

Conference planning checklist

Timeframe	Tasks	Innovations & tips
12+ Months Before	• ☐ Set conference dates • ☐ Check for potential conflicts (holidays, other events) • ☐ Define conference theme and objectives • ☐ Form organizing committee • ☐ Create initial budget projection • ☐ Identify and book venue • ☐ Start exploring keynote speaker options	• Use project management software to track tasks and deadlines • Consider a virtual or hybrid format to increase accessibility • Implement sustainability practices in your planning
9-12 Months Before	☐ Develop conference branding (logo, color scheme) • ☐ Create conference website • ☐ Open call for papers/presentations • ☐ Begin sponsor outreach • ☐ Set up registration system • ☐ Book main speakers • ☐ Plan marketing strategy	• Use AI tools for initial content creation and translation • Implement a mobile app for the conference • Consider using blockchain for secure, transparent ticketing
6-9 Months Before	☐ Finalize program structure • ☐ Set up review process for submissions • ☐ Arrange accommodations for speakers/attendees • ☐ Plan catering and social events • ☐ Develop crisis management plan • ☐ Start regular promotional activities	• Use virtual reality for venue tours for remote planners • Implement gamification elements to increase engagement • Consider carbon offsetting options for travel
4-6 Months Before	☐ Close submission period • ☐ Begin review process • ☐ Finalize speaker list	• Use machine learning for efficient abstract sorting and reviewer matching • Implement a networking AI to suggest valuable

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	• [] Open attendee registration • [] Arrange audio-visual equipment • [] Plan for special dietary requirements • [] Organize transportation if needed	connections for attendees • Consider offering childcare services
2-3 Months Before	[] Finalize program schedule • [] Confirm all speakers and sessions • [] Arrange printing of materials • [] Brief all staff and volunteers • [] Finalize catering orders • [] Check all technical requirements	• Create a virtual twin of the conference for remote attendees • Use augmented reality for enhanced poster sessions • Implement real-time translation services
1 Month Before	[] Send final joining instructions to attendees • [] Prepare name badges and conference packs • [] Conduct final venue inspection • [] Test all technical equipment • [] Finalize social media strategy	• Use facial recognition for quick check-ins (with consent) • Implement a chatbot for instant attendee support • Create digital goodie bags to reduce waste
1 Week Before	[] Hold final team briefing • [] Prepare registration desk • [] Print final attendee list • [] Set up venue signage • [] Prepare speaker gifts	• Use RFID technology for session tracking and crowd management • Implement a real-time feedback system for immediate improvements • Set up a digital wall for live social media feeds
During the Conference	[] Manage registration desk • [] Coordinate with speakers and session chairs • [] Monitor social media and engage with attendees • [] Handle any issues promptly • [] Collect feedback	• Use AI for real-time content summarization • Implement live polling and Q&A platforms • Offer virtual reality meetups for networking
Post-Conference	[] Send thank you notes to speakers, sponsors, and volunteers • [] Collect and analyze feedback • [] Update website with post-conference content	• Create AI-generated highlight reels • Use data analytics to provide personalized post-conference resources • Start an online community for continued engagement

Timeframe	Tasks	Innovations & tips
	• [] Conduct financial reconciliation • [] Hold debrief meeting and document lessons learned	

Additional considerations

- **Diversity and inclusion:** Ensure diverse representation among speakers and panelists. Provide accessibility services for participants with disabilities.
 - **Accessibility:** Ensure the conference is accessible to all, including those with disabilities.
 - **Sustainability:** Implement eco-friendly practices such as digital programs, reusable materials, and waste reduction strategies.
 - **Technology:** Utilize conference apps for real-time updates, networking, and engagement. Consider virtual attendance options for wider reach. Always have contingency plans for technology failures.
 - **Networking opportunities:** Create structured and unstructured networking opportunities.
 - **Engagement:** Plan interactive sessions, workshops, and networking opportunities to foster participant engagement.
 - **Evaluation:** Develop a feedback mechanism to gather participant insights and improve future conferences.
 - **Content capture:** Plan for recording and distributing conference content post-event.
 - **Legal considerations:** Ensure compliance with data protection laws and obtain necessary permits.
 - **Health and safety:** Develop health and safety protocols, including potential pandemic considerations.
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