

Event Planning

I'm going to talk about event planning first as it's logically the first thing one must do. Sometimes planning and creation will be the same step, especially for smaller events. For larger ones, however, it makes sense to support event planning within Fedora Hubs.

Required fields

When planning an event, there will be certain fields that seem relevant no matter what event it is, and these fields will map directly into the same fields in the creation of that event. Before it is possible to create an event from one being planned, therefore, one must have the following pieces of information:

The *name* of the event. The *date* of the event, although *time* would be necessary as one approaches the event (perhaps this should be required within a month or two of a larger event?). Date and time may require certain formats to be useful? The *location* of the event, preferably a *street address*. Street addresses may be complicated, though, as locations vary wildly throughout the world. Perhaps this ought to be a text field that we farm off to a piece of mapping software to verify? The *description* of the event. I'm still not certain that the description should be required, but at the same time if all you have is a name, you may not have anyone new interested in going to it. Finally, we should require some sort of *contact person*, whether this be the event's owner or someone else involved with the event.

Optional Fields

Past those pieces, there are a number of different types of information that may prove useful to an event planner. However, we must always keep in mind the fact that the more options you show, the harder the interface is to use. Therefore, we probably need a way to prioritize these fields by those we expect everyone will want to use, and those that are vital to those people who need them. Most likely, we will want categories of fields that are not always visible, but can be added. This will not be an easy UX problem to solve.

Planning events is *_hard_*. I don't know that we want to be trying to support it right off the bat, even though I expect that if we get it right – big if! – it'd be invaluable for those who create events. There can be a large number of things to keep track of, between the need to submit a bid or proposal for larger events (FLOCK, FUDCON), and identifying one's best choices from the options.

You need to know your *budget* for the event, and *what it will and won't cover*. It helps to know what things have cost *in the past*, and approximate *ratios* of price for the various aspects of the event. For example, for FLOCK, you need to factor in *funding ¼ of the attendees* from each region.

You need to know *when* the event needs to happen, or typically happens. You need to know the *constraints around timing* (other events, availability of students, availability of venues, holidays, etc).

You need to get *swag*, decide *where* to get it, *what kind* you need. Having access to a database of *where people have gone* for things in the past would be amazing. Offering swag often means you need a general idea of *who* will be at your events. For example, if you have t-shirts, you need to keep in mind

that 'one size' t-shirts are usually sized for men and won't fit most women very well. I don't know what sort of problems t-shirts have for people of color, but I would not be surprised if there were some.

You need to decide which *venue* to use, whether one that is all-inclusive and has *hotel rooms*, one you only need for *a short time*, or one that is *separate* from but nearby to a hotel. Venues include information about *cost* of conference rooms and lodging, *how much space* there is in meeting rooms and how many hotel rooms they have available. They can include information on *when* they are available, or when they are cheaper. They can include info about what *tools* they have available, like projectors, printers, WiFi cost and speed (and you will also want to know what they *don't have* and you need to supply). Location of venue will also affect the *travel costs*, how to get to a city, to the venue, between a hotel and conference center. It will affect what *food options* and *evening entertainment* are available, within the venue and nearby. You often need to *store information* that you get from potential venues. And you need *form letters* (requests for proposals, or RFPs) to send to potential venues or the chamber of commerce in an area. You likely need to *negotiate* with the hotel to bring prices down, and will want to keep track of that.

When you start thinking about *transportation*, you need to keep in mind that larger events will likely have people from all over the world. And it's kinder to have multiple types of transportation from the airport to the venue or hotel, so that those who have the longest flights have the easiest transportation to their lodging. You need to figure out what the *visa* requirements are for those who are not residents of your country. This may also include consideration for the *safety* and *comfort* of the people you are hoping to include or invite (in the US right now, this includes people of color; women, trans and non-binary folk; differently-abled folk; and anyone who is unable or unwilling to hide how they are different from the so-called 'norm'. If you want diversity, you need to think about this).

Event planning should support *submitting a bid or proposal or ticket for budget reasons*. This may mean that we need an interface with *wiki pages*, *ambassadors ticketing systems*, and budget *spreadsheets*. Wiki pages, and non-wiki-based events, will need information on who is *organizing* the event, how much and what kinds of *help* you need and where to get it (people you know? People who are nearby?), who wants to *help before or during the event*, and possibly who within Fedora *intends to show up* (this last bit may be handled elsewhere in Hubs so may not be as relevant). You need to decide what *city* to use, explain *why* that city (pros and cons), and include photos and a description of why it's a good place to have it. For some events, you need to keep track of the intent/purpose or theme or topic of an event (whether for requesting money for a *Fedora Activity Day* or to make *proposing topics for talks and presentations* possible). You may also need *primary and secondary goals*, *Q&A*, *impact on the community*, and *specific things you plan to do*.

You probably have *images and photos* that you want to include in your event, whether to help *promote* it or to increase chances of being accepted. You also want to promote it (some use Facebook, Twitter, Eventbrite, email, IRC, Telegram, google plus, fliers and banners at universities when that's where an event is...).

You may want to include people who can't be there in your event, especially for a Fedora Activity Day, so you will want some sort of *remote access* and maybe *recording* of the event.

I know that some events will have people *proposing topics* for talks/workshops/presentations/etc; does this need to be supported in planning, or after event creation? Should we also allow people to *suggest events* and *topics*?

For larger events, there will likely be more than one person organizing. So you may need a way to *keep track* of what has been done, what is being worked on/status, and what needs doing. And this list must be *adjustable* because plans *_always_* change as you go deeper into a task.

We may want to allow people to add their own fields, but at the same time this could get unwieldy very fast. Allowing people to add any field they want means that we have difficulties with typos and capital letter variation and synonyms, so that needs closer scrutiny.

Create Events

When you create an event, it will become available to others to see and potentially say they want to attend. As a result, as stated in the previous section, it must include the *name*, *date* (and *time*, but not necessarily immediately), *location* (*street address*), *description*, and *contact person*.

If an event doesn't already have an event from an event planning activity within Hubs, we may want to *offer suggestions for event names*. I'm not sure yet what this should draw upon to do so, although perhaps it could be as simple as the name of the hub organizing it to start. That is information we will have access to, and might be better than nothing when someone has trouble naming things.

Date/time, as briefly stated in the previous section, may need specific *format/selection tool* to be usable by Hubs internally.

Locations are hard. As mentioned in the previous sections, we may want to allow for a free-form text field which we farm out to another location-specific tool (google maps?) to parse.

Description should be a free form field, I think.

Contact person should include a name, link to their profile, photo, and some sort of contact info. This may simply be Hubs messaging/IRC.

I suspect that many of the fields that exist within the planning stage should be passed through to the event creation stage. However, I also suspect that we need to take a closer look at each aspect to decide which pieces are relevant in a quick snapshot look, which belong on an event page, and which shouldn't be shown at all (much of planning doesn't need to be shown).

I do think that we need to prominently display any *remote access information*, both how to do it and where to go. We also need to make it clear where we *need help/volunteers*, so that we can tie it into event notification. This will need a lot more clarification, though: what does a help request need to include? How specific? General numbers are often easier than specific, and delving into topics often means that they are more complex than expected, especially if you've not done it before. Maybe we need to offer event creators a general idea of *what sorts of help people have asked for in the past and why*, so they can draw upon others' experience?

We definitely want to supply any available information on *how to get to* a place and any *hotel information* that is needed. We probably also want some way to show people *who else is going*, as that can often encourage attendance if you know people or there will be a lot of people there. Events probably need *images*, where possible. Again, this will likely draw people in.

Link to *wiki pages*. Since we are unlikely to be getting away from wikis anytime soon, make it easy to find them. *Link to tickets* for events, where applicable, only visible to ambassadors?

After Events

We probably want a way to figure out *who actually went*. This may be a complex problem, however.

Provide a *recording* of the event, a *blog post/event report*, *photos*, *how-to* where relevant.

Help ambassadors make *event reports*? Perhaps by *importing social media* posts about it?

For ambassadors, links to/interface for *submitting reimbursement requests*?