

Events checklist

The purpose of the event, and the title of your session(s).

Date, time and precise location of the event (gam will not appeal to most audiences, in the slot after lunch the audience may be drowsy. A children's event on a Saturday will usually attract more than a mid-week or Sunday event.)

The profile of the audience (e.g. aspiring writers, experts in your field, the general public), and how many are expected. Is the event being held at the same time as others (which can affect who comes to yours)?

The nature of the venue (e.g. lecture theatre, informal grouping, around a table) and any relevant features (e.g. if the lighting is poor and you need the audience to read things).

The nature of the session (reading, talk, panel discussion). Will you be on your own, and/or chaired, and/or with fellow panelists? If so, who are they? Can/should you contact any of them in advance and, if so, how?

The number and length of your session(s), and how much of any session should be a presentation and how much left for questions and answers.

Is the event being sponsored and, if so, by whom?

The availability of technical equipment (projector, PowerPoint, sound system, internet connection). Do you need to hand in e.g. PowerPoint presentations in advance? Can you check the site before the talk? Will someone be on site in case it fails?

Is there any intention to record your event and, if so, is that acceptable to you?

For schools: are there clearances, ID or insurance requirements of which you need to be aware?

Name and contact details of the organiser.

Does the organiser have your name, contact details and website, and details of your latest/forthcoming books?

If relevant, does the organiser have the name and contact details for your publisher/publicist/agent?

Who is meeting you, when and where? Do you have each other's mobile phone numbers?

A map of how to reach the event, and details of suitable public transport.

Will you need accommodation?

Who is responsible for booking travel tickets and accommodation?

Will a parking space be reserved for you?

What is the position if you would like to bring/travel with a partner – or a dog?

Do you have any disabilities of which the organisers should be aware?

The arrangements for refreshments, and any special dietary requirements. Also, if relevant, are you obliged, or would you like, to eat/stay for drinks with the audience. Might you have to mingle with them before your talk (which many speakers dislike)?

Are you expected to bring support materials e.g. a copy of your book, or handouts? May you do so if you wish? Can the venue photocopy materials for you if needed?

If the event can offer you the chance to sell your own books, who will sort out the arrangements for supplying books?

Who will be supplying the books: you? Your publisher (or might fliers to be forwarded to the publisher be a safer bet)? A local bookseller (who may be able to offer a discount, or a modest commission to the event organiser on sales)? Will someone (not you) be on hand to sell the books?

What fee will you be paid?

Who will be paying your travel and subsistence expenses: the event host? Your publisher?

If in doubt, exactly what expenses may you charge for? Do you need to supply receipts?

With expenses like hotel bills, will the organisers pay them in advance? If not, what is the arrangement?

When will you be paid? (It should be within 30 days of the event.)

Do you need to supply an invoice? Assuming yes, do you need a reference number or other identifier? To whom, at what address, should you send the invoice?

If the event is cancelled, how much notice will you be given and what will you be paid? (As a minimum, any bona fide expenses incurred should be refunded.)