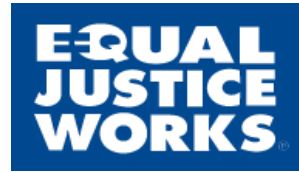


Equal Justice Works Event Planning 101



Planning an on-campus event is the best way to connect your fellow law students with engaging panelists, discussions on hot topics in public interest law, film screenings, receptions, rallies, trainings, and more. Equal Justice Works is always here to help connect you with potential speakers, films, and other resources! Here are our top 5 tips to planning a successful event.



For three decades Equal Justice Works has created opportunities for public interest lawyers committed to building a more just society. We believe that the poorest and most vulnerable among us deserve the same access to justice and quality legal representation as the privileged. To achieve this, we offer a continuum of opportunities for law students and lawyers that provide the training and skills that enable them to provide effective representation to underserved communities and causes.

Step #1: Set Goals

The first step to hosting a successful on-campus event is to have clear goals in mind. Ask yourself the following questions:

- What is it you want to accomplish?
- Who is your target audience?
- How many people do you want to attend?
- What is your vision for how the event will unfold?
- What type of events are popular on your law school campus?
- How long do the successful events usually last?
- Where are the possible locations for the event?

Once you have answers to these questions, you will be in a better position to come up with a concept for the event.

Step #2: Build a Team & Stay Organized

The next step is to make sure you have support to host the event, whether it be from your fellow public interest law students or law school faculty and administration. You will need their help in staying organized so the event can go smoothly!

It is helpful to keep the following information handy:

- Potential speakers/Contacts
- All planning e-mails
- Planning Meeting Agendas and Notes
- Business Cards
- Invoices
- Promotional materials
- Planning Timeline
- Event Schedule (including designated tasks)

Step #3: Contact Potential Speakers

The hardest part of putting together a successful event is making sure you have engaging panelists lined up to participate in the discussion. Equal Justice Works is always happy to help you search for potential speakers – just email the Law School Engagement & Advocacy Unit at lsea@equaljusticeworks.org to ask for help! You can also reach out to your law school professors and counselors to see if they have any ideas.

It is best to consider a wide variety of speakers for any event – think about law school professors, legal professionals, public interest lawyers, postgraduate fellows, and more. Be flexible when brainstorming and selecting top picks.

After deciding which potential speakers you'd like to contact, your next step is to invite them to the event. Make the invite short and concise, but include all the necessary information:

- First Paragraph: Introduce yourself and the purpose of the event. Tell the invitee about the target audience, and let them know how they may contribute to the event.
- Second Paragraph: Tell the potential speaker about the organization behind the event, and their role on your law school campus.
- Third Paragraph: Thank the speaker for considering your invite, and let them know the best and fastest way to reach you.

TIPS

Remember to check your spelling and grammar, and make sure you give the potential speaker the correct time and date!

Be persistent and follow up on your requests, but be reasonable about the number of times you contact a potential speaker. Have a list of alternates, and don't get discouraged: there are bound to be a few rejections.

Step #4: Plan Your Audience Outreach

Publicizing your event is important! Reach out to:

- Like-minded public interest law students
- Public interest law organizations on campus
- Community organizations
- Relevant political organization on campus
- Progressive issue groups that may be interested in the event topic
- Student government organizations
- Law school faculty and administration

You'll also want to set up a Facebook event page, along with blasting your event on social media channels you know attract your target audience. Try to get the event featured on your law school events calendar or programming board.

Old-fashioned publicity methods can help as well: create and publish a set of fliers and other promotional material, and get some of your event team members to pass them around on campus. Post fliers all over campus!

Some law schools allow students to table in the student union or lobby areas, but ask permission first.

Step #5: Host the Event!

After putting in all the prep work and publicizing your event, it's time to make it happen!

1. **Communicate with your event team** well in advance about any last minute, day-of action items that need to be completed. If necessary, email them an itinerary of the big day so everyone is aware of what needs to happen.
2. **Make yourself available** by phone and email in case there are any emergencies. The more communication, the better!
3. **Get to the location early** to make sure everything is all set, from the catering to the IT setup (microphones, projectors, lighting, etc.). Make sure someone is available to greet any event speakers or special guests.
4. **Create a sign-up sheet** so you have a record of all attendees. Many organizations like to have a list of attendee email addresses so they can send thank you's or invites to future events.
5. **Take photos and video of the event.** You can post these on social media during or after to let people know what they missed!
6. **Don't forget to clean up!** Make sure the room or venue is left in great condition after the event – you always want to leave a good impression so you can use the location again for your next event.