

# **BERLIN SCIENCE WEEK**

## **Host an Event Guide**

**Citywide Programme 2026**

# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	01
<b>Participation Criteria</b>	02
<b>Part I: Shaping Your Event Concept</b>	
Topic	04
Target Audience	05
Objectives	06
Event Formats	07
Interactivity	11
Science Communication Tips	12
<b>Part II: Producing Your Event</b>	
Project Management	14
Financing & Ticketing	15
Venues	16
Accessibility	17
Materials & Equipment	18
Evaluation	19
Advertising	20
Running Your Event	21
After Your Event	22

# Introduction

## What and who this guide is for

### Hosting an event in the Citywide Programme

The Berlin Science Week programme consists of two main programme streams: the Citywide Programme and the Festival Centre Programme. The Citywide Programme is a collection of independently organised, partner-led events across Berlin.

Joining the Citywide Programme is free of charge. You can take part by hosting a science event between 1–10 November and registering it as part of Berlin Science Week. Registered events are included in the official programme, and participating institutions or initiatives are recognised as Programme Partners.

### Designing your event, from start to finish

This guide is designed for anyone interested in hosting an event as part of the Citywide Programme. Whether you are a long-term partner looking to improve or diversify your events, or are organising a public outreach or citywide event for the first time, this guide will help you run a successful event from start to finish.

It covers both the conceptual side of event design – shaping your topic, defining your audience, and setting objectives – and the practical side of delivery, including planning, producing, promoting, and evaluating your event.

# Participation Criteria

## Who can join the Citywide Programme

### Organisations & initiatives that engage with science

Participation in the Citywide Programme is open to organisations and initiatives that engage with science; these include but are not limited to universities, research institutions, cultural venues, embassies, creative agencies, and cultural or community initiatives.

We welcome contributors across disciplines and fields of expertise, including, but not limited to, researchers, science communicators, artists, and performers. To ensure that your event meets our standard for scientific integrity we recommend including a researcher from a relevant scientific field either as a collaborator, advisor, or speaker at the event.

### Our Festival Standards

To be part of the Citywide Programme, events should meet our festival standards: high scientific quality, societal relevance, and an engaging format that offers space for diverse voices. All event registrations that align with our [Guiding Principles](#) and demonstrate feasibility will be considered for inclusion in the official programme.

# Part I

## Shaping Your Event Concept

# Topic

## Choosing an event topic

An engaging topic for a public outreach event is specific, current, societally relevant, relatable and thought-provoking. This requires thinking creatively and beyond the scientific research topic. Ask yourself: Why should people care? Why does this matter now?

### Annual Theme:

Every year, Berlin Science Week sets a festival theme that shapes the year's messaging and programme. The annual theme is designed to help you think of how science shapes our world and experiences in it. The 2026 theme In Touch invites you to consider the personal impact and experience of science. To help you relate your event topic to this year's theme, ask yourself:

- How does this research impact society or the individual?
- How does this research connect people to each other, nature, or the environment?
- How can I genuinely portray the personal endeavour behind science?

When you register your event as part of Berlin Science Week, you will be asked to place your event in one of our seven event tracks. Each event track represents a way science touches our lives. You can find the event tracks [here](#).

### Example

Rather than presenting a broad topic like biodiversity loss, you could focus on the decline of one particular animal or group of animals and how this impacts our lives. A strong topic in this direction could be the decline in insects and its effect on food systems. An fitting event title would be: "What happens to our food if insects disappear? Pollinators, crops and the future of our plates."

### Tip:

Events which explore a complex topic or challenge from multiple angles as an interdisciplinary collaboration are great platforms for interesting discussion. Consider collaborating with other institutions or organisations.

### Optional Support:

Join our free online workshop on 15 June to refine your title, polish your description, and ensure your event is communicated clearly and effectively.

# Target Audience

Defining who your event is for

## Who You're Communicating With

You cannot effectively communicate, if you don't know who you're communicating with. Focusing on one main target audience will help guide your design process, make your event more specific and relatable, and focus your advertising efforts. Audiences can be grouped by factors like age, background, and interests. "The general public" is too broad. Consider:

- Who is most affected by this topic?
- Who is usually left out of public discourse on this topic?
- Which audiences do I have a channel to reach? This could be through a collaboration partner, venue, or your own community.

## The Berlin Science Week Audience

The typical Berlin Science Week audience includes, but is not limited to, young professionals, students, creatives and early-career researchers, who are looking for more than passive entertainment. Our audience is looking for emotionally compelling content, critical conversations, verifiable research, and opportunities to engage directly with experts while contributing their own perspectives.

# Objectives

Defining what you're trying to achieve

## Setting Goals

You can guide your design process by asking yourself, what do I want people to take away from the experience? Setting a goals for your event will also help you understand if you were successful. Possible goals could include:

- Eliciting an emotional response, like awe, curiosity, excitement.
- Raising awareness about an underrepresented topic, perspective or group of people.
- Facilitating dialogue, for example between scientists and the participants, or experts from different fields.
- Engaging new audiences.
- Inspiring new projects and collaborations.

## Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

In some cases, you can measure whether you achieved your goal. These key performance indicators can include number of participants, participant feedback, and participant demographics. Keep this evaluation method in mind when you set your goals. See page 19 for more on evaluation.

# Event Formats

## Designing the audience experience

### Formats to fit your goals

An engaging event isn't created by an interesting topic alone. How your audience experiences the topic matters just as much. Berlin Science Week is a great opportunity to try new, creative, and experimental event formats. We particularly encourage interactive formats, as they allow you to build a relationship with your audience and create memorable experiences.

There are many exciting ways your event can take shape. We recommend designing something custom to your goals. This can include interactive, performative, or experimental elements, or combining aspects of different formats.

#### **Tip:**

Start with your goal, not your format. The most effective events are designed around what you want participants to feel, learn, or do. You can find an extensive list of science communication formats in German at [Wissenschaftskommunikation.de](https://www.wissenschaftskommunikation.de).

#### **Optional Support:**

Book a consultation call with us. We're happy to provide feedback, bounce back ideas, and identify opportunities for you to showcase your work at the festival. Book your call [here](#).

## Emotional Response

If you're looking to elicit an emotional response from your audience, these formats could be for you:

- Performance** Artistic, theatrical, comedic, musical, or movement-based interpretations of a topic that help audiences connect on an emotional level.
- Exhibition** Exhibitions can include artistic, tactile, or interactive elements and allow visitors to explore a topic at their own pace, leaving room for personal reflection and emotional reactions.
- Talk** Talks don't have to be stiff, scientific lectures. Storytelling and personal experiences can create meaning and connection. Think TED-style talks or local storytelling events.

## Raising Awareness

If your goal is to raise awareness about an unrepresented topic, perspective or group of people, you may consider:

- Talk** Talks are excellent for sharing information and communicating new perspectives. They can be supported by hand-outs or resources that participants can take home. To make your talk more memorable and less one-directional, consider adding audience interaction through Q&A sessions, voting, or discussion rounds.
- Panel Discussions** Panel discussions bring together experts or representatives from affected groups to present different perspectives on a topic. Add interactivity by inviting questions from the audience.
- Exhibition** Exhibitions allow you to share information in a visually engaging way. Visitors can absorb new information or perspectives at their own pace and explore the topic at a depth that suits them.

## Engaging New Audiences

New audiences are those who do not typically attend traditional science events. If your goal is to reach them, consider formats that combine multiple interests or activities.

**Workshop** Workshop-style formats are familiar to many people, as they are used across a wide range of interest areas, from theatre to yoga to drawing. They enable guided, hands-on experiences that may involve discussion, co-creation, movement, or reflection, either individually or in groups.

**Quiz** A pub quiz or similar format creates a relaxed, entertaining environment for participants who enjoy friendly competition and social interaction. Keep the atmosphere informal and encourage teamwork, participants should feel like they're having fun, not taking an exam at school.

**Walking Tour** Exploring spaces on foot appeals to people who enjoy discovery and exploration and can help show familiar places through a new lens. Tours can highlight historical sites, reveal details usually overlooked, create connections to one's surroundings, uncover spaces usually unseen by the public, and offer fresh perspectives on everyday environments. They may take place throughout the city, in nature, at research centres, in museums, or at exhibitions.

**Games** Games appeal to audiences who enjoy active, hands-on experiences. They're not just for children. They may be physically or mentally challenging, or both, and can involve individual or team participation. Examples include:

- Simulation games: Participants take on roles and make decisions within a scenario, such as policymakers, scientists, and citizens negotiating climate policy.
- Narrative role-playing games: Participants take on characters and navigate a storyline together.
- Escape or exit games: Participants work in teams to solve puzzles and "escape" within a time limit.
- Scavenger hunts: Participants explore a space to search for clues, solve puzzles, or complete tasks.

**Performance** Artistic, musical, theatrical, comedic, or movement-based performances appeal to audiences who appreciate creative expression and cultural experiences.

## Facilitating Dialogue

If your goal is to facilitate dialogue, you may choose discussion-based formats like:

**World Café** World Cafés enable small-group conversations that mix experts with audience members. Experts sit at different tables with set discussion topics, and participants are invited to join a table of interest. After a set amount of time, participants rotate to new tables. Discussion points can be collected and shared with the larger group afterwards.

**Fishbowl** Fishbowls enable open conversations between experts and participants. An expert and one or more participants have a conversation in the centre of the room, while others listen. After a set period of time, new participants rotate into the conversation.

**Speed Networking** Fast-paced one-on-one conversations that facilitate mixing and initial connections, though usually not deep discussions. Allowing time for informal conversation after speed networking enables participants to follow up on interesting exchanges.

## Inspiring Collaboration

If your goal is to inspire new projects, consider formats which allow participants to mingle, discuss, and co-create:

**Hackathon** These intensive, goal-oriented events bring together people with different skills and expertise to address a shared challenge. They are ideal for generating concrete outcomes, prototypes, or new collaborations.

**Workshop** Guided activities using prompts, group work, or facilitated discussions can help generate ideas and lead to potential new projects.

**Speed Networking** Short one-on-one conversations on a predefined topic can connect individuals with shared interests and spark new collaborations.

# Interactivity

## Making any event format interactive

Interactivity turns an event into an experience. Instead of simply receiving information, participants become part of the conversation. It helps people connect more deeply with the topic, remember what they've learned, and share their own perspectives more confidently. No matter the format, you can make your event more interactive by including a participatory element. Consider adding:

**Audience Voting** Use physical materials like stickers or tokens, or digital tools such as [Mentimeter](#) or [Slido](#). Voting can gather audience opinions, prioritise ideas, spark discussion, or determine a competition winner

**Q&A** Questions from the audience can be asked live or collected in advance using paper or digital tools.

**Group Discussions** Small-group discussions with guided prompts allow multiple voices to be heard in a less intimidating setting for participants who may be hesitant to speak in front of a large audience. Groups can share their discussion outcomes with the wider audience.

**Co-Creation Boards** Physical or digital boards, like [Padlet](#) or [Miroboard](#), where participants can add their thoughts, ideas, or opinions in response to a question or topic.

**Informal Conversation** Offer dedicated time after the formal event for participants to mingle with speakers or experts and continue conversations in a relaxed setting.

### **Tip:**

You can create custom formats or bring in interactive, performative, or experimental elements by combining multiple formats.

## Example

Imagine your topic is how light pollution in cities affects wildlife, and your goal is to spark an emotional response, share research, and open discussion. Your event might begin with a contemporary dance performance from the perspective of an animal affected by light pollution, followed by a short talk presenting key research and possible solutions. To close, participants join small-group discussions to reflect and share their perspectives. By combining artistic, scientific, and participatory elements, you create a richer and more engaging experience.

# Science Communication Tips

Clear, engaging, but not oversimplified

## Avoid Common Pitfalls

Common pitfalls in science communication include the use of overly academic language, too much information, or overly simplified explanations. To adapt the scientific content of your event to your audience, ask yourself:

- What level of knowledge do I expect my audience to already have on the topic?
- How much detail do they need to understand the point I want to make?
- How can I hook my audience?
- Where can I reduce jargon?
- Which well-known examples or relatable experiences can I use to explain the concept?
- Which metaphor could I use?

## Be human

Science communication that is authentic and shows the human side of science connects with audiences and builds trust. With In Touch, we encourage real stories about the scientific process, career journeys, and the everyday life in science.

## Engage, rather than disseminate

The goal of your event should not simply be to inform, but to engage. This means avoid lecturing your audience with information and instead think about moments of reflection and participation. You can dive deeper into public engagement and citizen participation in this [resource](#) from the Museum of Science.

## Practice, feedback, practice

We strongly recommend that speakers and facilitators practice before the event. This may be through in-team practice and feedback sessions, facilitated workshops or one-on-one coaching.

### Tip:

For those looking to improve their public speaking skills, we can recommend coaching by [Dyane Neiman](#).

# **Part II**

## **Producing Your Event**

# Project Management

## Keeping it all on track

### Build a Team

Good project management will keep you and your team on track! Set milestones and establish clear roles and responsibilities from the beginning. A small, reliable core team works best, ideally at least two organisers, supported by additional volunteers on the day of the event. Reach out to your colleagues, friends, or make an open call.

### Production Reality Check

At this stage it's valuable to have a production reality check. Your ideas may be excellent, but they may not be feasible. Reflect on your team's capacity, budget (see Finances on the next page) and experience level to avoid overpromising.

#### **Tip:**

You can use our [milestones checklist](#) and [roles and responsibilities](#) templates to get started.

# Finances & Ticketing

## Funding your event

Citywide events are featured in the Berlin Science Week program free of charge, but they must be independently funded. Event costs can include venue hire, materials, pay for professional working staff – particularly professional freelancers who do not have a second salary – and (optional) thank you gifts for speakers. Here are some ways to cover your event costs:

### Partnerships

If you are affiliated with, or your event is hosted at, an institution or organisation, they may be able to cover event costs. Contact the knowledge transfer, communication or event team to ask about available budget for public outreach events.

### Sponsorships

Institutions, organisations, or companies that work in a similar field to your topic or have a similar target audience, may be interested in sponsoring your event for brand visibility. This could include placing their logo on event advertising or presentation slides, or branded giveaways. Identify and reach out to potential sponsors.

### Paid Tickets

At Berlin Science Week, our mission is to make science accessible, that's why we strongly encourage you to offer your event to participants for free. However, if the financing options above are not available, you may consider paid ticketing for your event. A ticketing system allows you to set capacity limits and track expected attendance. While each citywide event has an event page on the Berlin Science Week website, a ticketing system is not embedded, so you will need to set this up yourself.

#### **Tip:**

Research institutions and some research projects are mandated by their funder to dedicate part of their funding to science communication – your event could be an excellent opportunity for them to fulfil this requirement!

#### **Tip:**

Recommended ticketing platforms include [Eventbrite](#) and [SeeTickets](#), or your event venue may offer its own ticketing system embedded in its website. If you would like to collect information from participants before the event, an online form such as Google Forms is a good option.

# Venue

## Choosing where your event will take place

The Citywide programme is both a chance to open up places of research to the public and take research to new spaces. At Berlin Science Week we're particularly passionate about bringing science into the heart of the city and its cultural and everyday spaces, making it accessible by bringing it to people where they are. When scouting event venues consider:

- Suitability for your format
- Venue capacity
- Appeal for your target audience
- Accessibility for people with different mobility and access needs (see accessibility section on the next page)
- Your budget

## Use Your Connections

The easiest option is to reach out to venues that you already have a connection with. For example, the institution or organisation you work at, the community space you regularly visit, the theatre you took acting classes at, the exhibition space your friend's mum owns or the cafe or bar where you're a regular!

### **Optional Support:**

If you don't already have leads, no problem. We've made a curated list of event venues which previously hosted citywide events. We've even organised discounts at some of them for you if you host your event there as part of the festival – be quick! Find the venue list [here](#).

### **Tip:**

If our list of venues isn't fitting for you, we would recommend searching online on web sites like [Visit Berlin](#), asking in your networks, or simply walking around your local area to see what you can find.

## Online or Hybrid Events

Hosting your event online or hybrid increases the accessibility of your event, allowing those who cannot travel to participate from home. It's also a great opportunity to reach people when they have only a small amount of time free, for example during lunch on a weekday. Increase the interactivity of online events by using breakout rooms, chat functions and online collaboration boards.

# Accessibility

## Designing a welcoming event

### Inclusivity

Inclusivity is one of our values and [guiding principles](#). We aim to remove barriers to participation so that everyone can engage with science in ways that are safe, respectful, and meaningful. This means considering the different access needs of our audience including mobility, support, care, and safety requirements.

### Accessibility

To create an accessible, inclusive event consider:

- Barrier-free venue: step-free access, nursing and baby-changing facilities and all gender bathrooms.
- Accessible design: colour blind-friendly, readable fonts.
- Accessible language: avoid jargon, use multilingual translations where possible.
- Financial accessibility: free or low-income ticket options.
- Making access information visible on your event webpage, including transport information, step-free access, facilities, seating, and sensory conditions.
- Including an access-needs question in sign-up form for workshops to facilitate accommodations.

### Safer Spaces

A safer space means a space in which a person or group of people can feel confident that they will not be exposed to discrimination, harassment, or any other emotional or physical harm. This means thinking ahead about how you will prevent and respond to uncomfortable or harmful situations. Helpful measures include:

- Code of conduct
- Visible awareness officer/team and reporting options
- Awareness protocol – a predesigned process to handle reports of misconduct
- Statement of conduct on the event webpage and stated at the beginning of the event, here is a template statement that you can adapt
- Consent for physical contact
- Trigger warnings

#### **Tip:**

All Berlin Science Week partners are expected to comply with our [Code of Conduct](#). In it, we explain our expectations, reporting routes, and protections.

# Materials and Equipment

The thing you may need on-site

## Materials

Which materials you require depends on the event format. We encourage participatory formats which can be supported by materials like sticky notes, flip charts, paper, pens, voting stickers or crafting materials.

Presentations and talks can be made more tangible and engaging with the use of props, which can include small models or objects to demonstrate scientific concepts, scientific equipment (that is not expensive or fragile) or paper hand-outs.

## Technical Equipment

Technical equipment, including microphones and projector, is usually either set up or available to rent at regular event venues, enquire with the venue team. Alternatively, you can hire technical equipment.

### Tip:

You can hire technical equipment from sites including <https://wemme-events.de/> and <https://www.party.rent/de>.

# Evaluation

## Measuring your success

Defining your goals (see page 6) helps you to not only stay on track whilst planning your event, but also to evaluate your event and improve for future iterations.

To measure how successful you were in reaching your goals, define key performance indicators (KPIs) before the event. These can include quantitative measures like attendance, analysis of audience demographics or audience feedback in the form of surveys, interviews, or embedded data collection during the activity.

### Example

If your goal is to engage immigrant communities in debates on the energy transition in Germany, your key performance indicators could be:

- Number of attendees (target: >30 people)
- Percentage of attendees with self-reported migrant background collected through ticketing form (target: >60%)
- Number of questions from the audience (target: >5)
- Participants answers to the question “Would you consider taking part in more activities around the energy transition?” collected through exit survey (target: >60% yes).

### Partner Feedback

We'll also ask you to share some feedback after the event – it helps us improve the Berlin Science Week programme and support future partners. You will receive a Partner Feedback Form by email after 10 November, which will include both questions about the attendance of your event and your experience as a partner.

# Advertising

## Promoting your event

Even the most exciting event won't have much impact if people don't hear about it. A bit of targeted promotion can go a long way.

As a Citywide Programme Partner, Berlin Science Week will support your visibility through the official programme and provide you with a media kit and optional printed materials. Think of this as your foundation and then build on it with your own channels. While we do our best to offer our partners as much visibility as possible, the rate of success is always higher if you also undertake your own communication measures in parallel.

Rather than trying to be everywhere, focus on where your audience already is:

### Online

Share your event on the platforms your target audience uses (e.g. Instagram, LinkedIn, community groups). Tag collaborators, speakers, and venues and ask them to share as well. If you can, invest a little money in a paid or boosted post – this can offer you a lot of visibility with a clearly defined target group.

### Physical Spaces

Posters and flyers still work, especially in places your audience frequents (cafés, universities, cultural centres, your venue).

### Through Networks

Partner organisations, venues and communities often have newsletters, event listings or social media channels. Reach out to ask for a feature.

### Optional Support:

Book an additional comms packages to boost visibility on our channels, or request branding packs for elevated onsite advertising. To book a comms package, get in touch with our team by scheduling a call [here](#).

# The Day of Your Event

## Running your event

### Arrive Early

This is where everything comes together! On the day of your event, aim to arrive early, around an hour before the start, to give yourself time to set up the space, test any technical equipment and brief your team. Make sure everyone knows their role, from welcoming guests to supporting speakers or facilitating activities.

If you're working with speakers, ask them to arrive at least 30 minutes in advance. A short check-in or even a quick warm-up with your team can help ease nerves and create a positive atmosphere before participants arrive.

### Stay Present

During the event, try to stay present. Even if things don't go exactly to plan, your attitude and energy will shape the experience. Be ready to improvise if necessary and make sure you have a technical assistant who is familiar with the equipment present.

### Document

Documentation can be incredibly useful for future promotion and reflection. If possible, document the event with photos or video, always with participants' consent. Introduce the photographer at the beginning of the event and explain how you intend to use the media. Give participants the option to also opt out.

#### **Tip:**

You can use our [on-site checklist](#) template to get started.

# After Your Event

## Wrapping everything up

### **Celebrate!**

Directly after the event, take a moment with your team to debrief and celebrate what you've just achieved - you've just brought science into the city! Note down some of your own reflections and send out a survey to participants, if you're doing one, whilst it's fresh.

### **Feedback**


At a later date, consider meeting again as a team to share your reflections, evaluate participants' feedback and fill out the Berlin Science Week Partner Feedback Form. Not everything may have gone perfectly, but that's okay. A successful event isn't a flawless one, but one where people felt engaged, welcomed and curious.

### **...and that's it!**

Thank you for helping bring science into the city. Every event contributes to making science more open, engaging, and accessible. We hope to welcome you back next year to continue shaping Berlin Science Week together.

## Berlin Science Week

Falling Walls Foundation gGmbH  
Kochstraße 6/7  
10969 Berlin

 @berlinscienceweek

 Berlin Science Week

[berlinscienceweek.com](http://berlinscienceweek.com)

Hosted by:

**FALLING  
WALLS  
FOUNDATION**

Funded by:

