

Easy Stage Guide to Having a Stand at an Event

Pre-planning

There are thousands of conferences, events and occasions held every year which could be excellent for raising the profile of Soroptimist International Great Britain and Ireland (SIGBI) and attract new Members and supporters of our work. To make the most of every opportunity, these events need to be planned with attention to detail and communicated clearly with all involved parties.

<p>Why have a stand at this event?</p> <p>a) Is it a topic that Soroptimists are involved with?</p> <p>b) Will we get more publicity?</p> <p>c) Will we get new members?</p> <p>d) Will it be worth the effort?</p> <p>e) Is it value for money?</p> <p>f) Will there be women at the event?</p>
<p>Preparation before signing up for a stand (sequence listed actions as required for each event)</p> <p>a) Agree success factors and outcomes.</p> <p>b) Make contact with the lead person for the stands.</p> <p>c) Who will be at the conference/event – eg show</p> <p>d) What is the conference/event about and does it fit well with Soroptimist aims, objectives and ethics?</p> <p>e) What are the timings for the conference? Will people be in sessions during the day and only be looking round at designated times? (Need to know for resourcing the manning of the stand).</p> <p>f) How many potential women will we reach?</p> <p>g) What is best price for SIGBI as a not-for-profit organisation?</p> <p>h) Carry out a cost benefit analysis - this will only be an indication of the costs versus the potential income for new Members e.g. stand costs £500 and will only reach 20 potential Members decide if it is worth it. Very difficult to predict but essential to try.</p> <p>i) Who will pay? Club? Region? National Association? HQ? Grants? Donations? You will need to have the information from your cost benefit analysis.</p>
<p>Ask questions</p> <p>a) How big is the stand?</p> <p>b) Are there power points? How many chairs are provided?</p> <p>c) Are the places allocated before the event or is it a free for all?</p> <p>d) Is there a wall behind suitable for a banner/back drop?</p> <p>e) How far are we from the main hall?</p> <p>f) Where are the toilets?</p> <p>g) Are there any food outlets?</p> <p>h) What time can we get there to set up?</p> <p>i) Are there any restrictions as to what we can have on the stand?</p> <p>j) Any restrictions on number of people allowed to work on the stand at any one time?</p> <p>k) Can we use a pull up banners?</p> <p>l) Do we need a letter from HQ explaining we are a not for profit organisation?</p> <p>m) Can we sell items ?</p>

Risk Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Send a copy of the public liability insurance from the SIGBI Website to the event organisers. b) Check if any licenses are required. c) Complete an event risk assessment – event organisers normally provide forms – otherwise there is useful information from the UK Health and Safety Executive www.hse.gov.uk/event-safety/

Event Planning:

Once you have sufficient information, then you can start detailed planning for the event:

- You need a project team leader and a team: the size and roles of the team members will depend on what you want to achieve, so start by agreeing with the team a sentence that defines the objective(s) of the event – this can then be used afterwards to review whether you have achieved your objective(s). For effective customer/supplier relations it is best for one person to be responsible for contact with the organisers. You need roles to be allocated for finance, organising the volunteers, stand design/theme, publicity materials on the stand, publicity before and after the event. Some of these roles may also need teams depending on the size of the event.
- It is recommended to write notes of agreed actions and communicate using email so that you have a written record for all of the team to refer to.

What goes on the stand
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) This depends on the conference/occasion. Does it have a theme? b) You will need lots of leaflets to give out. You will need all advertising material that you can get which is modern and up to date. You may need to create materials appropriate for the occasion. Remember to use the SIGBI logos and publicity material to increase brand awareness (applying the SIGBI Brand Guidelines). The stand design and layout needs to look inviting. c) You need a clip board with sheet for people to give their emails if they want to know more about Soroptimists – a petition to sign can be useful way to draw people in and ask for their contact information. d) Have a glass bowl so people can put their business cards in. e) Consider having a bowl of free wrapped sweets on the stand – it often attracts people to come over and make initial contact. f) Attractive photographs of what Soroptimists do around the world relevant to the theme. Don't restrict it to your Club, Region, National Association or Country.

Volunteers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Contact other Clubs and Regions. Soroptimists are well travelled and if the event is easy to get to people will travel. b) Make a timetable/rota for Members to be there. Try to have the largest numbers of volunteers present when the conference/event is the busiest around the stands. c) Make sure everyone is “singing from the same song-sheet”. Provide “sound-bites” and some examples – and practise on one another in advance. The #WhySoroptimist? Campaign has some great examples that people can personalise for themselves, and there is a useful Easy Stage Guide to creating an “Elevator Pitch”. d) Recommend volunteers wear similar clothes for easy identification e.g. black trousers or skirts, white top with a Soroptimist blue sash that clearly says Soroptimist. e) Make sure volunteers know that there is unlikely to be any expenses. f) Train volunteers how to go up to people to talk to them.

Marketing & Publicity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Advertise your stand to as many people as you think might go to the event. b) Let local media know – before and after the event. c) Set up or decide which Website, Twitter account and Facebook pages to use and keep updating – start well in advance of the event.

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| d) Have lots of publicity material to give away.
e) Make sure that the Soroptimist brand is as visible as possible. |
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Post-Event

- Review how the event went against its agreed objective(s) and share any learning for future events
- Inform SIGBI HQ/Clubs/ Regions of any potential recruits in their area so that they can follow up.
- Inform SIGBI HQ/Clubs/Region of other contacts made who could be useful partners for projects/networking.
- Congratulate yourself and other volunteers on promoting Soroptimist whether or not you get new Members you will have raised the awareness of the organisation - be sure to thank everyone so they feel valued.
- Ask everyone involved for feedback
- After the event ask SIGBI HQ if it is possible to see how many people have joined either as Associate or Club Member as a result of the event.