

SCHEDULING

Here are some helpful tips aimed at scheduling events and other time-based activities. Above all, try to take into account the needs of both the organizers and guests.

Overall scheduling of the event/general considerations

- Consider budgets when planning schedule and event types. Don't plan too much in that you can't afford to pay to show and administrate, or that you yourself get too overwhelmed!
- Don't organise things too early. Allow a breakfast/networking session in the morning so people have time to arrive (think about possible transport delays/roadworks/train disruptions etc.)
- If you have a large number of sessions / activities / talks - consider making a physical board with post it notes and sharpies to work out how the sessions will take shape
- Consider similar themes and try not to let the talks clash if you have multiple tracks (make the themes different colours of post it notes in the planning phase)
- Plan in downtime/playtime - some people attend events to see folks they have not seen for a while, so they won't want to attend everything. If possible, design physical space to allow for this!

Talks

- Don't have the person who is traveling the furthest go on first!
- Schedule in time for a tech check for all speakers so you and they feel comfortable in the space and to solve any problems early.
- Talks: keep people's attention - plan breaks - but not between every talk if short! (break into morning session / lunch session / afternoon session instead)
- Decide upfront if you want to factor in time for Q&A
- Make it low pressure if people want to leave talks (especially if there are multiple things going on at the same time, or multiple tracks of talks)
- Set up time / buffer time so that you don't get too behind
- Be strict with talk timings - don't let people run over, give them a 5 / 2 minute warning (have a bell)
- Have the running order written down online **and** physically in the space
- Reminder slides of schedule when nothing else showing (what's up next etc.)
- If running talks, consider asking for slides in advance
- Get your speakers to show up 1 hour early minimum. If possible have a private space/room for speakers where they can leave their things, and supply water, fruit, etc.
- Consider recording in case people miss talks (but be aware that might change the atmosphere of a talk, and make it less personal, or the speaker may be more nervous)
- Put someone who isn't you in charge of timing for the session so it takes an immediate worry off your plate. Get them to introduce the talks and make sure things keep to schedule

Live games

- Live games - time slots. Give people stickers with their times printed on, have walk ups on standby for dropouts.

Exhibition

- Exhibition scheduling may sometimes be limited by a certain venue, so you may have limited control
- Otherwise, try to think about the length of time someone would want to spend in the exhibit and plan around that
- It is good to be in dialogue with the exhibitions preceding/following yours
- Exhibitions can also have events, especially for the opening/closing. If the exhibition is up for a long time, events can even be used to reinvigorate interest in it.

Online events

- Broadcasting online events are unexpectedly exhausting, make sure you take shifts or give yourself time to rest
- Timezones are hard! Think about what time might appeal to as wide an audience as possible.
- Consider recording the session (Twitch makes this very easy!) and posting online as soon as possible so that folks that missed it by an hour or two can still catch up on it in the context and timeframe of the festival

Check Clashes/coordination with other events

Of course it is not always possible not to conflict with another event, but it is always worth checking that you are not too close in date to something very thematically similar to your event. On the other hand, if a similar event is happening in a nearby city or county, it could be worth reaching out to coordinate and encourage attendees (especially an international audience) to consider coming to both events.

- [Events for Gamers](#)
- [Playful Festival Listings by Zo-ii](#) (currently in hibernation)
- [Directory of games industry events](#) (currently in hibernation)

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