

The official John Quincy Adams Society guide to making your event awesome

Always use this guide when planning events. That's any chapter activity that the broader campus might be interested in, so things like speakers, documentary showings, tours, etc. Work in coordination with the national office; don't hesitate to reach out with questions. National exists to help you succeed.

First, some key principles:

- **Responsibility:** The chapter president is ultimately responsible for the success of the event. This entails making sure that everyone is playing their part, and making sure that things that need to happen, happen. If you delegate a task to someone, make sure they do it; if they don't do it, do it or find someone who will. Don't leave checking in to the last minute.
- **Delegation:** Involve the chapter in the event's success and divide up the work.
- **Follow-up:** Confirm things. Remind people.
- **Outreach:** Your campus should be aware of your event; people who might be interested should be made aware, and they should be reached through multiple channels. What does success look like? After the event, nobody will be able to say "I would have attended if I had known about the event."

Always do:

1. **Reserve the room as soon as possible.** Get a room that's a bit smaller than the number of people you expect will be in attendance.
2. **Exchange contact information with the speaker as soon as possible.** You'll want to be able to reach each other by email and by cell phone. Find out if the speaker needs audiovisual equipment, such as for a slideshow, and make sure the room has it, that it works, and that you know how to use it.
3. **Alert potential partners on campus as soon as the event is confirmed.** Professors, relevant classes, relevant departments, relevant clubs. Even if they didn't help you last time. Make it easy for them to help you – provide a line or two they can just copy and paste to send around; offer to give them fliers or make a two minute announcement at their meetings/class. Professors may be willing to offer students in their classes extra credit for attending.
4. **Announce the event on relevant channels** via a Facebook event, postings on OrgSync or relevant listservs, fliers on campus (we can reimburse – talk to National), tabling, chalking (if allowed – double check your university's policies). If the school has an official event calendar, get on it. Make sure to target buildings with relevant classes (like international relations, political science, or history) for physical outreach activities like fliers. Tell your friends, too.

5. **Email your list. More than once!** Send the announcement as soon as you've confirmed the event, and send a reminder email **a week before** and **the day of**.
6. About a week before the event, send the speaker a quick note saying that you're looking forward to their event. Make sure to mention the date, time, and location again, and make sure to ask if they need anything.
7. Make plans for food and for serving the food (such as plates, napkins, etc). Make sure to follow your university's policies. **Make sure to mention there will be food in promoting the event!**
8. **Trigger a notification a few hours before the event on the event page and on your group page.**
9. **Text people a reminder if you've got their number.** This is why our official signup sheets include a slot for phone number.
10. **Leaders should dress presentably** for the event. You want to convey that you run a serious group. You can't go wrong with a suit and tie (although if your speaker is in something less formal, adjust your outfit accordingly if you get the chance); you can also pay attention to what people on stage at department-sponsored events on your campus wear.
11. **Arrive early. Know where you'll meet your speaker.**
12. **Thank the audience for attending, and introduce your group and your speaker.** Ask the speaker to provide a short bio for you to read.
13. **Pass around an official chapter signup sheet.** Everyone at the event has shown they're interested in your group.
14. Take a **photo** at the event, including the speaker and the crowd, and send it to National.
15. **After the event, applaud and thank the speaker.** Ask them if they need anything before they go (such as directions to their hotel or a restaurant tip).
16. The next day, **send the speaker a brief thank you email.** Let National know how the event went. Send any receipts you need reimbursed and any new contacts for the national newsletter. Also thank the new contacts and add them to your list.

Optional:

Press release – contact National for template and help, then distribute to campus press, including not just the general contact/editor but also reporters who cover things like your event. You can do multiple press releases for the event: once it's finalized, in the days before (using the same release), and afterwards (updating with, say, quotes from the speaker's remarks). Send any reporters who write a story a note thanking them for the coverage.

Dinner with the speaker – We like to make this happen when possible. Figure out details with National regarding payment and attendees. National will not reimburse for alcohol. The opportunity to attend should be extended first to the chapter's top officers. More than one person should attend.