

# Guide to Organising, and Running, a One-Off Event for U3A Sapphire Coast

## Introduction

If you're thinking of running a one-off event for U3ASC, these guidelines will give you an idea of what is involved. They might make the whole process sound a bit daunting, but please don't be put off by that. Remember that the Program Team is there to help you with any of this. So, if you feel yourself starting to lose enthusiasm, can't solve a problem by yourself, or just feel the need for a pat on the back and a cup of tea, we're here for you 😊.

### 1. General information

- 'One-off Events' are those courses or activities that take place on one or two days, rather than as a continuing course over many weeks. They can be a great option for course leaders who don't want an ongoing commitment; or who have specialized knowledge that lends itself best to a short presentation or workshop; or who have a great idea for a single activity such as a bus trip, a tour of some place of interest to members, or just a social activity like a lunch.
- One-off events are subject to the same principles and policies as ongoing courses, so, if you're unsure about whether your one-off proposal meets those principles, please refer to the document **U3A Sapphire Coast Policies on Courses and Events**, which you can find on the website (click on About Us, then Policies).
- But, even better, talk to a member of the Program Team. You can contact the Program Team Leader at [u3asc.programs@gmail.com](mailto:u3asc.programs@gmail.com). He or she will put you in touch with a Program Team member who will become your on-going contact for anything to do with your One-Off. Your proposal, no matter what it is, will be welcomed, and your Program Team contact person will be keen to help you resolve any issues associated with it.
- It's always better to contact the Program Team well before the start of a term, so that there is time to put your event in the on-line program, and so that the greatest numbers of members possible see it. Sometimes, though, this isn't possible and your event can be inserted into the Program during a term and members can be alerted to it by email, or through our monthly newsletter.

### 2. Making a proposal.

- First, contact the Program Team leader (see above), then discuss your proposal with your nominated Program Team contact person.

- Look at the **Course/Event Proposal Form** available on the website (click on Take a Role, then Offering a Course). It's a useful tool for documenting your proposal. It will let you know exactly what you need to consider in planning your event, and the information you need to provide to get your event accepted into the Program. You can complete the form yourself and then send it to your Program Team contact, or work through it with your Program Team contact person.

### **3. Planning your One-Off**

- Your Program Team contact person will be happy to help you with advice at any time, but basically it is your responsibility to organize your One-Off.
- Some of the issues you might need to deal with include deciding on a date, time and duration of your event; finding and booking a suitable venue (bearing in mind access, and OH&S issues); organising a presenter (if it isn't yourself); setting a fee to cover venue hire and any expenses incurred by you or your presenter; booking transport if it's a trip you're proposing; ensuring the availability of any equipment needed on the day; arranging catering if required; working out a budget to help you decide on the attendance fee; assessing and planning to manage any risks associated with the activity you are proposing; and deciding who will be the contact person for further information about the event.
- Your Program Team contact person will have had some experience of helping to organize other One-Offs, and will be able to help you identify anything you may have missed in your planning, or help you with anything you don't feel able to do yourself.
- Please note that you should not opt to run the One-Off in your own home unless you have Home and Contents Insurance with public liability coverage (see Managing Your Course – a Guide for Course Leaders, section 12 Occupational Health & Safety for more information)

### **4. Setting an attendance fee**

- In line with U3ASC's constitution, and consistent with all other courses, you may not make a profit from running a One-Off. But you should make sure that you recover any and all expenses you (and/or your presenter) incur in planning and running the event. These might include, but are not limited to, venue hire, printing of handouts or other materials, travel costs for you and/or your guest presenter, the cost of providing morning or afternoon tea, and the cost of a small thank you gift for a guest presenter.
- Your event attendance fee should be determined by the total anticipated costs, divided by the estimated number of participants (yes, there's a lot of guess work involved in that – consult your Program Team contact person if you're having trouble with this).

- As a general rule, if the attendance charge is more than \$15, your Program Team contact person will set up the online booking system we use, so payment in advance is required. This helps to ensure commitment and thus some guarantee of numbers. Otherwise, you should just collect the attendance charge on the day.
- If you're going to have a lot of costs up-front, you can ask your Program Team contact to organize an advance of up to 50% of your costs, or to provide a guarantee that your costs will be covered.
- If you don't think you will be able to recover all of your costs, you can apply, well in advance of the course, for a subsidy from U3ASC using the form **Application for Course Funding**, which you'll find on the website (click on Take a Role, then Course Leader Resources).
- If your attendance fee is more than \$20 per person, or the total fees you collect exceed \$300, you will need to make a detailed accounting of your expenses, and send that to the Treasurer at [treasu3asc@gmail.com](mailto:treasu3asc@gmail.com).
- You must also send any funds remaining after the payment of expenses to the Treasurer. Without exception, these are the property of U3ASC.

## 5. Promoting your event

- Your Course Proposal Form will be the basis of the information provided about your event in the Program, and the main source of information to members. You're not obliged to do anything more, but ...
- You might also want to write a brief promotional blurb and send it to the Publicity Coordinator at [u3ascsec@gmail.com](mailto:u3ascsec@gmail.com) for inclusion in a media release to the print, radio and on-line media, at least three weeks before your event. A photo relevant to the event would help in getting placement in print and on-line media. One-offs can be attended by non-U3ASC members so publicity might help you to attract greater numbers.
- And/or, you might like to write something and send it with a photo to the Publicity Coordinator (see email address above) for inclusion in the U3ASC monthly newsletter. Again, do this well in advance of your event to make sure you don't miss a deadline.

## 6. Last minute preparation

- A couple of weeks before your event, we suggest that you confirm all of your bookings and arrangements. If there are any problems that might lead to cancellation of the event, contact your Program Team contact person immediately.

- A week or so before your event, have a dry run through at the venue, checking that you have all equipment you or your presenter need, that equipment is compatible, that internet connectivity if needed is working. Think about the best seating layout for the presentation. Check that your presenter, if it isn't you, is completely clear about the venue, date and time.
- Decide whether you or your presenter wants to receive feedback on the event and, if so, download the **Course/Event Evaluation Form** from the website (click on Take a Role, then Course Leader Resources). Ask your Program Team contact for an Attendance Sheet, prefilled with details from the on-line booking system, or download the proforma **Attendance Sheet** from the website (click on Take a Role, then Course Leader Resources). You must keep attendance records for insurance purposes.
- If you are not the presenter, prepare a brief introduction of the presenter and check with them that you have the details correct.
- If you will be collecting the attendance fee on the day, organize a 'float' of coins and small notes so you can give change.
- If appropriate, organize or purchase a token 'thank you' gift for your presenter if they are not a U3ASC member.
- If you can, arrange for someone to take photos of the event for use in future publicity, the website, Facebook etc. Make sure that everyone in the photos is identified and that they have given their consent to the use of their photos.
- A few days before the event, send out an email reminder to all enrolled participants. Your PT contact person should be able to gather the email addresses required through the booking system, and might send out the reminder for you if you ask.

## 7. On the Day

- Get there early so you have time to check that everything is set up, connected, working etc.
- Have the Attendance Sheet ready for participants to sign as they arrive, and if you're collecting fees, have some container for the money and your float ready.
- At the opening, introduce your presenter (if it's not you), and thank them (and anybody else who has contributed) and present your token gift at the end.
- Make sure the venue is left as you originally found it. You can ask participants to help with this.

## 8. After the event

- You'll probably just want to breathe a sigh of relief, pour yourself a drink and relax for a while. Feel free to do that, but then, make sure that you:
  - Send a note of thanks to the presenter if appropriate
  - Add up all the money collected, pay any outstanding accounts, and take out the money needed to reimburse you and the presenter for expenses, then forward any remaining amount to the Treasurer, together with detailed accounts if required (see under 4. above)
  - Send the attendance sheets to you Program Team contact person
  - Send any good photographs and a brief report of the event to the Publicity Coordinator at [u3ascsec@gmail.com](mailto:u3ascsec@gmail.com).

We look forward to hearing about your proposed 'One-off' and to adding you to the ranks of our wonderful volunteer Course Leaders, who make U3ASC possible.