



**HARRISON PARROTT
FOUNDATION**

TOP TIPS ON HOW TO PLAN A SYMPOSIUM



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How HP Foundation plans a Symposium..

Running a successful symposium involves careful planning, organisation, and effective communication. Here are some tips to help you make it a meaningful and impactful event:

Clear (Read: laser-like) Purpose and Goals:

Clearly define the purpose of the symposium and set specific goals. What do you want to achieve? Whether it's raising awareness, fundraising, or educating attendees, having a clear purpose will guide your planning. Similarly, at this embryonic planning stage, think about the scale of your event and whether you want it to be intimate and collaborate or informative and far-reaching.

Target Audience:

Identify your target audience and tailor the content and format of the symposium to meet their needs and interests. Consider the level of expertise and background knowledge your audience may have.

Diverse Speakers:

Invite a diverse range of speakers who can provide different perspectives and expertise related to your charity's mission. This diversity can enhance the richness of the discussions and appeal to a broader audience.

Engaging Topics and Sessions:

Select topics and sessions that are relevant, timely, and engaging. We prefer to avoid the keynote speaker + panel discussion format in favour of short, punchy presentations and more time for collaborative discussion, however, the keynote + panel discussion format is tried, tested and true, so don't shy away from it on our account!

Logistics and Planning:

Pay attention to logistical details such as venue selection, seating arrangements, audio-visual equipment, and catering. Ensure that everything runs smoothly on the day of the event to create a positive experience for attendees. And, perhaps most importantly, ensure there is excellent coffee and cake! This is an HP Foundation **must have**.

Promotion and Marketing:

Effectively promote the symposium through various channels, including social media, email newsletters, podcasts, video, and partnerships with other organizations. Create compelling content that highlights the value of attending such as what you will learn by attending. To emphasise the importance of the HP Foundation Symposium, we run this as part of a broader Music Access Awareness Week online campaign. This helps create interest and urgency about our chosen topic and is a great way to showcase what we have been doing and our partners' work. Use an online ticket booking system to help you manage attendees and invites such as Eventbrite (these also allow you to



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use their SEO and subscriber networks to reach a wider audience). Promote on event listing platforms relevant to your theme or location, such as This is London. Depending on the size of your event, you may wish to run a PR campaign and get journalists to attend or to feature your event in their publications. Create digital programme booklets so delegates know who is speaking and the topic themes. We also recommend hiring a photographer or videographer to capture the event. This is a great way of sharing on the day activities, and creates additional materials to drum up support for a future event.

Networking Opportunities:

Design the symposium to include networking breaks, Q&A sessions, and possibly a post-event reception. Facilitate connections among attendees, speakers, and sponsors to foster collaboration and support.

Partnership:

Partnerships can provide financial support, in-kind contributions, and broader reach through their networks. For the HP Foundation, we have picked partners based on their expertise and geographical location to ensure that we are presenting events to diverse communities in differing spaces.

Feedback Mechanism:

Collect feedback via a survey from attendees to understand what worked well and where there is room for improvement. Use this feedback to enhance future events and demonstrate your commitment to continuous improvement.

Post-Event Follow-Up:

Follow up with attendees, speakers, and sponsors after the event. Share key takeaways, express gratitude, and provide information about the impact of the symposium and how funds raised will be used. The HP Foundation produce post-Symposium digi-packs that are shared with delegates, collaborators and invites guests who couldn't make it on the day to ensure the message(s) from the day are shared broadly and can be referred back to as a resource.

The key is to create an inclusive and informative environment that inspires action and support for your charity's cause. Good luck!