TIPS FOR PLANNING MORE EMPOWERING & INCLUSIVE EVENTS

USE LOCALLY SOURCED FOODS, GOODS, AND SERVICES WHENEVER POSSIBLE

The greater Boston area has a wealth of great businesses. Take some time when planning your event to look into local businesses as options for buying food or goods for your event.

REFLECT DIVERSITY AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE

Northeastern University is an exceptionally diverse institution. Having your events highlight speakers who reflect this diversity in terms of identities, role within the university, beliefs and opinions can go a long way in increasing the richness of your program and student attendance. Also don’t forget to be inclusive in how you market the event, too.

LOOK AT THE PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS OF THE SPACE

Can someone in a wheelchair easily access your space? If someone is hearing impaired will they be able to sit anywhere they want and still hear information? Are there gender neutral or family restrooms available? Asking questions like these can go a long way in improving the comfort of your participants.

WATCH WHAT YOU ORDER FOR MEALS

You want the people who attend to be able to eat! If you can ask about dietary restrictions in advance, do so. If you can’t, try to order a few options that are kosher and halal, gluten free, vegan, or vegetarian. We call this the “maybe not the pepperoni” rule.

BE GENEROUS WITH CREDIT

When doing your closing acknowledgements remember to include the people “behind the scenes” who also helped make your event possible. This should include the people who may have set-up the chairs, made sure the mics worked perfectly, and will ensure the venue is clean after you leave.

HAVE A SKILLED MODERATOR OR FACILITATOR FOR THE EVENT

Setting the hospitable tone can start from the very beginning by having the moderator or another representative of the program personally greet people as they come in. However, the most important thing that a skilled moderator or facilitator can do is interject in a productive and gracious way (if needed) to make sure that everyone (and we mean everyone) feels welcome and safe at your event.

USE RECYCLED GOODS OR ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

Being environmentally conscious is becoming easier and easier! When using paper handouts try and look for recycled products, print double-sided or use half sheets. Have a recycling bin at your event. If possible, use electronic resources like Guidebook or Google Drive in order to save paper.

TRY TO USE INCLUSIVE ACTIVITIES AND LANGUAGE

Language is key to creating a welcoming environment. This means taking the time to explain any vocabulary or jargon being used, swapping gender-biased terms like “guys” for “folks” to address a mixed sex audience, and being aware of inadvertently limiting the identities your members can express. An example would be saying “Let’s have all the men on this side of the room and all the women on the other.” Many people identify as both, neither, or somewhere else on the gender spectrum. Try to create groups in a more creative way like birthday months, or favorite movies, and start your event by asking about the pronouns people use. When doing icebreakers, you should also consider people’s different ability levels and cultural/religious expectations that may make someone uncomfortable touching others.

OPEN THE EVENT TO THE BOSTON COMMUNITY IF YOU CAN

One of the best parts of living in Boston is the wealth of knowledge you can gain from just attending events at all the different colleges and universities in the area. Try and find ways to bring in community members to participate both as observers and speakers.

DO YOU HAVE A SUGGESTION OR QUESTION? EMAIL US AT: SJRC@NEU.EDU

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