

BIG event worksheet

developed January 2013

This worksheet is designed to help you plan an event for the Broader Impacts Group, be that a workshop, guest speaker, or other activity. Once you have completed this worksheet, the BIG leadership can give you feedback and support for your event.

The ideal model for BIG events is to provide instruction that is paired with practice. For example, a workshop on demos would ideally happen right before the Cambridge Science Festival. Or a workshop on public speaking would involve actually practicing a short speech/talk.

First, for the conceptual ideas:

1. What do you want to accomplish conceptually, ideally? Is there an issue that you would like to address (e.g. science writing abilities, educational outreach abilities, the cohesion of the Broader Impacts Group community)? A concrete goal, measurable result or tangible deliverable is ideal.

2. What type of event would be best for this - a small workshop or a large lecture, or something else?

3. What impact would this have on MIT and/or WHOI communities?

4. Think of an event, any type of event, that you went to and that you were really impressed with. What were some of the elements that made it successful?

Now let's get serious:

5. How do you envision your event?

6. The target audience: Who and how many? Ideally, how many people must attend for the event to be worthwhile? How many people do you expect to attend, realistically? (see previous attendance records for BIG events)

7. What is your publicity plan? How will you communicate to the audience why they are attending this event? If there are multiple “demographics,” how will you explain what they can each gain/build from this experience? Please see our publicity guide at <http://www.whoi.edu/website/big/>

Note that when welcoming the audience and introducing the event, if you invited the wider community, you may need to explicitly say, “the reason the audience is so diverse, the reason that we have invited admin and profs and students alike, is that we are trying to build a community of people. This group is not just about serving graduate students with more resources, but rather connecting resource and creating a rich network around a shared interest and value - the importance of communicating science well.”

8. Where would you plan to hold this event – at MIT, WHOI, or elsewhere? Would it be appropriate and feasible for the event to be video-linked for those who cannot attend in person? Will you need someone to represent BIG at MIT if the event is at WHOI, or vice versa?

9. When do you intend to hold this event: during the summer, IAP, or another time? What day of the week will work best based on your target audience?

10. Who could help you inside or outside of BIG? Do you need another BIG organizer with whom to split tasks? Do you need to connect with communications staff, faculty, or admin at MIT, WHOI or beyond?

11. Is there anyone who might have an interest in this topic as well and might be interested in doing a synergistic collaboration? (Think cost sharing, resource sharing, two birds, one stone, efficiency...)

12. How much will the event cost? Will you need funds for it? Some possibly appropriate funding sources include: GSC funds, GSLG grants, or Off-Campus funding (for more socially-oriented events). Please ask us to see previous BIG budgets, as well as our funding guide at <http://www.whoi.edu/website/big/>

13. What is your timeline for preparing for this event? We encourage you to plan at least 2 months ahead of time, especially if you will need funding. Set times for securing funding, coordinating with presenters, reserving space, gathering materials, publicizing...

Evaluating your success:

14. What will it take for this event to be successful?

15. Can you think of any obstacles to the success of this event?

16. What do you think the realistic outcome will be?

17. How do you plan to evaluate the impact of this event?

Congratulations! You are well on your way to making a broader impact!

Don't forget to take pictures and bring the BIG guest book to record names and email address!