event; funding, grants, subsidies or other assistance may be available from government agencies.

Non-government funding options

Other online resources offering information on non-government grants and how to apply include:

- [The Funding Network](#),
- [The Grants Hub](#).



Crowdfunding

Crowdfunding is an alternate funding option where a project or venture raises money from people, usually online. As with any funding, it requires planning, research, time commitment and use of resources.

A crowdfunding model is generally based on a project/event initiator who proposes the project to be funded, individuals or groups who support and fund the idea, and a moderating organisation or platform that brings the parties together to launch the idea.

If you want to consider crowdfunding your event:

- investigate reputable online crowdfunding organisations,
- create a plan, including communication and deadline for funding,
- have a team work on the crowdfunding platform, including a graphic designer,
- research other similar or local events that have been crowdfunded,

- make a video(s), create interesting photographs and details to post online,
- offer incentives for people who donate through crowdfunding (e.g. discounted tickets, VIP seating).

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Sponsorship

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Businesses want to ensure maximum return is obtained for every dollar spent.

All businesses closely examine their costs and return on investments, particularly marketing and sponsorship budgets.

If approaching businesses for sponsorship, address 'what's in it for them' so sponsors get value for their investment.

Recognise the days of business (and government funding agencies) giving financial assistance simply as a goodwill gesture are gone, and competition for sponsorship is strong.

When approaching potential sponsors:

- allow sufficient lead time prior to the event for applications to be given adequate consideration,
- always present professionally with easy to read, clear, succinct information about the event, its aims, objectives, target audience and proposed marketing channels,
- articulate how sponsorship will work for their business and what you are asking of them,
- present a sponsorship application that gives the sponsor value for money,
- present exact details of what benefits will be provided to the sponsor if they agree to your proposal.

If you receive sponsorship, stay in frequent contact with the sponsor to build goodwill and deliver all the agreed sponsorship rights.

Sponsorship plan

Approach sponsorship in a planned and methodical way.

Strategic, organised and carefully considered applications have a greater chance of success than those that are haphazard and ad-hoc.

As a starting point, prepare a draft sponsorship plan before submitting any requests. For context, prepare the event marketing plan prior to developing the sponsorship plan.

In formulating a sponsorship plan, address the following:

- how will sponsorship assist the sponsor with their own marketing and business goals,
- what sponsorship benefits can you offer and confidently deliver:
 - naming rights,
 - tickets and accreditation,
 - signage,
 - hospitality,
 - invitations to official events,
 - speaking opportunities,
 - medal or prize presenting opportunities,
 - on-site product activation opportunities,
 - 'money can't buy' opportunities.

- which organisations could provide sponsorship:

- local,
- regional,
- state,
- national.

- what type of sponsorship is needed:

- cash,
- value-in-kind,
- other assistance.

- is there a conflict of interest between the event's objective(s) and the sponsor and its products?

- will there be a conflict of interest or ambush marketing potential if more than one major sponsor is involved?

- for annual events, could sponsorship be secured over multiple years?

With these points in mind, the following methods could be adopted when seeking sponsorship.

Approach sponsorship in a planned and methodical way.



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Sponsorship submission guidelines

1. Submit sponsorship applications well in advance of the event

Give sponsors ample time to consider applications. Set a timeframe for the preparation and submission of applications and allocate these responsibilities.

Check the format the potential sponsor would like to receive the application (i.e. electronically, hard copy or personal presentation).

2. Ensure the sponsor's products/ services and ethos are compatible with the event

Identify appropriate sponsors but make sure they are suitable. For example, don't approach a brewery or gambling company to sponsor a junior sport event.

3. Be realistic with your request

A sponsor's product may be much easier to obtain than cash. Depending on the products, this could help to offset costs (e.g. printing, website hosting, vehicles, laptops).

4. Gain an understanding of sponsor expectations

Select potential sponsors and find out what they expect in the submission and the benefits they require.

5. Target applications to the relevant decision-maker

In doing sponsor research, identify the right person to whom the application should be directed. Simply sending the document to the sponsor in general could mean the application takes some time to reach the appropriate decision-maker or (worse) is ignored.

6. Approaching competitive sponsors

If an approach is to be made to competitive companies (e.g. airlines, food and beverage, telcos), submit the sponsorship request to one company only and make this clear in the application.

If this application is unsuccessful, only then send an application to a competitor.

7. Ensure the application creates a professional impression

The submission should be professional in every way – well written and typed with good page layout, and professionally presented to the potential sponsor.

Never rely on computer spell-checkers for spelling accuracy. Ensure different people read the application to check for errors prior to submission.

8. Prepare a sponsorship submission

Submission content will vary according to the type of event but should include:

- event aims and objectives,
- organising committee expertise and experience and (if a regular event) information on past events, media clips, testimonials etc.,
- event dates, location and venue(s),
- organising committee contact name, address, telephone number, email, website and social media accounts,
- sponsorship requested (i.e. cash and/or VIK) and over what period,
- how the sponsorship will be used,
- how sponsorship will benefit the sponsor's business,
- event-related sponsor benefits to be provided.

Ensure any proposed major or naming rights sponsor is offered the greatest benefit. Make every effort to give equivalent monetary value for the benefits given. Most large sponsors will look for an indication of the sponsorship's worth.

Clearly state sponsor entitlements. For events with a sponsor hierarchy, avoid situations where one sponsor could 'take over' an event with signage saturation and other forms of advertising, resulting in a negative backlash from other sponsors, the community and local businesses.

9. Written confirmation of sponsorship commitment

Always get written confirmation of sponsorship commitments.

For large events, create a sponsorship agreement that lists the sponsorship benefits to be delivered and the sponsorship amount in either cash or in-kind.

For smaller sponsorships, an agreement via email that is confirmed by both parties may suffice.

10. Encourage loyalty/allegiance to the sponsor(s)

Encourage organising committee and/or club members' loyalty to sponsors in their day-to-day purchases. Stress the importance of allegiance to sponsors in building a strong event/sponsor relationship.

11. Maintain effective communication with sponsors

Once sponsorship has been secured, ensure good communication throughout the event cycle. Keep sponsors informed of any media and other opportunities to activate and promote their products/brands.

12. Take advantage of every opportunity to 'plug' sponsors

Make every effort to give maximum publicity to sponsors in pre-event social media posts, media releases and interviews. If television interviews are involved, wear sponsor T-shirts or caps (if supplied).

13. Deliver agreed benefits

Standing by commitments to sponsors and giving recognition wherever and whenever possible are the keys to building a foundation for future sponsorship.

Ensure every benefit agreed to in the sponsorship application is delivered. If possible, under-promise and over-deliver.

There is a cost in 'servicing' sponsors so ensure it is budgeted.

14. Manage organising committee changes

If organising committee changes occur leading up to the event (i.e. election of a new committee or members), ensure new members are fully briefed on sponsorship agreements.

A new committee should contact sponsors as soon as possible.

15. Post-event sponsor reports

Prepare a comprehensive, professionally presented post-event report for your sponsors.

Apart from courtesy, it is important to strengthen ties with sponsors to gain support for future events.

Sponsor reports should include a letter of appreciation and:

- review of the event and the level of success achieved,
- how the sponsorship contributed to the event's success,
- benefits delivered for the sponsor,
- event photographs, particularly showing sponsor recognition and product activation,
- copies of media and social items,
- copies of printed collateral and other material (e.g. programs, posters, advertisements).

Standing by commitments to sponsors and giving recognition wherever and whenever possible are the keys to building a foundation for future sponsorship.



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Event delivery

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If you run an event, you are a service provider and you will be the person responsible for making sure the event is accessible.

The most effective way of ensuring access for everyone is to think about access at the very earliest planning stages of your event. This means thinking about the access requirements of attendees, staff, speakers, performers and exhibitors who may have a disability.

If the needs of potential participants in an event are taken into account at the earliest planning stages the better the chances of making it genuinely accessible and significantly reducing the potential for future problems.

Source: [Accessible Events Guide](#).

Accessible events

Making events accessible for people with disabilities is a legal requirement in state, territory and federal law.

A comprehensive Accessible Events Guide can be downloaded [here](#).

This resource will help make your event more accessible for people with disabilities.

It outlines best practice and covers legal responsibilities and requirements, planning, transport, promotion, ticketing, technology and communications.

Event program

Event and festival programs can comprise of competitions, displays, parades, exhibitions and performances within an overarching event framework.

If your organising committee is developing a new event program:

- investigate ways to create a point of difference from other events,
- ensure the event can be completed within the scheduled time,
- design the program to maintain continuous interest but ensure the schedule isn't too tight,
- if specialist equipment is required for any competitive events, make sure it is moved promptly to and from the site,
- understand the impact the event will have on the physical environment and minimise negative impacts,
- avoid event components that are in bad taste or perceived as socially unacceptable.

For annual events, consider introducing something new or different into each year's program to maintain interest and attract new audiences.

Create a point of difference from other events.



Broadbeach Country Music Festival

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Event bookings

Make all event bookings as soon as practicable, which typically include:

- venue(s), including those for official functions,
- catering,
- temporary equipment and overlay hire,
- accommodation,
- first aid and ambulance,
- police and security services,
- back-up generators and operational support services,
- service club assistance,
- participants (e.g. judges, entertainers etc.),
- announcer/MC/welcome to country,
- audiovisual requirements,
- theming elements,
- advertising spots.

Review all the different items and services which must be booked and detail these in the event plan.



Sand Safari Arts Festival

Licences, permits and approvals

Identify licences and permits needed for the event as early as possible and submit applications to the relevant authorities.

Be sure to allow time for applications to be processed and the necessary licences and permits issued.

Depending on your event, permits and/or approvals may be needed from:

- local government,
- venue managing bodies,

- state agencies including but not limited to:
 - [Queensland Police Service](#)
 - [Department of Transport and Main Roads](#)
 - [Department of Justice and Attorney-General](#)
 - [Department of Environment and Heritage Protection](#)
 - [Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation](#)

When road closures and use of roads are involved, contact the local council and local police for a road closure application form.

Applications must be submitted to the Queensland Police Service at least 6 weeks prior to the event to allow for processing and police rostering.

Detailed information on road closures and traffic management can be found on the Queensland Government Department of Transport and Main Roads [website](#).

Volunteers

Volunteers are an invaluable resource in staging events.

If you require substantial volunteer numbers, carefully plan their recruitment, training, event-time rostering and management.

This process should:

- determine volunteer numbers, how they will be recruited and where from,
- determine tasks, roles, responsibilities and rosters,
- ensure police checking and screening is conducted (particularly if children are involved in the event),
- foster enthusiasm and commitment,
- determine best form of recognition for volunteers' time and effort.

You should be aware of the rights and responsibilities of volunteers and ensure there is appropriate insurance to cover them.

Treat volunteers with dignity and respect and provide them with work breaks, uniforms, shelter, food and water.

Ensure volunteers at annual events are not taken for granted or that requests for volunteering do not become an imposition.

Volunteer resources may be stretched, particularly in smaller communities and sparsely populated areas. Events will be impacted if annual events are run or new ones introduced with little or no thought to volunteer resources.

Consider the following volunteer sources:

- tertiary institutions or schools (where the event tasks align with students' courses),
- industry bodies relevant to the event type,
- local services clubs such as Lions and Rotary.

Volunteers are an invaluable resource in staging events.

Accommodation

If accommodation is needed for event participants, VIPs and/or others, determine accommodation needs, type and tariff range before the event.

When a large amount of accommodation is required, negotiate a discounted tariff with accommodation providers or consider a sponsorship arrangement.

Produce an accommodation list for participants including tariff ranges and distances from the event venue. In the case of visiting VIPs, make accommodation bookings as soon as their attendance is confirmed.

For large events expected to draw substantial numbers of competitors and/or spectators, consider establishing or hiring a central accommodation booking service.

Ensure local accommodation providers that may not be formally included in arrangements are contacted and informed there may be a spike in bookings around the date of your event.

Provide local restaurants, cafes, pubs and clubs connected or geographically close to the accommodation or event with the same information to ensure participants have catering options outside event times.

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Venue(s)

Systematically check all venue(s) well before the event and after the initial pre-event site check. This is particularly important in places where, for example, an outdoor venue is not in frequent use.

Check these main items:

- cleanliness and condition of:
 - competition grounds, any training, practice and warm-up areas,
 - grandstands and other seating,
 - food and beverage storage, preparation and service areas,
 - changing rooms,
 - toilets.
- check all venue facilities are available and operational,
- check electricity supply and, if the event is to be held at night, the lighting,
- arrange power for any concessionaires, exhibitions and stallholders and confirm the electricity supply can cope with expected demand,
- if an event will be broadcast on television, check the required lux level with the event broadcaster,
- check mobile phone range across multiple carriers and access to wi-fi facilities. If it is weak, arrange for services where participants will be able to easily use their phones and access wi-fi that will cope with expected demand,
- check the number of litter and recycling bins and, if necessary, arrange additional bins. Arrange regular waste removal during the event,

- make sure adequate toilet facilities are available to cater for the expected maximum attendance. A general guide to the ratio of toilets is:
 - day event: 1 toilet per 100 people,
 - night event: 1 toilet per 50 people.
- No matter how good your event, insufficient toilets necessitating long queues cause dissatisfaction. Put arrangements in place to clean toilets several times during each event day.
- Ensure toilet facilities are:
- accessible for people with disabilities,
 - located well away from food storage, preparation and service areas,
 - well-lit for security and safety,
 - provided with soap and hand-washing facilities,
 - checked regularly for hygiene.
- if it is intended to decorate the venue, include requirements in the venue site plan (temporary event overlay),
 - venue decorations typically include flags, banners, signage, logos, look and feel, advertising material and bunting.

Remember to always consider a wet weather contingency plan, particularly for outdoor events.

Catering

Food and beverage quality and pricing can strongly affect the way participants respond to an event.

Use good judgement when setting food and beverage prices so your organising committee can achieve budget and attendees feel they are paying a 'fair' price.

Whether you operate the catering service or arrange a third-party concession:

- carefully select the type of catering to be offered (have regard to any cultural, dietary or religious needs),
- establish standards in the range and quality of food and beverage,
- ensure each outlet has the necessary permits and licences,
- insist on a reasonable level of pricing,
- ensure compliance with health and safety standards,
- where necessary, arrange catering during the event for:
 - competitors,
 - officials and volunteers,
 - VIP guests.



Outback Festival

Traffic management and parking

Good traffic management and efficient parking are critical elements when large traffic volumes are expected.

As part of the planning process, assess venue access roads for potential problem areas and bottlenecks.

Discuss the traffic management plan with the relevant authorities and arrange police assistance if necessary.

Investigate any requirements to meet with the [Department of Transport and Main Roads](#) and/or local council to determine regulatory requirements.

Encourage public transport use (taxis, buses, trains, ferries) where services for spectators and participants can adequately service the event.

If public transport is a primary transport mode, brief each transport authority on anticipated volumes and timing. If an event is in south-east Queensland, consider consulting with [TransLink](#).

Review traffic signage requirements and obtain permission for placement of event directional signage at key locations.

Provide good clear signage for parking and allocate marshals to assist with event parking arrangements.

Allocate special parking areas for:

- visitors with a disability,
- VIPs including sponsor representatives,
- officials and volunteers,
- competitors and performers,
- exhibitors,
- buses and coaches,
- law enforcement and first aid services.

If venue car parking is limited, consider using other car parks with a shuttle transfer service (park and ride).

Post-event exit of vehicles is an equally important component of traffic management. As most spectators will want to depart as soon as possible, plan for a smooth and timely egress. Marshals and police can assist in keeping traffic moving.

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Audiovisual equipment

Most events use audiovisual (AV) equipment and systems.

Even with modern technology, assume something will go wrong no matter how good the system or how well it has been installed.

To avoid potential problems:

- supply a spare microphone with new batteries,
- have a backup amplifier for the PA system,
- install and test the system before the event,
- place loudspeakers in appropriate locations to avoid feedback,
- place video screens to allow for the largest possible viewing audience,
- position cameras to capture images clearly (i.e. above the crowd's heads, on balconies and platforms, etc.),
- know how to operate the equipment (volume, balance, cameras, where to plug in backup microphone and amplifier, etc.),
- thoroughly check all equipment including the backup system before the event starts and set the volume and balance. Be careful setting the volume - often PA systems can be set too loudly,
- position all electrical leads and cables to prevent inadvertent disconnection and danger to the public,
- make sure any background music is appropriate for the event, selected well in advance and volume set at an appropriate level.

Venue site plan

A venue site plan is essential for your event and should include:

- all temporary overlay inside and outside the venue,
- parking areas and directions to them,
- parking area entry and exit for different constituent groups (i.e. competitors, spectators, performers, officials, VIPs, persons with a disability, etc.),
- public transport set-down and pick-up areas,
- disabled visitors set-down and pick-up areas,
- public entry and exit gate(s), ticket rip/scanning and bag check areas,
- back of house support compounds,
- competition, training and warm-up areas,
- food and beverage areas,
- water access, information booths,
- toilets and change areas,
- security fencing (if required),
- accreditation zones and access points,
- VIP areas,
- emergency vehicle access and exit,
- emergency evacuation areas,
- first aid stations,
- main event areas (fields of play, stages, exhibition booths, activities, entertainment etc.).

Distribute copies of the site plan to each organisation involved in the event. Post it around the venue prior to the event, on the event website and on social media.

Equipment hire

If using loaned or hired special equipment, get written clarification of:

- supplier names and addresses,
- when equipment is required and where,
- who is responsible for transporting it to and from the venue,
- any permits required,
- who is responsible for insurance,
- who is responsible to install, remove and return equipment post-event,
- safety requirements.

Distribute copies of the site plan to each organisation involved in the event. Post it around the venue prior to the event, on the event website and on social media.

Printing and online requirements

Ensure a clear structured timeline so all images and information for hardcopy printing (newspapers, magazines, flyers, programs), websites, applications (apps) and social media platforms are created, tested, checked and 'go live' to meet deadlines.

Electronic or online requirements can include:

- high quality event logo,
- event banners with logo, name, date and website,
- social media friendly logo and media,
- email signatures for organising committee and staff,

- electronic digital mail (eDM), electronic newsletters,
- videos (if applicable).

Printed material usually falls into 3 categories:

- initial requirements (letterheads, entry forms, submissions),
- pre-event promotional items (posters, leaflets, invitations),
- items needed during the event (programs, tickets, passes, forms).

Plan and work back from the date the printed items will be needed. Printing should be completed at least one week prior.

Find out from the printer and/or graphic designer when artwork and copy are required and how long it will take to complete each item. Confirm a date - not a 'guesstimate'.

Working back from the date when the item is required allows a realistic estimate of how long it will take to prepare the material.

In the case of programs, it is usually necessary to obtain copy and logos from sponsors and advertisers. Allow ample time as this usually takes much longer than initially expected.

Having determined timing, establish the date by which preparation of printed material must be initiated. Develop a detailed schedule with target dates for preparation and production of each item.

The Event marketing section will discuss this in more detail.



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Information kits

If your event has visiting participants, consider information kits outlining:

- organising committee contact names, office and emergency telephone numbers, email addresses, website and applicable apps,
- accommodation options,
- local public transport and taxis,
- special event transport arrangements (if any),
- city/town and event map,
- access to cost effective temporary mobile phone systems or sim cards,
- wi-fi details,
- local hospitals, medical centres, doctors and dentists,

- restaurants, cafes, pubs, clubs and bars,
- laundries and dry cleaners,
- banks and ATM locations,
- tourism information (local, regional and state information as well as pre and post-event touring options).

Consider a sponsor for the packs to defray costs.

List all essential event information on your event website and update regularly. Event specific apps also provide an opportunity to provide complete up-to-date information.

If your event is expected to attract international competitors, identify any special needs such as dietary or religious requirements and any cultural sensitivities.

International visitors may have limited knowledge of Australia or Queensland so information kits should include additional details such as transport from their port of entry (e.g. capital city airport) to the event location, safety tips, banking and postal facilities, shops, trading hours, etc.

Include information on how to obtain an entry visa into Australia. More information on visas can be found at the [Australian Department of Immigration & Multicultural Affairs](#).

Assistance in compiling this information could be sought from the local council or RTO.

Pre-event briefing

A few days before the event, hold a final face-to-face briefing for all involved groups to:

- outline the event program and schedule,
- discuss requirements for installation and removal of equipment,
- ensure everyone understands what is expected, where and when,
- ensure everyone knows the lines of communication,
- ensure everyone knows what to do and who to contact if there is an emergency or accident,
- answer any questions.

If a group meeting is not viable, then a communication notice sent out prior to the event may suffice.



Protocol

Many events host VIP guests who could be local, state or commonwealth government representatives, politicians, ambassadors or consuls general, dignitaries, sponsor representatives or high-profile identities.

Prepare the VIP list early in the planning process and send invitations in sufficient time to allow responses. If key VIPs cannot attend, allow ample time to invite an alternative person(s).

When several VIPs will be attending, allocate hosting responsibility to an organising committee member or establish a protocol sub-committee.

Determine VIP hosting requirements such as:

- correct names, titles and salutations,
- cultural, religious or political sensitivities,
- transport and parking,
- accommodation (if required),
- meet and greet services at the event and official functions,
- hospitality at the event and official functions,
- event accreditation and access to VIP areas.

Ensure arrangements are made well in advance and the VIPs are advised in writing.

If VIPs are speaking at an event function (e.g. official opening or closing, medal or prize presentations, official dinner), prepare a speaker program and clearly state what is expected (i.e. speech topic, acknowledgements, time limit, etc.).

Include a tactful request on the program sheet that speakers adhere to their allotted times (especially if the event is being broadcast live). It only needs one or two speakers going over time to significantly disrupt the event schedule.

Post-event tasks

Outline post-event tasks and responsibilities in the event plan such as:

- venue cleaning and waste removal,
- dismantling and removal of any temporary overlay,
- return of loan and hire equipment,
- removing banners, signage, decorations, look and feel, etc.,
- returning sponsor materials,
- letters or emails of appreciation to key organisations and individuals,

- conducting post-event evaluation (refer to Post-event evaluation section),
- preparing the final event report,
- preparing specific reports for sponsors and any government funding agencies,
- promptly arranging audited financial statements (acquittal of funding) for grant providers,
- updating the asset register with any purchased, discarded or borrowed equipment.

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Risk management

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Risk management is a critical issue no matter the size or type of your event.

Take a proactive approach - identify and evaluate areas of risk, then implement a risk management plan to address potential problems and minimise liability.

Risk falls into 3 main categories:

1. Financial,
2. Health and Safety,
3. Legal.

Financial

Financial risk means the risk associated with an event losing money.

Reduce financial risk for your event by:

- ensuring the organising committee or parent organisation is an incorporated body,
- being clear at the outset who will be the ultimate underwriter or guarantor should an event lose money,
- ensuring good planning and governance and effective financial management,
- allowing sufficient lead time to plan and deliver the event,
- identifying competitive influences that could impact event income,
- focusing on income-driving elements of the event,
- including a contingency in the budget,
- determining other issues that could undermine the financial well-being of the event.

Risk management is a critical issue no matter the size or type of your event.



Woodford Folk Festival

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Health and safety

The underlying legal issue is duty-of-care.

For your event, this means taking all possible steps to avoid potential injury to everyone involved - spectators, participants, volunteers, officials, committee members, staff, contractors, etc.

Examples of health and safety issues include health standards in event catering, stability of temporary structures and equipment, potential fire and trip hazards, alcohol zones, crowd control barriers and accidental injuries to competitors or spectators.

Allocate risk management responsibility to specific organising committee members or, for larger events, appoint a sub-committee.

As a starting point, identify areas for risk evaluation including:

- financial, health/safety, legal and reputational risks,
- sites, areas and situations that are potentially physically hazardous,
- security threat assessment (police assistance may be required),
- no-show by performers or special guests,
- transport and parking,
- venue access and egress,
- cash handling,
- injury,
- spectator barriers and stands,
- catering,
- structures such as stages, marquees, display stands, lighting/PA towers, etc.,
- event participant areas, including use of specialised equipment,
- spectator flows into and around the venue, wayfinding signage,
- first aid.

Carefully assess each risk area and take mitigating action.

Ensure all personnel are thoroughly briefed and fully aware of the need to take reasonable care to avoid situations that could potentially injure any member of the public attending or participating in the event.

Management, training, and briefing of volunteers are key actions in the risk management process.

Professional advice for risk management is available. With larger events involving substantial numbers of participants and/or spectators, it is strongly suggested professional advice be sought.

Professional advice for risk management is available. With larger events, it is strongly suggested professional advice be sought.

Legal

Legal risk management requires identification of all applicable mandatory legal requirements - legislation, regulations, codes of practice, industry standards and contractual provisions.

Key elements of effective legal risk management procedures are:

- identification and review of key legal risks - conduct an audit of legal obligations and ensure they are properly documented,
- prevent non-compliance - implement controls to ensure the organising committee is discharging its legal obligations,
- regular monitoring - undertake regular reviews to ensure any changes to legal obligations are identified and acted on,
- communication and reporting - ensure management and staff have proper understanding of legal obligations and the organising committee is made aware of legal risks and compliance issues.

Obtaining specialist legal advice is often advisable when reviewing agreements or considering legal issues specific to events such as intellectual property, insurance or consumer law.

Resources

The Queensland Government provides information on risk management on their [website](#).

To further assist clubs, associations and organising committees with alcohol and safety issues, visit the Queensland Government's '[A Planning Guide for Event Managers: Alcohol Safety & Event Management](#)'.

This publication is an initiative of the Queensland Police Service in conjunction with relevant Queensland Government departments. It is a process document containing comprehensive information and pro-formas that, when completed, comprise an effective event management plan.

Forms, fees, guidelines and compliance information are available at the Queensland Government's Office of Liquor and Gaming [website](#).



Insurance

Insurance is a necessary part of risk management.

Ensure adequate public liability insurance cover is obtained for your event. Insurance must include cover for spectators, participants, volunteers, officials, and organising committee/parent body.

Although a club or association may have a long-standing public liability insurance policy, it is strongly suggested professional advice is sought to review the policy and ensure everyone involved is fully covered prior to the event.

Public liability insurance will cover event organisers against claims brought by individuals or organisations relating to bodily injury and property damage. The organiser will be liable to pay compensation where it is in breach of duty of care.

Event organisers are generally responsible for the selection of suppliers, set-up of event infrastructure ensuring adequate amenities and access, and attending to health and safety concerns.

Failure to properly ensure these issues are suitably addressed can result in accident or injury. The organiser may be held liable to pay compensation if it is deemed to be responsible.

Holding adequate public liability insurance will ensure the insurance policy will cover any compensation payment rather than the organiser having to provide the funds themselves.

Thoroughly research insurance options and deal with a reputable organisation.

Some organising committees use brokers. Contact other event organisers to ascertain where and how other organising committees are sourcing public liability cover.

Recognise that individuals are liable personally if suitable insurance cover is not obtained.

As well as public liability, other types of insurance for events can include accident insurance for volunteers, cash, workers' compensation, property and cancellation.

Insurance cover may also be required for equipment hired or on loan and/or expensive goods to be given as prizes for competitive events (e.g. a vehicle).

In these cases, clarify responsibilities for insurance before items are provided and, where necessary, arrange policies in advance.

Consider pluvius insurance for outdoor events that have potential for substantial financial loss if it rains.

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Security

The type and scale of the event usually dictates the threat assessment and level of security required.

For most events, there are three main security issues:

1. Cash

If large amounts of cash will be accumulated (e.g. gate takings or food and beverage revenue), adequate security must be in place. Many events are held on weekends when banks are closed so progressively take cash to a secure place.

2. Crowd control

Problems could arise at large sporting or music events and/or when alcohol is available. Never assume an event is safe.

Throughout the event planning process be aware of the risk to spectators, particularly high risk associated with events such as rodeos, motor racing and air shows.

Assess potential crowd control and spectator flow problems and put contingency arrangements in place to deal with issues quickly, efficiently and effectively.

Crowd control may include restricted or no access to certain accreditation zones. If so, clearly mark these areas and emergency exits with barriers and signs.

3. General security

Be generally mindful of security for participants and spectators. An integral part of ensuring adequate and appropriate security is making sure people feel safe while attending or participating in events.

The type and scale of the event usually dictates the threat assessment and level of security required.

Incident management

Incident management is about coping with sudden emergencies or crises.

Implement procedures to properly handle incidents. Included in these procedures are plans to deal with the media and social media should a serious incident occur.

Your event should have incident reporting and emergency response plans.

Accidents and other incidents can generate negative publicity for an event leading to reputational damage.

Social media can record and report on an incident within seconds. Mobile phone vision and individual commentary can quickly be picked up by mainstream media.

It is vitally important an event incident is managed swiftly and professionally before it is posted online and before organisers have acted or responded.

If your event is large, have an incident management team in place to deal with the crisis and with media if a major incident occurs.

The incident management team should ideally be kept small, preferably:

- event coordinator or chairperson,
- an experienced organising committee member,
- legal advisor,
- person with media and social media experience.

Once the team has been formed, appoint a spokesperson along with a social media manager. These people must have the necessary knowledge, be comfortable dealing with the media and remain calm under pressure.

If a serious incident or accident does happen, speed is vital.

Crisis management experts recommend:

- assemble the incident management team,
- gather and document all possible information,
- legal and police advice may be necessary prior to releasing any information,

- prepare a statement setting out:
 - summary of the facts and outcomes (what happened),
 - what is being done to rectify the situation,
 - what is being done for the people involved.

- address the media and/or post information online,

- be accurate, honest, upfront and respectful,

- notify all appropriate people and organisations,

- all enquiries (media and others) should be directed to the spokesperson only,

- avoid allocating blame,

- follow up with thorough internal and external debriefings,

- implement a positive public relations plan.

While an incident management team may never be needed, if an incident does occur, the way it is handled can substantially reduce negative publicity, reputational damage and may help reduce the risk of legal action.

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Tropical Journeys Great Barrier Reef Marathon Festival

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Event marketing

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A carefully planned and targeted approach to marketing will likely position your event to achieve maximum results.

As the events industry is very competitive, the development and implementation of an effective marketing plan is vital to the overall event management process and crucial to your event's capacity to achieve its objectives.

Having a structured approach to marketing increases the likelihood of achieving your event's goals, growth and success.

In most cases, the event marketing plan will be required for funding submissions or assistance from government bodies, major sponsors and stakeholders, who will want to understand how you propose to market and promote the event.

Marketing means getting the right messages across to the right target markets at the right time. It directly communicates with people to satisfy their need or want to make the decision to attend an event.

Marketing encompasses research and development, promotional methods, advertising, online tools, social media, publicity and channels used to distribute event information.

Integrating and leveraging off tourism and government bodies, local industry, stakeholders and supportive partners is a strategic imperative for the marketing plan.

Tourism and Events Queensland has developed the **Big Marketing Guide** as a resource tool when developing your event marketing plan. It covers everything you need to know to successfully market your event to consumers, media and the tourism industry.

Events are a key driver of tourism in Queensland and this guide has practical information for Queensland tourism and events related businesses. The guide can be downloaded [here](#).

An event marketing plan should include:

1. Objectives,
 2. Target markets,
 3. Stakeholder engagement,
 4. Market research,
 5. Competitor analysis,
 6. Marketing strategies,
 7. Marketing activations,
 8. Marketing and communications action plan,
 9. Timing,
 10. Budget,
 11. Evaluation.
- For larger events, the marketing plan could also include:
- Management structure,
 - Event budget,
 - Branding,
 - Product packaging,
 - Key performance indicators (KPIs),
 - Destination experiences,
 - Cross promotional activations,
 - Sponsorship.

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Objectives

An event's marketing objectives must align with the business plan's vision, mission statement and objectives.

Events and businesses take a consumer approach when developing their objectives. If event attendees have an unforgettable experience and their expectations have been met or surpassed, then the event's sustainability and longevity is highly probable.

SMART objectives are Specific, Measurable, Accurate, Realistic and Timely.

Examples

Implement effective marketing strategies that generate the desire for locals and visitors to attend the event,

Build a brand, communications and advertising plan that connects and stimulates action directly with the target market that results in attendance, participation, ticket sales and word of mouth,

Work with stakeholders to maximise all promotional and in-kind opportunities to spread the event message to as many targeted people as possible,

Provide on-going economic benefit to the local community by working with local tourism operators, Regional Tourism Organisations (RTO) and councils on marketing and promotional initiatives,

Ensure marketing promises made to consumers, attendees and participants are realistic, will meet expectations and will be fulfilled by the event organiser,

To achieve X amount of ticket sales/attendees.

SMART
objectives are:

Specific,
Measurable,
Accurate,
Realistic,
Timely.



Target markets

Understanding your event's primary markets allows for smarter and more targeted advertising campaigns and promotional activations. Allowing you to reach the audience you need to target.

This must be identified prior to the creation of marketing strategies, advertising schedules, artwork design and website build.

Who are the target markets (demography)?

Identify who will be attending the event and the targeted audience for marketing, communications and promotions:

- are they families, couples, children, specific age groups, special interest, cultural, competitors, spectators or tourists?
- who will the event attract and who will have the desire to attend and possibly pay a ticket price?

The RTO and local council can provide great insights and data from other events in their home town.

Where are these markets (geography)?

Determine where the event attendees will be coming from - local community, regional, state, national and international. Engage with the RTO to understand who visits the host destination at the time of year your event is being held.

The RTO may be able to provide statistical data information that can build a visitor profile for your event. They may also have data from other events providing new insights into people that already visit the destination.

How to reach the target markets?

Formulating marketing strategies will identify the most appropriate and cost-effective ways to get the message across to groups you wish to attract.

Once it has been determined where the attendees are from (local or outside region), you can then identify where advertising and promotional activations and efforts should be focused.

Consumers are constantly bombarded with streams of advertising messages. If event promotion is to achieve maximum effectiveness, it must be carefully targeted at the right audience.

Event organisers need to take the time to identify their target groups by conducting market research and formulating appropriate strategies to reach these markets.

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Targeted Geographical Markets

Local market

- who from the host destination should the event be targeting and how best to reach local residents,
- understand the host destination as best as you can by engaging with the RTO, council, tourism operators including accommodation providers, other event organisers, local media including newspaper, radio and TV stations, schools, universities, local small and corporate businesses,
- there will most likely be associations and clubs holding large membership databases that you could approach for insight, feedback and support.

Drive market

- this is the 3-4 hour driving radius surrounding the event destination where visitors will travel for day trips or for overnight stays,
- events are a big motivator for people to drive to other destinations to experience something they don't have close to home. In regional areas, visitors will use an event as an excuse to get away for a few days and make the most of the host destination,
- understanding how to reach people outside the event destination is necessary for growth. Determine media companies providing online, radio, print, TV advertising and promotional leveraging into these areas.

Intrastrate, interstate and international markets

- long distance visitors may already be in the destination at the time of the event. In most cases (unless it's already holiday season), a newly established event may not attract event-specific visitors for a couple of years. It will also have to be determined if the event is capable of attracting visitors from afar at all, particularly if air travel is needed,
- annual events that seek sustainability and financial support need to generate visitors from afar. These visitors assist with generating expenditure into the destination driving higher economic impact for the community,
- when visitors start to travel from long distances for the event it is important to work with local airports, airlines, accommodation operators and online trade wholesalers to create product packaging.



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Stakeholder engagement

You should engage with and leverage off all potential stakeholders and partners that can assist you in delivering a successful event. These partners will also maximise the chance of sustainability and longevity of your event.

Identify all potential partners and meet with them to discuss your event's marketing objectives and determine what resources, contacts and tools you could access.

In some cases, potential partners have allocated budgets for events, new opportunities or initiatives they can provide in return for sponsorship benefits. In most cases a business and marketing plan would be required to access these funds.

You should engage with and leverage off all potential stakeholders and partners that can assist you in delivering a successful event.

Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO)

The RTO is the official destination marketing body responsible for generating visitation and expenditure into its region. They may also have a membership base of local tourism operators that pay an annual fee to contribute to the marketing budget.

Sometimes the RTO may be able to provide direct funds for an event. If not, they may be able to include the event in their own marketing activities, event calendar or provide promotional support.

The RTO may also have pre-allocated radio, print, TV and online campaign activity that could be utilised to promote your event as a co-operative marketing initiative.

Each RTO has their own plans and guidelines on how they include an event into their advertising. They may have cross-promotional opportunities that your event can leverage from.

RTOs often have great experience in destination marketing and may be able to assist in the creation of an effective marketing plan. The range and type of assistance will depend on the RTO's resources, which can vary.

Case Study: Regional Country Music Festival

The event organiser contributed \$2,000 to a co-operative radio campaign targeting the drive market 3 hours outside the event destination.

This provided the event with 2 weeks of prime time and best available spots plus a 1 month promotion that included online activity.

The RTO's overall campaign was a \$24,000 investment that provided 3 separate events over 3 months with the opportunity to participate as an event partner at a minimal investment of \$2,000.

Total campaign was \$30,000 - RTO \$24,000
3 x events \$2,000 each.

The event paid \$2,000 and the RTO contributed \$8,000 towards their campaign. The RTO 'topped and tailed' commercial spots with their destination message and included the event's key messages and information in the middle as the call to action. This provided greater credibility to the event.

Local businesses and tourism operators

These businesses will shape the overall visitor destination experience for your event. A variety of local small and corporate businesses as well as clubs, associations, schools and universities should be considered.

Tourism accommodation properties from 5 star hotels and resorts through to 2/3 star motels and caravan parks could provide great support. They may provide discounted rates, special deals, promotional opportunities, signage in foyers, emails and social media posts to customer databases and networks detailing the event.

Other tourism operators for consideration include transportation businesses, attractions, restaurants and shopping centres. These businesses may provide discounts or special promotional activity to support the event.

Look for opportunities to work with these local tourism operators as they usually have access to large customer databases, social media accounts and years of experience marketing to tourists and visitors.

You could also be guided by the RTO and local council about who they believe you should be engaging with.

Case Study: Regional Country Music Festival

The event organisers engaged with a cross-section of accommodation properties and accessed great discounted deals from 4 hotels with varying rates suitable for different budgets and needs.

The event organisers then promoted the deals on their website, social media posts and in their radio and print advertising.

In return, the 4 hotels offered different promotional support including eNewsletters to their databases about the event and accommodation weekend deals, social media posts, inclusion on website, online advertising, and foyer promotions with displays, banners and brochures.

The organisers were also able to obtain additional promotional support from the local radio station over and above their purchased advertising schedule.

They also connected with the local bowling club, country music venue hotel, seniors and rotary clubs and a local retailer selling country style products.

All these supporting partners helped promote the event in their own way.



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Stakeholder engagement

Tourism industry

The Queensland tourism industry is a major economic driver for the state and proactively seeks opportunities to encourage travel through events.

The tourism industry includes the local airport, airlines, online accommodation and experience booking engines, online wholesalers and traditional retail travel agencies.

Engaging with national and state tourism bodies such as **Tourism Australia (TA)** and TEQ can provide co-operative marketing opportunities, as well as online resources and tools. The RTO will be able to advise the most appropriate contacts for their region.

Event organisers in their second year that can meet TEQ's objectives and eligibility requirements are able to formally apply for funding for specific marketing initiatives through the **Queensland Destination Events Program (QDEP)**.

The Queensland tourism industry is a major economic driver for the state and proactively seeks opportunities to encourage travel through events.



Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF)

Case Study: Regional Country Music Festival

As this event grew and more intrastate and interstate visitors expressed an interest in attending, the event organisers were successful in their application and received funding from TEQ's Queensland Destination Events Program.

This enabled the event to engage a public relations specialist to generate media coverage into interstate markets, which they wouldn't normally be able to achieve effectively within their current marketing budget.

The results included stories about the event in metro city newspapers, online national media outlets, airline in-flight magazines and targeted country music publications.

The funding program had very clear objectives, guidelines and eligibility requirements which the event needed to demonstrate.

The event engaged with local tourism bodies to amplify and add value to their event marketing plan. This provided the event access to additional marketing opportunities and activities they wouldn't have otherwise been able to undertake.

The event was limited by budget, resource and skilled expertise. This new activity funded by the program was over and above their existing marketing plan and provided additional value to the overall event.

Opportunities

Leverage

Identify opportunities to leverage off supporting partners with large and established customer databases, membership bases, social media accounts and websites.

It may take a few years before an event develops a large enough social media network to worth with. Remember many opportunities may also lie within national associations, schools, universities and clubs particularly with sporting and cultural events.

Cross-promote

Cross-promoting between different associations and clubs allows greater reach to promote your event (i.e. a rugby event could engage with soccer or athletics clubs).

Engage

If possible, engage with other event organisers who run successful events even if they appear quite different to your event.

RTOs, Local Tourism Organisations (LTOs) and Visitor Information Centres (VICs) in your region are also good distribution points for event information and collateral. Brief the staff on your event and keep them up-to-date with information they can pass on to visitors.

Case Study: Regional Country Music Festival

The event organisers accessed an additional resource by way of a university intern who worked for 6 months on the events social media platforms, managing posts, updates and images, and maintaining a connection with the event audience.

This role also meant keeping other key stakeholders updated and included, who in turn, would share their networks of social contacts.

The intern came at no cost to the organiser and provided real life experience to the university student who will be able to use the event as a reference in their CV for future employment.

They were also able to access a qualified and experienced graphic designer through a key stakeholder at a special reduced rate, who worked on their brand, web design, advertising and collateral needs.

This designer was starting his own business after many years with an agency and wanted the opportunity to profile his capabilities and work on an event project.

This enabled the designer to demonstrate previous contracted work under his own business to potential clients. For the event organiser, it meant an exceptionally low rate because of the introduction from a local stakeholder.

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Market research

Data and statistics

Tourism bodies and local councils may provide visitation numbers, expenditure, geographical breakdowns, peak/low travel periods and historical data.

For example, the [TEQ website](#) provides tourism research and insights to a variety of stakeholders which can assist decision-making and strategy development.

As part of this, TEQ manages the analysis and publication of results for Queensland, based on the National Visitor Survey, International Visitor Survey, Survey of Tourist Accommodation and Overseas Arrivals and Departures.

Results from other research projects are also collated to ensure a robust cross-section of tourism information.

Primary research is also undertaken by TEQ to better understand the needs of Queensland's visitor target markets and the experiences Queensland's destinations can offer to meet those needs. This research includes consumer demand research, segmentation research, destination brand health analysis and analysis of community attitudes to tourism.

TEQ also provides a range of industry resources and marketing tools.

This information allows you to dig deep to understand the most likely target audience to attend the event. It will ensure the marketing budget is spent wisely and you reach the right people with your advertising and promotional efforts.

Take advantage of all the research, reporting and data that has already been collated.

Insights and learnings

Learn as much as possible about other events held in the destination.

Gain as much information about the event organisers' experience working in the destination:

- how did they market effectively to get the best results,
- who did they engage,
- where did they spend their marketing budget,
- what media activity generated the best visitor numbers,
- what online and social media activity did they focus on.

It is also important to know what strategic plans your key stakeholders and sponsors have for the financial year ahead for event support and tourism visitation. There could be opportunities to leverage off their plans and objectives.

There could also be crossover of strategic goals for the event with local tourism businesses and community organisations, creating great supportive partnership opportunities.

Learn as much as possible about other events held in the destination.

Conduct research

In-depth market research may be beyond the resources of smaller events but can be done easily and at minimal cost.

Information gathering over years of an event's life-cycle will allow for a rich and robust amount of data and facts, resulting in improved strategic planning and event development.

The more information you can obtain regarding attendees, the more specific your information will be. This hard evidence sets the foundation for subsequent sponsorship, grant funding and other assistance.

Simple market research is vitally important to the future success of your event. Understanding which markets event attendees travel from will enable organisers the ability to target that same market, ultimately driving increased visitation and participation.

The more information that can be gathered and reviewed at registration, gate entry or surveyed during the event, results in a higher likelihood of successful targeted marketing and promotions in the future.

The simplest method is to request a postcode when a ticket is purchased. This information will indicate the catchment area for your event.

A survey can be captured online with ticket purchases or at the gate. Information can also be collected when asking potential attendees to sign up to a newsletter or social media update.

Ideally a survey should seek information on home area, gender and age group, number in party (adults/children), accommodation used (if staying over) and length of stay, method of travel (own vehicle or type of public transport), how they heard of the event and what they considered the event highlights.

Competitor analysis

Having a complete picture of an annual events calendar will allow you to see any competition that exists.

Research similar events in your region, state or Australia wide to determine what your competitive advantage is and what your point of difference will be.

Having a competitive edge over other events will make it easier for people to decide to attend your event.

You should also determine if your target market is potentially going to attend another event running at the same time. This could be a completely different type of event but will still compete with your event for the same attendees.



Case Study: Regional Country Music Festival

The event organiser researched the competition of events across the annual calendar in the destination, firstly to make sure they didn't jeopardise the timing of the event.

They were able to confirm they were the only country music festival happening in the destination, giving their event a point of difference. No other music events were happening for months either side of their event date.

When researching other events outside the destination, they determined they had a direct competitive advantage as their destination had a regional airport, accommodation and tourism experience infrastructure that their competitors did not have.

This would result in more visitors choosing this event over other country music festivals because of the easy accessibility and the broader tourism industry that provided variety and choice to visiting attendees overall experience.

Once this was identified, the event worked with the RTO and accommodation properties to product package the event experience with 2-night accommodation offers.

This was a marketing activity their competitors were not undertaking, giving this event another competitive edge.

Having a complete picture of an annual events calendar will allow you to see any competition that exists.

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Marketing strategies

Develop priority marketing strategies that will be key drivers in promoting your event to its target market.

These strategies will align with the marketing objectives and allow for creative thinking, problem-solving and innovation.

Consider the following when determining your marketing strategies:

- developing/improving the website and social media networks,
- generating/increasing publicity and media coverage,
- building/evolving an event brand,
- developing/expanding advertising campaigns,
- maximise/co-operatively partner with stakeholders,
- maximise/grow attendance, ticket sales and participation.

Marketing activations

These are marketing activities necessary to reach the event's target markets and achieve the event's marketing objectives and strategies.

The different marketing activations available to the event need to be investigated as the decisions made will ultimately determine the number of people that will learn about the event.

Pricing, sizing, specs and requirements will all vary depending on location, the media company and the best deals you can negotiate.

Branding

Creates a unique image of your event in people's minds, mainly through advertising campaigns with a consistent theme. Clever branding of the event will establish a significant and differentiated presence in the marketplace.

The event will need a logo, key messages, brand design elements, suite of images, artwork designs, videos and colour palette. It is the way you want the event to look and feel and to be portrayed to your target market.

Clear, concise, consistent and professional looking brand designs will stand out in a crowded advertising space.

You want cut-through, individuality and strong key messages through words, images and logo. The name of the event itself is also crucial as it may include the destination name, type of event or just spark curiosity and interest.

Knowing your target market will allow for a proper brief to the designer to create the most appropriate design style to suit the audience. The branding will then sit across all advertising mediums including online activity and printed collateral.

Advertising

Is the purchased space across mass media distributed across television, radio, print, outdoor signage and online. This is how event branding is used with key messages and design elements.

Most mass media companies will provide campaign schedules with advertising spots varying in size, price and available times. Identifying the best way to reach the event's target market will ensure the best and most effective budget spend.

If you want to secure the best spots in your event advertising you must book as soon as possible.

Regional television, radio and print advertising can be quite reasonable in pricing as they have an audience reach to a specific area.

Metro cities and larger regional areas with big populations will see higher premium rates that may not be achievable with your allocated budget.

Some media businesses will also offer free community notice board advertising in which the event can participate. Connect with your RTO to identify the best advertising mediums for the region.

Investigate and compare all the different advertising options and proposed schedules available to the event with specific focus on audience reach, frequency or number of spots, target market fit and pricing.

Understand what extra online and social media activity is available and any added value promotional inclusions they can offer as part of the advertising buy.

An advertisement should achieve four objectives:

- attracting **ATTENTION**
- developing **INTEREST**
- creating **DESIRE**
- inducing **ACTION**

Advertising agencies can be contracted to provide the resource skills in design, layout, copywriting, campaign schedules and all facets of advertising.

They can assist with creating a comprehensive marketing campaign and manage the entire process of delivering the advertising activity. If the event does not have its own resource, then working with an advertising agency could be a solution.

Collateral

Consists of all the marketing pieces that will promote and represent the event and demonstrate the brand and logo.

This includes brochures, flyers, business cards, postcards, letterhead, email footer, sponsorship folders and merchandise.

Ensure all collateral is consistent in design and displays the brand elements correctly.

Direct mail and eNewsletters

Advertising by direct mail is through a printed flyer or newsletter distributed to a database of subscribers, customers or attendees. Direct mail is done in the traditional form of postage to people's homes or workplace.

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Marketing activations

Electronic Digital Mail (eDM)

Is more highly used as the cost of printing and postage is excluded and the electronic flyer arrives in the email inboxes of everyone on the database.

E-newsletters are also sent electronically instead of being printed in hardcopy, saving you time and money.

Signage

Includes banners, posters, A-frames, pull-ups, billboards and window displays. All of this is printed and should be eye-catching with minimal text to ensure the key messages get cut-through and create interest.

The event name, logo, dates, website or where to purchase tickets could be included. Keep them brief so they stand out. The way the brand elements and imagery are used will be important design considerations for different signage needs.

Public relations

Is another important part of marketing and generally recognised as any free publicity that can be generated for the event.

Traditionally this was always through newspaper and magazine publications and radio but online news sites are increasingly becoming the way people will access the latest newsworthy stories.

There are online event and travel writers, bloggers and websites that could also promote your event.

Ideally having access to a network of media contacts is necessary - work with event stakeholders and utilise their media networks.

The creation of a media release for any size event is recommended as this would be distributed to journalists looking for new stories.

Connect with and brief your RTO communications team who are always looking for new story angles to share with their media contacts.

If there is an event media release completed some communications managers may be happy to circulate. This will hopefully generate publicity and media stories about the event.

Some journalists and media writers may even want to attend the event to create a story about the event experience. This can be great exposure for the following year.

It is also important to capture print and online publicity that is generated to form part of your post-event evaluation report. Media monitoring is an important part of evaluating the event.

This means getting to know the right people, finding out how they may be able to assist, what information they require, how they want the information presented, and be aware of their publishing deadlines for information.

Consider how to encourage more people to register for newsletters through your marketing activity, this will assist with data collection.

Writing a media release

To get a media release published it is important to prepare newsworthy items. Different story angles about the event can be pitched to different media outlets dependent on their readership/listeners.

The level of success achieved will be proportional to the initiative, newsworthiness, professionalism and amount of effort put into preparing the media release.

Write the event story around **Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?**

- where possible do not exceed one A4 page or around 300 to 400 words. Regional publications may accept longer releases with strong local interest. Keep paragraphs short with 18 - 25 words and avoid repetition. Keep sentences short and write in a manner that is clear and interesting,
- ensure the words 'MEDIA RELEASE' are clearly typed at the top of the page/email. You must also indicate the release date,
- main point of the story should be given in the first sentence. Include the balance of the information in descending order of importance. At the end of the media release provide a contact name, phone number, website and email address,
- if sending photographs, provide high resolution images and avoid any that are vague in content, quality or composition. Ensure images are labeled clearly,
- after sending a media release, you could call to check that the journalist received the information.

Ambassadors

When an event uses a well-known person to the target market - most likely a celebrity or sport star who allows the event to use their name, face, voice and in-person participation to help promote the event.

A celebrity chef might be an ambassador for a food festival where a rugby league star might participate in a community charity event. An ambassador would normally be paid for this role though some may be happy to donate their services.

Website

Will be the public face of your event and should include all relevant and up-to-date information and brand elements. It could also include a page for potential attendees to sign up to receive regular electronic newsletters, this will also assist with data collection.

The website should have links to the event's social media. It can be advantageous to arrange for the event site to be linked to relevant regional, state and national websites.

Social media

Is one of the most effective and cost efficient ways to promote your event.

By creating an event Facebook page and asking people to like and share your page, your event can reach large numbers of interested people quickly.

Creating Twitter feeds and an Instagram account has potential to do the same.

Social media information and reminders need to be updated frequently to be most effective. Paid advertising or boosting on social media can also increase your event's reach and should be investigated.

Social media networks

 **Twitter** is an online social networking and microblogging service, which enables its users to send and read text-based posts of up to 140 characters. These are known as 'tweets'.

 **Instagram** is an online mobile photo-sharing, video-sharing and social networking service that enables its users to take pictures and videos and share them either publicly or privately on the app, as well as through a variety of other social networking platforms such as Facebook and Twitter.

 **Facebook** is a social networking service. Users can exchange messages, including automatic notifications and join common-interest user groups.

 **YouTube** is an online video streaming service. It allows registered users to upload videos for public viewing. Anyone who goes to the site can view posted videos.

Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW)

TEQ works in partnership with the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse, which is Australia's largest tourism network.

Simply put, the ATDW allows your business to appear on websites that include:

- TEQ's consumer site www.queensland.com,
- Tourism Australia www.australia.com,
- Inclusion in 5 TEQ apps for Apple and Android devices including This is Queensland,
- Queensland's regional tourism organisation websites and many more.

There is no cost to list your event and event organisers can register, create and manage their event listings via www.atdw-online.com.au.

Social media is one of the most effective and cost efficient ways to promote your event.

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Marketing and communications action plan

The most effective marketing and communications action plan is a spreadsheet that becomes a work-in-progress document. It should include timeframes, budgets, resources and responsibility allocation.

This will ensure all activities are actioned by set deadlines allowing proper management of multiple activities.

This document also doubles as a good internal reporting tool for organisers to remain in control of all event marketing detail.

A marketing calendar is another effective tool to collate all marketing activities into one spreadsheet document. It provides event organisers with a snapshot of dates set out in a calendar form, listing the different activities in market.

It will allow you to see any gaps or overlaps that could happen while scheduling multiple activities over a 12-month period. This calendar can also be referred to as an advertising or media schedule.

Specifications					Design due dates				Approvals		Production		
Item	Responsibility	Qty/Specs /placement	Quote	Distribution	Final text	Brief	First draft	Final	Logo	Final	To print/ dispatch	Delivery due	Required
1.	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text
2.	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text

Example spreadsheet of a marketing and communications action plan.



Crush Festival Bundaberg

Timing

Timing of the various promotional activities and components is extremely important.

Initial short burst promotion and advertising should start as soon as the event date is set. This creates event awareness in the target market and enables people who may have to travel, the time needed to make plans.

Marketing and advertising should continue throughout the lead-up to the event. Many events will promote heavily in the 4 week lead-up to ensure the event gets maximum exposure.

Social media networks allow continuous messaging throughout the planning stage right up to, and during the event.

Timing of an event is crucial to its success, consider weather, school holidays, calendar of other events, public holidays etc. Seek views of the RTO and local councils and speak to accommodation providers about capacity issues.

Proper research will ensure you make the best decisions on event timing and event marketing plans.

Budget

Most events large or small will have tight budgets to achieve results, so a structured, well researched and strategic marketing plan is essential.

In a workable spreadsheet, break down the budget across the creation and activation of all marketing activity and continuously monitor and adjust as real costs come through. Careful budget management is necessary to make sure you have not over or under-spent.

For smaller events, budgets may be limited, so promotion should be considered in two main stages - firstly in the initial promotion early in the planning process and secondly, during the 3 - 4 weeks prior to the event.

In the interim, every effort should be made to gain free media and online support to generate ongoing publicity. Maximise every opportunity with your stakeholders to generate activity that doesn't take money from your marketing budget.

Evaluation

Post-event marketing evaluation is imperative and will most likely be required by sponsors and stakeholders who have provided funding or support.

It is also a vital tool for event organisers to understand what strategies they did or didn't achieve effectively.

Evaluating the results of the marketing plan can provide realistic insights and learnings to ensure future growth and further success in the years ahead.

The overall evaluation report should indicate the strengths and weaknesses of the different marketing activities undertaken and highlight changes required and areas that need greater focus.

It will also allow for better and more effective decision making on how the marketing budget and resources should be allocated in the following year.

Proper evaluation will also highlight what advertising was most effective in reaching the target markets and how much free promotional and media publicity was generated.

Evaluate the activity and support that was generated by stakeholders including tourism and government bodies and the local business community including accommodation providers.

Identify what extra leveraging could be generated next time you work with these supporting partners.

Hopefully through your evaluation process you will see the tremendous amount of support that you generated from others, that ultimately contributed to the overall success of your event.

A structured, well researched and strategic marketing plan is essential.

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Working with Tourism and Events Queensland

TEQ has developed an integrated events marketing platform ***It's Live! in Queensland***, to assist in driving value for Queensland's world-class calendar of events. It has been designed to complement and strengthen the Queensland tourism brand. It sits within the Queensland brand platform and provides a focus for all future event marketing activity.

The platform promotes Queensland's world-class calendar of events and showcases how events bring to life Queensland destinations and communication like nowhere else in the world – making visitors feel welcome, invigorated and alive.

The ***It's Live! in Queensland*** brand stamp was developed for partners as a visual representation of their inclusion within the ***It's Live! in Queensland*** platform. It is an acknowledgement that the event is part of Queensland's world-class calendar and a proud statement that heroes the true value of a Queensland event.

We encourage you to work with [Tourism and Events Queensland](#) to maximise the benefits and opportunities for your event.



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Post-event evaluation

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Post-event evaluations are critical to ongoing success.

You should evaluate your event and identify benefits generated for sponsors, government funding agencies and whether objectives were achieved.

With limited financial resources and time constraints, some clubs and associations may find it difficult to undertake an evaluation, particularly in the case of free events.

However, post-event evaluations are critical to ongoing success.

The method of event evaluation outlined in this section should help clubs and associations with event evaluation at minimal cost provided organising committee members are willing to allocate the time.



Rockhampton River Festival

Debrief meeting

Arrange a debrief meeting of the main committee and sub-committees as soon as possible while your event is fresh in the collective memory.

Review every aspect of event planning, management and marketing, examine any problems and identify ways future events can be improved.

As part of this review, recognise what worked well and what didn't, as well as successes achieved throughout the planning and delivery processes.

A typical debrief would cover:

- organising committee structure and operations,
- funding and sponsorship,
- budget and financial management,
- event program, schedule and attendance,
- timing,
- venue(s),
- equipment,
- operational support services and event logistics.

- risk management,
- transport and parking,
- accommodation,
- security,
- event workforce, including volunteers,
- marketing, communications, PR, media relations, community engagement.

Arrange further debriefs with all external stakeholders to review their perspectives and discuss future events.

Event assessment and evaluation

This will determine whether your event achieved organising committee and other stakeholder objectives. Statistics are needed to report back to sponsors and funding bodies to validate their event investment.

In comparing numbers to original forecasts, sponsors and funding agencies can clearly ascertain if an event assisted them to achieve their event investment goals.

Critically analyse your event in terms of:

- numbers and origin of all event participants (where data is available),
- event revenue from all sources,
- event expenditure,

- budget outcome,
- number of 'visits' on the event website, shares, forwards, hits and check-ins on social media.

If the event was free with no attendance count, get estimates from different sources, particularly event-experienced individuals such as stallholders, exhibitors, concessionaires and police.

Compare each area to the original or re-forecasted numbers to help form an evaluation of the financial, participation, marketing and promotional success of your event.

Critically evaluating an event leads to improved performance and better outcomes for future events.

Critically evaluating an event leads to improved performance and better outcomes for future events.

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Final report

Prepare a final report with all key information, successes and learnings from the event.

Acquittal of grant funding

Government agencies providing event funding, grants or subsidies require details of how their support was used. This is commonly referred to as 'acquittal of funding'.

This information should be supplied accurately and promptly following the event, either included in the financial statements or as an attachment showing allocation of the grant or subsidy.

Accountability and transparency means funding acquittal of public money must be treated as mandatory and a post-event priority.

Organising committees not complying with acquittal requirements will have little, if any, chance of future funding.

Accountability and transparency means funding acquittal of public money must be treated as mandatory and a post-event priority.

Looking ahead

Over time, annual events may see a gradual decline in public interest and attendance. All 'products' have a life cycle, which may extend over many years or just a few months. An annual event is no exception.

Incliment weather aside, any declining interest in annual events may be caused by any one or a combination of:

- public attitude of 'seen it all before', 'same old same old', 'nothing new',
- declining effectiveness of marketing methods and channels,
- events held too frequently to maintain public interest and support,
- oversupply of similar events in the community or region aimed at similar markets,
- spectator and/or participant dissatisfaction with a previous event,
- seasonality factors (wrong time of year),
- national and global economic conditions,
- society and attitude change (i.e. no longer a market for this type of event).

Organising committees should determine if declining interest in their event was a one-off or likely to repeat.

In addressing this issue, organising committees can:

- extend the time between the events (e.g. from annual to every 2/3 years),
- change the event date(s) to another time of year,
- change event program and schedule to appeal to new markets,
- shorten the event,
- combine with other compatible local or regional events to create greater impact and wider interest, creating a 'cluster' of events or one large event,
- move the event to another location or venue,
- discontinue the event.

Organising committees embracing change and using entrepreneurial skills to evolve an event have a higher chance of continuing that event's success.

Organising committees embracing change and using entrepreneurial skills to evolve an event have a higher chance of continuing that event's success.



Opposite: Tara Festival of Culture and Camel Races

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Potential sources of assistance

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Disclaimer

The following information regarding potential funding sources is assumed to be correct at the time of compiling this edition. However, the level and type of funding, other assistance and contact details may change from time to time.

Event committees are accordingly advised to visit source organisation websites to obtain up-to-date information and contact details.

Various online resources are available to assist in hosting an event in Queensland.

Various online resources are available to assist in hosting an event in Queensland.

Queensland Government

Sponsorship is available to businesses, associations, local councils and not for profits to deliver significant initiatives and events in Queensland that help:

- create jobs and a diverse economy,
- deliver quality frontline services,
- foster innovation,
- protect the environment,
- build safe, caring and connected communities.

Website: www.qld.gov.au/sponsorship

Please refer to your local council or RTO website to check for funding and partnership opportunities.

Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ)

In partnership with government, RTOs, industry and commercial stakeholders, TEQ aims to build Queensland's tourism and events industry to foster innovation, drive industry growth and boost visitor expenditure.

The Queensland Destination Events Program (QDEP) leverages the crucial link between events and the destinations in which they are staged, extending economic, marketing and social benefits throughout metropolitan and regional Queensland.

For information regarding support under the TEQ QDEP:

Phone: +61 7 3535 3535

Email: events@queensland.com

Website: www.teq.queensland.com

The TEQ website has resources including:

- **The Big Marketing Guide** covers everything you need to know to successfully market your business to consumers, media and the tourism industry. The Big Marketing Guide has been developed by TEQ specifically for Queensland tourism businesses.
- **Going Digital - The Digital Ready Program** can help with digital marketing, search engine optimisation, increasing web traffic and using social media.
- **Brand Queensland** outlines TEQ's exciting new direction for Queensland, including the evolution of TEQ's brand and global creative, Queensland's Experience Pillars and target market insights.

Business Events

Business Events is a collective term referring to corporate and government meetings, incentive travel reward programs, association conventions, and exhibitions.

TEQ works in collaboration with Queensland's Convention Bureaux and industry to secure international business events, which provide economic benefits to Queensland's destinations.

For more information please visit: www.teq.queensland.com/events-support/business-events.

Arts Queensland (AQ)

AQ partners with local government to support quality arts and cultural experiences across Queensland through the Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF).

This promotes the role and value of arts, culture and heritage as key drivers of diverse and inclusive communities and strong regions.

RADF invests in local arts and cultural priorities, as determined by local communities, across Queensland. Website: <http://www.arts.qld.gov.au/regional-arts-development-fund>.

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Multicultural Affairs Queensland (MAQ)

The Celebrating Multicultural Queensland grants program funds initiatives that celebrate and promote Queensland's multicultural identity.

These initiatives increase community awareness of multiculturalism, foster community cohesion and support equal access to opportunities by people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Website: www.qld.gov.au/community/community-organisations-volunteering/funding-grants-resources/celebrating-multicultural-qld-grants-program.

Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing (DNPSR)

DNPSR Queensland provides the following funding programs along with several others developed throughout the year:

- State Development Program,
- Get Out, Get Active,
- Get Going Clubs Program,
- Get Playing Plus.

Website: www.npsr.qld.gov.au.

Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO)

RTOs are established to market and develop designated tourism regions in the state and provide a link between the region and TEQ.

Most RTOs produce annual event calendars for their areas.

Once the event date has been set, planning is underway, and a preliminary event program/schedule developed, contact should be made with the RTO to see where you could partner to add value to each other's activities.

RTOs usually have good relationships with local media and may be able to provide a media contact list.

Assistance may also be available with the distribution of media releases and other public relations activities.

However, the range and type of assistance will depend on the RTO's resources which can vary.

While RTOs should be able to provide promotion assistance, they do not have the financial resources to provide funding sponsorship.

Queensland has 13 Regional Tourism Organisations:

- [Brisbane Marketing](#),
- [Bundaberg North Burnett Tourism](#),
- [Capricorn Enterprise](#),
- [Fraser Coast Tourism and Events](#),
- [Gladstone Area Promotion and Development Ltd](#),
- [Gold Coast Tourism](#),
- [Mackay Tourism Ltd](#),
- [Outback Queensland Tourism Association](#),
- [Southern Queensland Country Tourism](#),
- [Visit Sunshine Coast](#),
- [Townsville Enterprise](#),
- [Tourism Tropical North Queensland](#),
- [Tourism Whitsundays](#).

For further contact details please visit www.teq.queensland.com - click on Destinations - select your region - then click Contacts.

Gambling Community Benefit Fund

This program provides funding up to \$35,000 to Queensland community groups for services or activities that have demonstrable benefits to communities.

There is an annual rounds schedule with applications due by the end of February, May, August and November.

Website: <http://www.justice.qld.gov.au/corporate/sponsorships-and-grants/grants/community-benefit-funding-programs>.

Our Community

The Our Community group provides advice, connections, resources, training and easy-to-use tech tools for people and organisations working to build stronger communities.

It provides help sheets, services and newsletters to help community groups improve their fundraising abilities and become healthier and more viable.

A comprehensive Australia-wide grant database is available to subscribers.

Website: www.ourcommunity.com.au.

RTOs market and develop designated tourism regions in the state and provide a link between the region and TEQ.

Volunteering Queensland

Volunteering Queensland is the lead organisation advancing volunteering for the economic, social, cultural and environmental well-being of Queensland.

It provides a statewide volunteer referral service as well as education and training programs for volunteers and volunteer managers plus support information including:

- Code of Practice and Standards for Volunteer Organisations;
- volunteer rights and responsibilities (for volunteers and organisations);
- volunteer recognition events, e.g. National Volunteer Week, International Volunteers Day,
- volunteer resources,
- volunteer insurance,
- volunteer targeted programs.

Volunteering Queensland also has a web-based referral service listing voluntary opportunities and needs.

Website: www.volunteeringqld.org.au.

Australian Sports Foundation (ASF)

Giving4Grassroots is the ASF's national small grants program that funds initiatives and programs aimed at increasing participation in grassroots and community sport throughout Australia.

Website: www.asf.org.au/giving4grassroots.

Queensland Grant Information

A community Facebook page to share current community grants that are open in Queensland. Search "Queensland Grant Information".

Website: www.grantsinformation.com.au.



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