POV
Community Engagement & Education
STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE
To Organizing A POV Screening

www.pbs.org/pov
Table of contents

2  Planning An Event
3  Before Your Event
10  During Your Event
11  After Your Event
12  Media Contact Form
14  Tips For Facilitators

Planning An Event

POV films showcase documentary film as an art form and can also be used to present information, get people interested in taking action on an issue, provide opportunities for people from different groups or perspectives to exchange views and create space for reflection. Refer to the event planning tips below to help you create a high-quality, high-impact event.
BEFORE YOUR EVENT

Step 1: Determine your objectives.

POV’s community engagement screenings can be tailored to your organization’s specific goals.

Ask yourself:

Have I defined my goals?

Set realistic objectives with your partners by thinking about some basic questions: What do you want to happen as a result of your event? Who is your target audience? Keep in mind that some goals are easier to accomplish than others. For example, adding to a person’s knowledge base is easier than changing his or her beliefs and behaviors. Being clear about your objectives will make it easier to decide how to structure the event (whether as a single meeting or an ongoing project, for example), target publicity and evaluate results.

Does the way I am planning to structure the event fit my objectives?

Do you need an outside facilitator, translator or sign language interpreter? If your objective is to share information, are there local experts on the topic who should be present? How large an audience do you want? (Large groups are appropriate for information exchanges, while small groups allow for more intensive dialogue.)

Have I arranged to involve all stakeholders?

Think about contacting other community organizations, public officials or experts who might be good speakers. If your group is planning to take action that will affect people other than those present, it is especially important to give voice to those not in the room and ensure that people are allowed to speak for themselves. Ask stakeholders to identify their objectives and determine to what extent they can be involved.

Possible event goals include:

- encouraging dialogue around important issues that affect your community
- raising awareness of important world issues
- forming new organizational alliances
- making new contacts with the media and becoming a resource to be consulted
- recruiting new members through increased visibility
- enhancing your educational curriculum for students, staff and/or volunteers
- studying the art of documentary

Step 2: Decide on a date, time and location.

Start planning your event at least one month in advance of the scheduled screening to ensure timely delivery of the film and other appropriate materials.

Your location should

- be reserved for the duration of the film, if not longer
- be large enough to accommodate all attendees
- have proper A/V equipment

Please note that goals may not include specific calls to action around legislation unless both sides are represented.
Step 3: Sign up to host an event.

- **Register** with the POV Community Network.
  www.pbs.org/pov/outreach/amdoc/events/register.php
- **Activate your account:** Check your inbox for an activation link and temporary password. Email events@pov.org if you do not receive this within 48 hours.
- **Request:** Log-in to your account and click Create an Event.

Let us know if you change any of your plans by contacting us at events@pov.org

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Ask Yourself:

**If the group is large, are there plans to break into smaller groups? Or should attendance be limited?**

**Is the event being held in a space where all participants will feel comfortable?**

Is the space wheelchair accessible? Is it in a part of town that’s easy to reach by various kinds of transportation? If you are bringing together different constituencies, is the space in neutral territory? Does the physical configuration allow for the kind of discussion you hope to have?

**Will the way that the room is set up help you meet your goals?**

Is the room comfortable? Will everyone be able to see the screen easily and hear the film? If you intend to have a discussion, will people be able to see one another? Are there spaces appropriate for small breakout groups?

**Have I scheduled time to plan for action?**

Planning next steps can help people leave the room feeling energized and optimistic, even if the discussion has been difficult. Action steps are especially important for people who already have a good deal of experience talking about the issues on the table. For those who are new to the issues, just engaging in public discussion serves as an action step.
Step 4:
Receive your screening package from POV.

Check your mailbox and your inbox!

MAILBOX:
What is mailed to you?

- A DVD screening copy of the film
  - If you have not received the film you requested one week prior to your event, notify us at events@pov.org.

- Audience Evaluations
  - These are not mandatory, but collecting audience feedback is an important part of the work we do and helps us gauge the community's needs. All personal information is strictly confidential, and we will quote audience members only if they authorize us to do so.

- POV Season Flyers
  - Feel free to use these for promotional purposes for your screenings.

Tips:
We strongly advise you to watch the film on the equipment you will be using on the day of your event.

If you have any problems with the copy of the film you are sent, email us at events@pov.org and we will work with you to resolve the issue.

INBOX:
What is available online?

- Each POV film has its own online partner toolkit that includes:
  - Discussion Guide
  - Lesson Plan
  - Reading List
Step 5: Choose a facilitator, moderator and/or speakers.

- It is best to choose people who are familiar with the issues and can create a friendly environment for open discussion and generate meaningful dialogue about the issues raised by the film.
- If you need to find someone else to facilitate, university professors, human resource professionals, clergy and youth leaders may be specially trained in facilitation. In addition to these local resources, groups such as the National Conference for Community and Justice and the National Association for Community Mediation may be able to provide or help you locate skilled facilitators.
- If you need to find someone else to moderate, consider a local journalist, for example someone from The Alliance of Women Film Journalists.

Tips:
To help your facilitators or moderators, we have free downloadable discussion guides available in our partner toolkits for all of our films at www.pbs.org/pov.

Email or send your facilitators the Tips for Facilitators (page 9).
Step 6: Promote Your Event.

Create Promotional Materials

You can design your own event flyer, or use a template provided by POV. All templates can be found in the films’ partner toolkits.

Please note that all print materials, invitations and web listings must include the following:

- The **POV logo** ([www.pbs.org/pov/pressroom](http://www.pbs.org/pov/pressroom)) or the phrase “This event is a collaboration with POV, the award-winning independent nonfiction film series on PBS. ([www.pbs.org/pov](http://www.pbs.org/pov))”
- The local and national broadcast dates of the program being screened (if it is a pre-broadcast screening)
- The filmmakers’ names
- The official film synopsis and/or images (if you choose to include), found on the film page at [www.pbs.org/pov](http://www.pbs.org/pov)
POV Logos

Contact the Media

- **Send us a completed Media Contact Form** (page 12) and your press release.
  - Our communications department must approve your contacts to ensure there is no overlap between our outreach efforts and yours.
  - Please note that all materials must include the POV logo or the phrase: “This event is a collaboration with POV, the award-winning independent nonfiction film series on PBS. (www.pbs.org/pov)”

- **Prepare press kits for distribution** on the night of your event.
  - Mail press kits to media contacts who cannot attend.
  - Each kit should include:
    - a press release (you can adapt the POV version available in our online Pressroom: www.pbs.org/pov/pressroom/)
    - a flyer adapted to your event (see Partner Toolkit for sample)
    - general information about your organization

- **Ask reporters to attend your event or review the film.**
  - Pitch the value of this unique screening and the importance of encouraging dialogue around contemporary social issues.
  - If reporters cannot attend and would like to obtain copies of the program for review, they should contact POV’s communications department at (212) 989-8121 x312.
  - If local broadcast information (day and time) is available, encourage reporters to include it in their stories so others can tune into the program.
Contact Your Local Public Television Station

We encourage our screening partners to connect with their local PBS stations around promotional efforts. Please email events@pov.org so we can put you in touch with the appropriate contact.

Use Social Media

Look into what social media platforms are being used by your target audience (Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr) and engage with them before and after your event.

How will POV promote your event?

Local Events Map

When you input your screening information into the Community Network, your event will appear on our local events map, which can be accessed on the highly-trafficked POV website (pbs.org/pov).

Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, Blog

We will use our various social media platforms to promote your screening. Be sure to follow us on Twitter @POVengage and like us on Facebook so we can share promotional efforts.
**DURING YOUR EVENT**

**Step 7: Execute your event.**

- Visit and confirm facilities.
- Make sure all A/V equipment is working properly.
- Go over discussion points with your facilitator.
- Take photos during your event—send us copies!
- Pass out audience evaluation forms.
- Announce the local broadcast date (if applicable).
- Share DVD purchase information (if applicable).

**Tips:**

If you are expecting a large audience, plan to break participants into groups for discussion following the screening of the film.

Reserve the last half-hour of your event to strategize about follow-up activities.

If you have a newsletter or listserv, pass around an email sign-up sheet at the event.

Do a head count. This can be helpful information to have when you are reporting on your event.

We encourage our partners to share their screening experiences on the POV blog. This can be a great way to promote your organization. Email events@pov.org with your photos and suggested blog post.
AFTER YOUR EVENT

Step 8: Wrap Up.

• Mail the film and completed audience evaluations to:
  POV, Attn: Community Engagement,
  20 Jay St., Suite 940,
  Brooklyn, NY 11201.

• Log back into the Community Network and fill out your event coordinator evaluation (click on Edit Evaluation) at www.pbs.org/pov/outreach/amdoc/events/.

Collecting feedback is a great way to measure the impact of your event. It can be helpful to have concrete data when you are looking for funding for future programs. Feel free to use the data collected in the POV audience evaluations for your own purposes.
**Media Contact Form**

Before you alert local print, radio and television outlets about your local event, please submit this list. Email your list to events@pov.org and we will respond within 48 hours. This is to ensure that we do not duplicate promotional efforts.

*TO:* Eliza Licht

*EMAIL:* events@pov.org

*FAX:* (212) 989-8230

*PHONE:* (212) 989-8121 x 318

**Event Information:**

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<th>DATE:</th>
<th>TIME:</th>
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<td>FILM(S):</td>
<td>ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:</td>
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**Print, TV, and radio outlets I would like to contact:**

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<th>Outlet name</th>
<th>Reporter/producer name and title</th>
<th>Phone or email</th>
<th>Pitching strategy/angle</th>
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Partner Agreement

Please acknowledge the following:

- Screening and discussion events are intended for education and awareness. POV films are not to be used in advocacy campaigns or calls to action around legislation, unless both sides are represented.

- You will notify us as soon as possible with the date(s), time(s) and description of your event. With your permission we can announce your event on our website and/or newsletter and/or notify press with whom we are already in contact.

- Screening events must be free (if you are showing the film as part of a conference or class, you cannot charge an additional entrance fee for the film).

- All print materials, invitations and web listings must list the local and national broadcast dates of the program being screened (if it is a pre-broadcast screening), the filmmakers’ names and the POV logo. They must also list POV as a partner, using the following language: “This event is a collaboration with POV, the award-winning independent nonfiction film series on PBS. (www.pbs.org/pov)”

- Press releases must use the language we provide to describe the POV films.

- All print materials must be approved by POV before they are distributed to the public.

- A Media Contact Form must be filled out and approved by the POV communications department if you plan to alert local press.

- You will complete and submit an online evaluation form for each film you present.

- You are responsible for returning the DVDs and audience evaluation forms to POV within one week after your event(s).

- If you are canceling your event, you will notify POV as soon as possible.
Controversial topics often make for excellent discussions. But by their very nature, those same topics can also give rise to deep emotions and the expression of strongly held beliefs. As a facilitator, you can create an atmosphere in which people feel safe, encouraged and respected, making it more likely that they will be willing to share their ideas openly and honestly. Here’s how:

**Prepare Yourself:**

**Identify your own hot-button issues.**
View the film before the event and give yourself time to reflect so you aren’t dealing with raw emotions at the same time that you are trying to facilitate a discussion.

**Be knowledgeable.**
You don’t need to be an expert on the issues, but knowing the basics can help you keep a discussion on track and gently correct misstatements of fact. Download the discussion guides for the film and review the Background Information section; you may want to take a look at the websites and articles suggested in the Resources section, too.

**Be clear about your role.**
You may find yourself taking on several roles for a single event, including host, organizer—even projectionist. If you are also planning to serve as facilitator, be sure that you can focus on that responsibility and avoid distractions during the discussion. Keep in mind that being a facilitator is...
not the same as being a teacher. A teacher’s job is to convey specific information. In contrast, a facilitator remains neutral, helping to move the discussion along without imposing his or her views on the dialogue.

Know your group.

Issues can play out very differently with different groups of people. Is your group new to the issue or have the members of the group dealt with it before? Factors like geography, age, race, religion and socioeconomic class all can have an impact on comfort levels, speaking styles and prior knowledge. Take care not to assume that all members of a particular group share the same point-of-view.

Prepare the Group:

Consider how well group members know one another.

If you are bringing together people who have never met, you may want to devote some time to introductions at the beginning of the event.

Agree to ground rules regarding language.

Involve the group in establishing some basic rules to ensure respect and aid clarity. Typically, such rules include prohibiting yelling and the use of slurs, as well as asking participants to speak in the first person (“I think . . .”) rather than generalizing for others (“Everyone knows that . . .”).

Try to give everyone an opportunity to be heard.

Be clear about how people will take turns or indicate that they want to speak. Plan a strategy for preventing one or two people from dominating the discussion.

Talk about the difference between dialogue and debate.

In a debate, participants try to convince others that they are right. In a dialogue, participants try to understand one another and expand their thinking by sharing viewpoints and listening actively. Remind people that they are engaging in a dialogue. This will be especially important in preventing a discussion from dissolving into a repetitive, rhetorical, political or religious debate.

Encourage active listening.

Ask the group to think of the event as being about listening as well as discussing. Participants can be encouraged to listen for things that challenge as well as reinforce their own ideas. You may also consider asking people to practice formal “active listening,” in which participants listen without interrupting the speaker, then rephrase what was said to make sure they have heard it correctly.

Remind participants that everyone sees through the lens of his or her own experience.

Who we are influences how we interpret what we see. Everyone in the group may have a different view about the content and meaning of the film they have just seen, and each of them may be accurate. It can help people understand one another’s perspectives if, in addition to sharing their views, speakers identify the evidence on which they base their opinions.

Take care of yourself and group members.

If the intensity level rises, pause to let everyone take a deep breath. You might also consider providing a safe space for participants to “vent,” perhaps with a partner or in a small group of familiar faces. If you anticipate that your topic may upset people, be prepared to refer them to local support agencies or have local professionals present. Think carefully about what you ask people to share publicly, and explain things like confidentiality and whether or not press will be present.
Let’s Recap:

✔ Test your DVD:
   Please be sure to pre-screen the film to make sure it works properly with your equipment.

✔ Promotional Materials and Press:
   If you create any promotional materials for the event, we would love to see them before you send them out. You can email them to us at events@pov.org. If you plan to contact any press about your screening, please email us a Media Contact Form (page 12).

✔ Changes to Date/Time:
   We’ll also help promote your event on POV’s Facebook page, Twitter, blog and Local Events Map. Therefore, please let us know as soon as possible if your screening date/time changes for any reason.

✔ Free Resources:
   Download the film’s Discussion Guide, Lesson Plan and other resources for your screening from the Partner Toolkit at

✔ Audience Evaluations:
   In your screening package you’ll find materials for your use, including audience evaluations form. These are not mandatory, but collecting audience feedback is an important part of the work we do and helps us gauge the community’s needs. All personal information is strictly confidential, and we will quote audience members only if they authorize us to do so.

✔ After your screening:
   Return the DVD to us and fill out your personal event organizer online evaluation form at: www.pbs.org/pov/outreach/amdoc/events/