



EVENTS HANDBOOK

**A GUIDE TO THE BASICS OF EVENT
PLANNING, TEMPLATES, EVENTS
REQUIREMENTS, AND RESOURCES
PROVIDED BY THE GSA AND THE
UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY**



WELCOME TO EVENT PLANNING

Planning an event is crucial to Departmental Graduate Associations (DGAs), Graduate Student Groups (GSGs), and GSA Committees. Therefore, the GSA wants to make it easier and more fun for you to host events for your fellow graduate students.

In this handbook, you will find important information, tools, and special requirements of the GSA that will assist you when planning events, including:

- *Basic steps of event planning;*
- *Special event requirements; and*
- *Free resources from the GSA including DGA/GSG event grants and event support.*

Any graduate students that are not with a DGA, GSG, or GSA Committee can use this handbook as a reference for their own event planning purposes. The GSA is here to improve all graduate student experience on campus so don't hesitate to reach out via email, phone, or meet us at the GSA Main Office 1030 ES, Earth Science.

All the best for your academic year!

GSA Main Office
1030 ES, Earth Sciences
Opens Monday to Friday
9:30 am to 4:00 pm



USEFUL TIPS

If you are planning for an event, talk to us first so that we can provide you with advice and resources to make your event a success!

MAIN CONTACT

GSA Events Coordinator
events.gsa@ucalgary.ca

EVENT SUBMISSION FORM

All graduate student events are required to complete the Event Submission Form and receive formal approval from the GSA Events Coordinator/Governance Coordinator in writing prior to the event taking place in order to obtain promotional items, equipment rentals, and Event Grant.

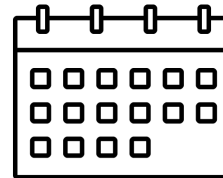
Access Link

Event Submission Form
[gsa.ucalgary.ca/
eventforms](https://gsa.ucalgary.ca/eventforms)

*One form for all your
event's needs!*

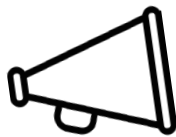
Failing to prepare is preparing to fail!

6 BASIC STEPS OF EVENT PLANNING



STEP 1 GETTING STARTED

Goals, objectives
Who, what, when, where,
why, and how
Research similar events
Form a team



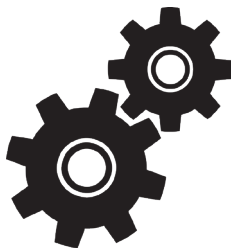
STEP 2 PLANNING

Event submission and approval
Budget
Funding proposals
Venue and food order
Volunteer organization
Material purchases
Keep all event receipts



STEP 4 PROMOTIONS & TICKET SALES

Promotional plan
Promotional materials
Ticket page



STEP 3 RISK MANAGEMENT

Venue insurance
Liquor license
Risk management plan
Waiver



STEP 5 EXECUTION

Preparation and set-up
Venue walkthrough
Equipment testing
Waiver administration
Problem solving
Take-down and clean-up

STEP 6 EVALUATION

Feedback collection
After Event Report
Claim DGA/GSG Event Grant

1 GETTING STARTED

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- Determine the goals and objectives for the event(s)
- Answer the questions “who, what, when, where, why, and how”
- Research similar events that were hosted in the past to learn best practices; this may also surface partnership opportunities
- Look for potential partnerships
- Form a team to help out with event organization
- Research venues, transportation, entertainment, and food and beverage options



USEFUL TIPS

- ▶ Collaboration with other student groups is a great way to increase participation and optimize limited resources.
- ▶ When you are given a contract from your chosen venue, read it carefully and ask questions over email so correspondence is documented – keep all emails on file until the event has concluded and all parties are happy as this provides a paper trail if things go wrong
- ▶ Make sure you know:
 - The cancellation policy of the venue;
 - When you have to provide the venue with final numbers of attendees; and
 - When the final food order is due – it is always good to see if you can add to the food order the day of the event in case more people show up than what has been planned; this may happen if you are selling tickets at the door.

2 PLANNING

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- Seek approval from the GSA Events Coordinator (please complete and submit the Event Submission Form [here](#))
- Seek approval from your faculty if applicable (only applied to University events – see definition [here](#))
- Set a date and time
- Prepare an agenda and roll out schedule for the event – DO NOT FORGET ABOUT SET-UP AND CLEAN UP
- Draft a budget to include all sources of anticipated revenue (ticket sales, sponsorships etc.) and anticipated expenses (venue charges, transportation, decorations etc.) It is advisable to get quotes from multiple venues that meet the requirements of the event to ensure you are paying a competitive rate. Include in your budget any miscellaneous and unexpected items (e.g. insurance, printing, linen rentals, paper products, parking). Include a 10% contingency fund to cover unanticipated expenses
- Prepare funding proposal (if necessary)
- Contact the chosen venue to finalize room set-up, food, décor, and itinerary
- Sign venue contract (if applicable) and pay upfront costs
- Recruit volunteers and assign tasks
- Update the venue on the number of attendees regularly

Keep all expense receipts and invoices for your record and expense reimbursement!

LINKS TO RESOURCES

- ▶ Learn how to plan a green event following the UCalgary’s Green Events Guide [here](#)
- ▶ Event Planner Template [here](#)
- ▶ [Event Submission Form](#)

3 RISK MANAGEMENT

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

THIRD PARTY LIABILITY COVERAGE

The GSA's commercial general liability insurance does not extend to cover student group events under any circumstances. The Event Organizer may purchase insurance for their event through PAL Insurance. PAL Insurance has been recommended as the local provider for third party event liability insurance. Applications may be completed online and PAL offers responsive and thorough customer service.

For more information for your events, please check out their website at:

<https://www.palcanada.com/>.

You may refer to the Special Events Liability or Party Alcohol Liability pages for more specific details that may apply to your DGA/GSG events. Please contact PAL Insurance directly for assistance: <https://www.palcanada.com/index.php/en-us/contact>.

Notes

In order to be insured by the University of Calgary's general liability policies, a University conference or event must meet certain conditions. Find more information about *What Constitutes an UCalgary Event or Conference* [here](#)

RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Depending on the size of the event, a Risk Management Plan is recommended. Events Organizer can draft a risk management plan and risk management strategies using the template provided on our website or in the Links to Resources section.

WAIVERS

Administering waivers to all participants is highly recommended for all events that are of higher risk. Waivers reduce the liability of the Event Organizer in case of injuries and/or incidents; however, it does not prevent the claimants from filing a suit against the Event Organizer/affiliated entity.

LINKS TO RESOURCES

- ▶ [Event Planner Template](#)
- ▶ [Risk Management Template](#)
- ▶ [University of Calgary's Events Guide](#) [here](#)

4 PROMOTIONS & TICKET SALES

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- Have a promotions strategy and plan in mind, and make sure to:
 - Define your target audience
 - Identify key messages
 - Brainstorm ways to reach your audience
- Some suggested promotional strategies include:
 - Posters
 - An online ticket sale system
 - Emails to members or subscribers
 - Word-of-mouth sales
 - Social media
 - Incentives (such as prizes, or giveaways)



USEFUL TIPS

- ▶ Dedicate at least 2 to 3 weeks to promotion and advertising for the best results. Depending on the size of the event, you might want to dedicate more than 4 weeks for promotions
- ▶ Submit information about your event to be featured in the GSA News and Views newsletter [here](#). If you are submitting to the News and Views, submit with plenty of time in advance. Publication in the newsletter is not guaranteed.
- ▶ Post events on the UCalgary's Events listing [here](#)
- ▶ Use [Canva.com](#) for free online design of your posters or social media graphics
- ▶ Use [EventBrite.ca](#) for free ticket sales

5 EXECUTION

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- Check the weather forecast to take actions to minimize any risks
- Prepare necessary items, equipment for the event in advance of the event if possible
- Arrive early for set up
- Walk through the site for potential hazards. Use the Special Events Assessment Checklist from UCalgary's Special Events Policy [here](#)
- Set up and test equipment
- Check in and sign waivers
- Solve any issues or problems that arise
- Take down and clean up
- Record feedback and comments from participants

The most common problem during events is technical issues. Test equipment in advance: ensure that you have internet connection, proper cabling, and sound system for the purpose of the event.



6 EVALUATION

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- Conduct a post-event survey
- In a report, record feedback, finalize costs and revenue
- Collect recommendations for future events
- Save all event contacts and documents

The more information gathered from the event, the better. This will help improve future events. For example, keeping track of how much food was consumed and which food was more popular will help plan food orders in the future.



GSA EVENT FORMS

EVENT SUBMISSION FORM

Link: www.gsa.ucalgary.ca/eventforms

This form is intended for any GSA Student Groups (DGAs, GSGs, consortium, or GSA committees) to request event support including:

- Equipment rental;
- GSA promotional items for prizes;
- LDL coupons;
- Event Grants for DGA/GSG/Consortium; and
- Booking of CEM Classroom/Table/Green Space.

Please submit the form at least 2-3 weeks prior to the event date. The GSA shall follow up with the request 2-5 business days for approval and/or further instructions.

AFTER EVENT REPORT FORM

Link: www.gsa.ucalgary.ca/eventforms

This form is intended for any DGA/GSG/consortium to submit receipts for your event(s) that they have requested GSA Event Grant funding.

DGA & GSG HANDBOOK

Link:
DGA Handbook
<https://gsa.ucalgary.ca/dgasgrns/handbook/>

GSG Handbook
<https://gsa.ucalgary.ca/graduatestudentgroups/>

Please check out the DGA or GSG Handbook for specific information about your Event Grant and event support available to DGAs and GSGs.

Event Submission Form

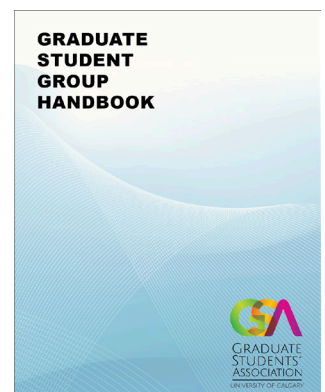
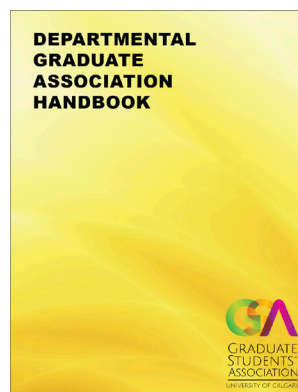
This form is intended for any GSA Student Groups (DGAs, GSGs, or consortium) to request event support including event approval for third-party liability insurance coverage and Event Grant.
Please submit the form at least 2-3 weeks prior to the event date. The GSA shall follow up with the request 2-5 business days for approval and/or further instructions.

Student Group name*	Email of President*
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Event Organizer's name*	Contact email address*
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
UCID Number*	Phone Number*
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Name of any other main Organizers from your Student Group for this event (if applicable)*	
<input type="text"/>	
EVENT INFORMATION	
Event Name*	Event date*
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="mm/dd/yyyy"/>
Event time*	Event location*
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Event description including the event purpose, activities, guest speaker information, and event sponsors/partners (please be as detailed as possible)*	
<input type="text"/>	
Targeted audience*	Estimated number of attendees*
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

After Event Report Form

Please use this form to submit receipts for your event(s) that you have requested GSA Event Grant funding.

Student Group name*	Email of President*
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Event Organizer's name*	Contact email address*
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Event Name*	Event date*
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="mm/dd/yyyy"/>
Total number of attendees*	Did the event meet your expectation?*
<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
What went well and what didn't go well?*	
<input type="text"/>	



SPECIAL EVENTS

ALCOHOL



For any GSA, GSA-funded or GSA-affiliated events that include consumption of alcohol that are not hosted in a private residence or a licensed establishment, if hosted:

- ▶ On-campus:
 - All alcohol service on campus, with the exception of events in MacEwan Student Centre, must be arranged and served through the University's preferred food service provider, Aramark. Find more details [here](#)
- ▶ Off-campus:
 - The Event Organizer may need to purchase a Special Events License from the AGLC. Find more details [here](#).
 - Party Alcohol Liability (PAL) insurance is available for purchase for a single or a series of events. The Event Organizer is personally liable for incidents at events where alcohol is provided without PAL insurance. Find more details [here](#).

FIELD TRIPS



For events with arranged transportation with a bus company, it is highly recommended that all participants complete a waiver before boarding the bus.

The GSA is not responsible for any carpooling activities. It is recommended that Event Organizer ensure all carpooling drivers are properly insured.

PET THERAPY



Please follow the Pet Therapy guidelines from the University of Calgary [here](#). Waiver is recommended for all pet therapy events.

SPECIAL GUESTS, VIP, & GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL



When there are special guest(s), VIPs, or government officials attending your events, you usually need to indicate this information to the UCalgary's Conference and Events Management Staff and the GSA Staff through the Event Submission Form. They will follow up with you for any special requirements.

GSA FUNDING

Funding may be available for DGAs, Graduate Student Groups and GSA committees to apply for. Possible funding includes:

- Quality Money,
- Event Grant (for DGAs, GSGs, and consotriums), and
- Professional Development Grant.

Visit the GSA web site for more information about funding.

SPONSORSHIPS & PARTNERSHIPS

Sponsorships and partnerships are important, and can help subsidize the cost for an event. The GSA must be notified of, and approve all potential sponsorship/partnership opportunities or relationships prior to sponsors and/or partners being approached. For the purpose of this document, a sponsor is defined as a one-off financial donor to an event or organization; and a partner is defined as a long-term supporter that seeks mutual benefit and/or is invested in the success of an organization.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

For any on-campus emergency situations, please follow the procedures outlined in the UCalgary's Emergency Response Plan instructions [here](#)

EVENT RESOURCES AND CONTACTS

GSA EQUIPMENT RENTAL

The GSA has the following items for free rental for eligible DGAs, GSGs, consortiums, and other graduate groups:



Projector



Popcorn machine



Portable
Bluetooth
Speaker



Water boiler

To request these items, please fill out the [Event Submission Form](#).

SPACE BOOKING AT UCALGARY

*Please be advised that some conditions are applied to venue bookings on campus. Please coordinate with the venue to learn about these restrictions.

Name of Space	Charges	Booking references and request forms
Classroom/Table booking/ Green space on main campus	Usually no	Please request classroom space here: gsa.ucalgary.ca/eventforms There is no limit on how many free classroom bookings a GSA Student Group can request per month. Please find more details on the CEM Classroom Booking Agreement for GSA Student Groups
Downtown campus	Usually yes	ucalgary.ca/downtown/events-conferences/meeting-rooms-event-spaces
Foothills campus	Usually no	ucalgary.ca/instructionalresources/bookingservices
Vitruvian Space	Usually no	ucalgary.ca/fsc/vitruvian/book_space
Rozsa Centre	Usually yes	scca.ucalgary.ca/theatre-services/facilities
The Loft	Usually no	Please contact GSA Events Coordinator for details
Grad Commons	Usually no	Please contact Jaya Dixit, FGS Student Advisor for details grad.advisor@ucalgary.ca
Nickle Galleries	Usually no	Please contact Marla Halsted for details and booking requests (403) 210-6201, marla.halsted@ucalgary.ca
Community Hub	Usually no	ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/node/938
Kinesiology gyms, spaces	Usually yes	Please contact Karen Delaney, Facility Booking Coordinator for bookings delaney@ucalgary.ca
That Grad Space	Usually no	https://gsa.ucalgary.ca/services/thatgradspace/

CATERING AND CONFERENCE CENTRES AT UCALGARY

MacEwan Events and Conference Centre - macewancentre.com

UCalgary Conference and Event Management - ucalgary.ca/cem

The conference centers are very resourceful and usually have contacts for any external rental services. You can meet up with their Events Coordinator, discuss your event and your needs, and they will help make your event happen.



TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS IN CALGARY

Within Calgary:

- First Canada Charter (approximately \$209 and up for round trip) - firstcharterbus.com
- Willco Transportation (approximately \$235 and up for round trip) - willcobus.com

Outside of Calgary:

- First Canada Charter (approximately \$1,100 and up for round trip – school bus) - firstcharterbus.com
- Willco Transportation (approximately \$350 and up for round trip – school bus) - willcobus.com
- Brewster Canada (\$1,250 and up for round trip – charter bus with washroom) - brewster.ca
- Universal Coach Lines - universalcoachline.ca

- ▶ Fill out the request form on these websites and a representative shall follow up on your inquiry, or
- ▶ call them up for quicker response.
- ▶ Book earlier in advance (3 to 4 weeks) as the buses tend to get booked up quickly.



EQUIPMENT RENTALS ON CAMPUS

UCalgary's Com Media Services – Main Campus: Visit their website [here](#)

Their services include:

- Classroom equipment booking;
- Conference and event support;
- Technical services; and
- Videoconferencing and Videography.

AV Services - Foothills Hospital Campus: Visit their website [here](#)

Their services include:

- AV equipment and technical support to over 100 classrooms and theatres within the UCalgary Foothills Campus;
- Facilitated video conferencing; and
- Technical Support: Call 403.210.3839 for assistance with the operation of audio visual equipment.