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Headline Partner



## EVENT ORGANISER HANDBOOK

PLANNING PROCESS PROMOTION PRESENTING

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION ON HOW TO HOST AN AMAZING EVENT  
WITHIN LEICESTER BUSINESS FESTIVAL



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# Event Organisers Handbook

## Leicester Business Festival

### LBF 2020

## About

### What is the Leicester Business Festival (LBF)?

The LBF is an annual, two-week Festival incorporating over 100 of free business events which are physical (with social distancing in place if require), digital or a hybrid of the two. These events take place throughout the Leicester and Leicestershire region.

Events of all descriptions are staged by local businesses to benefit the people and businesses in the region; help business and economic growth; challenge and stimulate; and to draw attention to region.

**The dates for 2020 are Monday 2nd to Friday 13th November.**

### How can I get involved?

Any business or organisation can apply to host an event. Business Festival events are all put on by local businesses to benefit the people and businesses in Leicester and Leicestershire, and therefore help business growth, ultimately having a positive impact on the region's economy.

Other ways to get involved include:

- Partnership/sponsorship
- Becoming a venue host
- Promoting the festival
- Attending events

Please contact [hello@leicesterbusinessfestival.com](mailto:hello@leicesterbusinessfestival.com) to discuss any of the above ways to get involved.

## Planning

### Events

#### What type of event can I put on?

Your event can take any shape or form, from a seminar, webinar, roadshow, workshop, through to a trade show, exhibition or major conference.

In 2019, subject matters ranged from GDPR, business finance, sales, marketing and social media, property, land and investment, exporting, recruitment and skills development.

#### Event Criteria

The Leicester Business Festival's key objectives are to:

- Drive inward investment and economic growth
- Support and engage the business community
- To act as the region's economic showcase

All events put on as part of the festival should contribute to the above objectives in some way. Therefore, we are looking for events that will:

- Benefit the local business community (by enabling them to interact, engage, promote, share best practice, learn new skills and / or network)
- Showcase what Leicester and Leicestershire has to offer, demonstrating to the wider world the prominence within the region
- Strengthen ongoing partnerships or develop new collaborations between research and academic institutions, local authorities and businesses
- Help to increase employability and grow talent within the region, raise aspirations, cultivate future stars and show opportunities and progression
- Drive business engagement and cross-sector collaboration
- Have potential to attract interest from businesses/individuals from outside of the region, to cultivate a range of local, national and international links
- Focus on wider issues or controversial topics (for example new technologies, innovation, economic issues or address challenges facing the local or national economy)

### Other Conditions:

- Organisers will need to agree to the LBF Terms & Conditions
- Business Festival events may not be used purely as a self-promotional platform. (Although hosting an event will provide a natural showcase and further incremental business opportunities).
- Events should be free to attend where possible. Tickets will be distributed on a first come first served basis.
- Events should be inclusive and accessible to all

### Sectors

Each event will be slotted into one of the following 10 sectors (some may fit into more than one):

- Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering
- Business Support
- Communications, Marketing & Creative Industries
- Education & Skills
- Professional Services
- Property & Construction
- Retail, Tourism & Hospitality
- Science & Technology
- Transport & Logistics

### How long should it be?

Your event can take any length of time from 1 hour to a full day.

### How many people should attend?

With a physical or hybrid event, you can open up your event to as many or as few people as required within limitations of your chosen venue, as well as any social distancing requirements.

With a digital event, the number is endless, as you are not tied down by any space restrictions. Please bare this in mind when submitting the number of tickets to be put 'on sale' on your application form.

We recommend being **realistic** on the number of attendees expected. This is a busy fortnight with over 100 events, so there may be similar events taking place over the fortnight which might compete with yours (a good promotional strategy will also help!).

*Top tip!* As events are free, it is natural to expect a number of 'no shows' on the day.

To help alleviate this, we recommend 'overbooking' by 20-30 per cent. So for example, if you are expecting 30 attendees, you may wish to open up to 38 or 40 bookable spaces to allow for drop outs. Please indicate this on your initial booking form.

## Do I have to pay to put on an event?

There is no application fee to put on an event as part of the festival, however other charges **may** apply including:

Venue Hire (although many LBF venue partners are offering venue space for free or at a heavily discounted rate - see the LBF website for details)

AV equipment

Refreshments/Catering

Promotional and marketing materials

Advertising

Speaker Fees

Any administration costs such as delegate badges

*Please note all of the above inclusions are completely on an individual basis as required/agreed with your chosen venue/event and are not a requirement of the festival.*

## Is there any sponsorship available?

The LBF cannot offer any individual sponsorship for you to host your event, however you are welcome to obtain your own event sponsorship if necessary.

## Can I charge for my event?

Events should be free to attend where possible. If you wish to charge a fee this must be agreed by the festival organisers at the time of application, stating why a fee is necessary.

## Featured Events

The festival organisers may wish to list your event as a 'featured' event. Featured events are selected from each sector for their innovation, relevance and impact on the region and are chosen by the LBF Board.

## Can I cancel my event

Once the event has been approved into the Business Festival, it cannot be cancelled unless there is a viable reason and the cancellation has been agreed to in advance by the Business Festival event management company (Associate Events). Cancellations of events reflects poorly on your business as well as being detrimental to the overall Business Festival.

## Venues

### Where do I hold my event?

We have a number of venue partners who have kindly agreed to offer their venue space either 'free of charge' or at heavily discounted rates. A list of these venues can be found on our 'Venues' page [www.leicesterbusinessfestival/venues](http://www.leicesterbusinessfestival/venues)

**Each event organiser is responsible for sourcing and booking their own event venue.**

Please contact the venue directly to check availability. The Festival Organisers are not responsible for finding your venue however are happy to help with any recommendations. Please say you are booking as part of LBF to obtain these reduced rates when you make your enquiry.

Any contracts or T & Cs should be agreed directly with the venue. Please note that some venues may charge for room hire, AV equipment or refreshments.

If you wish to use a venue that is not listed on the venue partners page, that is also absolutely fine.

### **Covid 19**

Please bear in mind when contacting venues to ask necessary questions to ensure the safety of you and your guests. For example, what are their Covid-19 guidelines, do they have markings/social distancing requirements in place for guests when they arrive/are in the building? Are there sanitisation requirements on arrival and exit? Are there points where the venue offers sanitisation? Will guests be required to wear face masks in the building and throughout the event? Each venue may have different approaches and it's good to know what the expectations are for this before confirming your venue.

Any contracts or T & Cs should be agreed directly with the venue. Please note that some venues may charge for room hire, AV equipment or refreshments.

If you wish to use a venue that is not listed on the venue partners page, that is also absolutely fine.

### ***Venue Top Tips! Things to think about when choosing your venue and planning your event:***

**Venue type** - hotel, business meeting space, venue - is this a suitable venue to host your event? Is there enough space /capacity for the number of people you are wanting to attend, also taking into consideration any social distancing restrictions should they apply during the time of the festival.

**Location** - Is it accessible? Easy to find? Please ensure you provide the sat nav post code if different to the main post code

**Parking** - does the venue have ample parking for your attendees?

**Does it have the facilities required to make your event work?** Go and visit your venue so you can familiarise yourself with the area, facilities and walk

through your event

**Capacity** - check carefully that the venue you have chosen meets with your expectations and can accommodate the number of attendees you have submitted on your form. Please also take into consideration any social distancing requirements that may need to be in place during your event - you may need to reduce the number of attendees to accommodate this.

**Layout** - what is the format of your event and how will the layout work best? If you are doing a hybrid event, are you having multiple locations for cameras etc, where will the audience be seated and where will you be streaming your event?

Do you require any staging, a lectern or a top table?

**Subsistence** - do you need to offer refreshments? Where and how will this be served? Will your venue permit these and in what format, due to Covid-19 restrictions? Will your venue offer table service instead of guests being able to help themselves?

**Audio Visual** - What equipment do you require? Screen, projector flipchart, PA system? There may be additional costs for these items, be sure to check with your venue if they are included

**Do you need a registration desk?** It would be advisable to ask attendees to sign in on arrival, can this be done electronically with social distancing in place, instead of asking guests to hold a pen that other people will also be picking up? Check where this will be located and how it will be managed if multiple people arrive at the same time, will they have to wait outside or queue 2 metres apart to sign in?

**Does the venue have Wi-Fi?** Is this free of charge? How do attendees log in? Obtain this information in advance so you can inform attendees on the day

**Health & Safety** - Check with the venue where fire exits are located, muster points and any planned fire alarms. Also, the venue's Covid-19 social distancing requirements/use of masks/sanitisation. It is a good idea to announce these before the event starts.

**Accessibility** - check out the accessibility e.g. disabled access, lifts, hearing loops etc

**Branding** - you will be offered the use of BCBF promotional banners to use at your venue if you are holding a physical event. It is worth just mentioning this in advance to the venue to ensure they are happy for you to display these, especially in public areas. These will also need to be cleaned down with a disinfectant wipe before returning them.

## Zoom

### If I am holding a digital/hybrid event, how will this work?

All event hosts holding a digital/hybrid event will have to use the LBF's digital platform of Zoom. Each host will be given a temporary LBF license that enables them to present their event as an alternative host.

- Approximately four weeks to the festival you will receive the link to the toolkit which will give you a step by step guide on how Zoom will work for event hosts. With this email you will also receive the log in details to access Zoom and a link to book your TEST with the one of the LBF team to run through all of the features for Zoom and to ask any questions. This TEST will take place approximately two weeks before the festival commences. This is to ensure you feel confident and comfortable using the Zoom platform.
- Your log in details for Zoom can only be used during the TEST and your online/hybrid event. We please ask that you do not log in during any other times, as this may affect other event host's TEST's or events.
- During the TEST we will run through all of the available features of Zoom, such as backdrops, muting etc.

### How do my attendees receive the log in link to access my online/hybrid event?

- We shall set up the Zoom details for your event and add the link to your digital/hybrid event onto your event page on our ticketing website, ticketleap. This will show on the post registration message attendees receive once they have registered and also on the confirmation email in the location section that gets sent to their email address on completion.



## Process

### Event Application Process

#### What is the application process?

There is a quick form you need to fill out to host an event during the festival, this can be found here: [www.leicesterbusinessfestival.com/apply](http://www.leicesterbusinessfestival.com/apply).

Before you submit your application, you will need to:

- 1. Decide on your subject matter, subject and title.** Make sure your event is interesting and attractive to your audience. It can take any shape (see criteria).  
*Top tip!* Think, 'Would I attend this event? Does it sound interesting / exciting / appealing?'
- 2. Audience** - have a clear strategy about who your target audience is (this might include a specific sector e.g. tourism businesses or particular level of employee or manager for example. *Top tip!* Consider why they would go and what they might get out of the event.
- 3. Decide on a date, time and duration of the event**  
*Top tip!* Make sure the event does not go on longer than necessary; consider when would be the best time e.g. after work, early morning. Also, do some background research to check that nothing else e.g. big industry events, are happening at the same time. If you are holding a digital/ hybrid event, you may want to shorten the length to keep you audience interacted and engaged.
- 4. Find and book a venue** (NOTE: We advise not confirming your venue until your application has been accepted and confirmed. Most venues will happily keep your preferred date on hold until this time) See the venues section for further assistance.
- 5. Speakers** Contact your intended presenters to check their availability and hold the date in their diary.
- 6. Submit your application!** [www.leicesterbusinessfestival.com/apply](http://www.leicesterbusinessfestival.com/apply)

#### What happens once I have submitted my expression of interest?

Once you have submitted your application it will start being processed and we will endeavour to get back to you within 14 days. You may be asked to supply more information.

Once all confirmed, your event will be listed on the LBF website ticketing system 'Ticketleap' and we shall send you your event URL to check before we make tickets live and available for people to book. Please ensure you check your listing thoroughly before it goes live! It is down to you if there is an error or mistake on your event listing.

You can then start to promote your event!

### Can my event listing be amended once it has gone live?

Yes it can. Please email [hello@leicesterbusinessfestival.com](mailto:hello@leicesterbusinessfestival.com) and we will happily make any amends.

### Can I use my own ticketing system e.g. Eventbrite?

**The festival organisers do not permit the use of alternative ticketing systems.** The reason for this is to allow an easy user experience for the attendee so multiple ticketing sites are not used. It also allows the festival organisers to have sight of the overall engagement, attendee numbers and data which are necessary for the final statistics and justification of the festival.

### What happens to the data?

The data collected will be used in a number of ways\*:

1. Relevant event data is passed onto the event organisers, so they have a list of their attendees and information to use to contact their attendees in advance of their event
2. Data is used for festival statistics e.g. number of attendees, attendees from outside the region
3. Data is used to keep attendees updated on festival news and invitations

*\*All data is collected and used in line with GDPR.*

## Ticketing System

### How do people book onto my event?

Attendees should visit [lbf2020.ticketleap.com/](http://lbf2020.ticketleap.com/) (the link can be found via the LBF website and clicking Calendar of events) to find their chosen event and complete the 'registration' process

When attendees book for your event please note they can only book one ticket at a time. Additional attendees, colleagues will need to book individually. This also helps us to capture the data of all attendees to your events.

### Hybrid Events

For those event hosts organising hybrid events, please be sure to liaise with the LBF team to let us know your physical event attendance number of places available, as well as your digital event attendance number of places available. These will be split out on your web page on our ticketing website, so attendees can be given the choice.

### How does the ticketing system work?

Events can be found by date, or filtered by sector, area and if it is a featured event.

When your event is set up we will ask you for the number of attendees/tickets available. The ticketing system will automatically become 'full' when these

numbers are reached. If you wish to reduce or extend your numbers at any time, please do contact us.

### What if my event 'sells out'?

Unfortunately, the ticketing system cannot operate a waiting list, however if you are lucky enough to 'sell out' we can ask any interested attendees to email you directly or add your contact details to the top of your listing.

You should also consider increasing your numbers to allow for any 'no shows' on the day.

### Sales Reports - Numbers only

Once all events are 'live' on the ticketing system, event organisers will receive an email with a link that will direct you to reports initially containing your delegate numbers. This report is updated daily and allows you to keep a track on your numbers.

### Sales Reports - Full Delegate Information

Approximately one month prior to the festival you will receive another report containing your full delegate information. NOTE: At this point, the 'numbers only' report will be disabled. Within this you will find that our ticketing system will have generated a daily '\*.CSV' report relating specifically to your event which you can download at any time of your choosing. Reports are generated each day. This is your own unique link. Please do not share this with anyone outside of your organisation.

## Promotion

### Event Promotion

**PLEASE NOTE: YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR PROMOTING AND MARKETING YOUR OWN EVENT!**

#### Do the festival organisers promote my event?

The Business Festival will promote events via a range of channels from press, social media, web and online marketing both in the lead-up and every day during the Festival.

The Business Festival will be releasing an official digital programme this year, where every event is listed. This will be made available online approximately one month before the festival commences and can be accessed via the LBF website and the LBF app.

However, with over 100 events anticipated, it's really important that you carry out as much promotional activity around your own events as possible too.

#### How do I promote my event?

STEP 1 – consider these things:

*Who is your audience and how will you reach them?*

Do they work in the same sector as you? Where might they go where they might see about your event? Are you aiming at big companies, SMEs, start-up businesses? What might they read, watch or listen to? The answer to this will help you to decide which promotional channels to use.

*When would be a good time to promote your event?*

You can promote your event as soon as it is live on Ticketleap. There are several ways to start promoting instantly (like social media / online). But there are also other ways that could take a little longer - such as designing leaflets or adverts.

Remember: Don't leave your promotion until the last minute and always include a link or details of how to book on to the event.

*Why would people want to come to your event? What's in it for them?*

Will they learn something new? Are they coming to see or hear about something that might help them or their business? Will they be meeting new contacts? Are you addressing a common problem or challenge in the industry? The answer to this question is what you want to get across in the content of your publicity.

## STEP 2 – decide which channels to use

### Here are some ideas:

#### 1. *Social media*

Twitter and LinkedIn are popular social media platforms to get the word out. If you're not already using them, its free and easy to sign up.

Don't forget to tag us in to your tweets and posts using our twitter handle @LBFestival or the hashtag #LBF2020

#### 2. *Website*

Put some details on the home page of your website so that people visiting your site will see it straight away. A blog or news page is also another good place.

#### 3. *E-marketing (emails/electronic newsletters)*

If you have a database of relevant contacts, drop them an email to tell them about your event.

Software such as Mailchimp also allows you to send free (up to a certain quantity) online newsletters to your contacts.

#### 4. *Newsletters*

If your company already sends out newsletters, see if you can get a piece about your event included in it. This goes for internal communications too - both online and printed - particularly if your event is relevant to your staff. Employees can also be great advocates and help to spread the word.

#### 5. *Advertising*

All of our media partners are offering huge discounts off their full rates for any event organiser or sponsor/partner involved in the Business Festival.

#### 6. *Printed materials e.g. Flyers, leaflets, posters*

If you are getting leaflets or flyers made up, distribute them far and wide. Put them in the canteen, down the social club or anywhere that people you think could be interested in your event, might go to. You may need to bear in mind, with the current Covid-19 climate that people may not be as keen to handle additional paper or that as many people will be visiting those places, so you may want to print these at a minimum and just make sure they're on noticeboards etc for people to view.

Contact us if you need any help with design as we can offer a professional service at a very reasonable cost.

## 7. Press releases

If you have a press department, send all the information to them to create a press release for you. If not, why not have a go at writing one yourself?

Press releases should be factual and relevant to the audience. They should also be written in the 3rd person (e.g. John Smith Associates is running an event to help businesses - rather than 'I am...' or 'We are...').

Create a catchy headline to grab the attention of journalists and briefly summarise the news. Then start the main part of the release with an introductory paragraph that generally gives basic details - who, what, when, where and why. The following paragraphs can then explain more.

## 8. Word of mouth

Tell the world! Your friends, colleagues, family, everyone. And ask them to pass it on to everyone they know too!

### STEP 3 – Create your content

Keep your content simple - don't use 30 words when 10 will do. Try to think of how to make your event stand out from the rest and make sure you include all the necessary information:

What is the event (short description)?

Why should people go? Who is it aimed at?

When is it (date and time)?

What platform is it being held on: physically/digitally or a hybrid of the two?

If it's a physical event, where is it (location, parking, transport links, map)?

How do people book? This should be a link to your event on the Leicester Business Festival website.

You should also include a contact details for more information should anyone have any questions.

To help you along the way the Business Festival team are reinforcing all your promotion with our general communication about the Festival including:

LBF website [www.leicesterbusinessfestival.com](http://www.leicesterbusinessfestival.com)

LBF digital brochure

Media and PR

E-marketing

Social media @LBFestival

Business Festival partners

Helpful downloads/tools/support packs are also available on the website here:

<https://www.leicesterbusinessfestival.com/downloads>

If you have any questions or need any help by all means, get in touch with us on 0116 464 5995 or email [hello@leicesterbusinessfestival.com](mailto:hello@leicesterbusinessfestival.com).

## Presenting

### Final Tips Leading Up to The Festival

#### Reminders/Joining Instructions

We will send out reminders to registered attendees the day before your event. We do this simply because some people will have booked onto events months ago, and we want to ensure that you get your full delegation attending your event. These reminders do not contain details of the event, so it is useful to send your own to confirm location, time etc.

#### *Pre-event Top Tips!*

We would strongly recommend that you send an email to all attendees confirming the details of the event around one week prior, including date, timings, venue, information re car parking/location (include a map if the venue can provide one)

Confirm your timings (always arrive at your venue nice and early to set up before attendees start arriving) or if you're holding a digital/hybrid event, we please ask that you log in to your event via the BCBF platform of Zoom at least 30 minutes before your event is due to begin to ensure you have everything set up correctly

If you're hosting a physical/hybrid event, have you been to visit your venue so you are familiar with the layout/facilities?

Confirm your numbers and preferred room layout, especially if you're presenting a hybrid event... are your seats laid out in a good position to cameras? Are all of your seats the correct amount of space apart to ensure you are adhering to social distancing measures?

Confirm your catering requirements if you are providing these (you may want to check your attendees don't have any special dietary requirements or other special requirements on the day)

Check the car parking arrangements at the venue

Ask the venue if they will be providing any directional signage on the day or do you need to provide this, so attendees know where to go on arrival? It is always good to see branding when you walk into a venue!

Do you want to provide name badges for you attendees?

If you're holding a physical event, we would advise asking people to sign in so you know who has attended, however people attending physically may feel more comfortable if this was done electronically. For digital events, you will be able to see who has logged on to your event down the right hand side of the screen.

Health & Safety - Check the venue doesn't have any planned fire drills that day and where the muster points are located, should you need to evacuate! Also do they have any specific social distancing /Covid-19 requirements on

arrival, for example, must all guests sanitise their hands before entering the building or are there sanitisation points around the venue for guests to use? Must guests wear masks? Is this compulsory for the duration of the event? It is often good to announce this at the beginning of your session!

Event Hosts and Organisers should take out the relevant comprehensive and associated insurance to cover their events

### Festival branding

Yes please - branding and logos can be downloaded from the LBF website (media and downloads page). If you need any assistance with this then please get in touch!

Please don't forget to keep in line with the brand guidelines if you are creating your own marketing materials. When circulating any information about the festival please also remember to include the festival logo.

### Presentation slides

The LBF Presentation deck is to be used at all events where there is a PowerPoint or keynote in use. This is a great branding asset and is a major part of providing a 'festival feel' when attendees are going to multiple events.

There are three slides at the start of the presentation deck that we ask you to keep in place, along with two at the end.

The slides will be available on the LBF website.

### Zoom Background

We will be providing a LBF backdrop on Zoom to all event hosts holding digital/hybrid events throughout the festival, they can of course use their own backdrop if they wish.

### Roller Banners

Further information regarding the banners will be available nearer the date.

If you wish to produce any of your own marketing banners this is absolutely fine however you will need to incur any costs. Festival branding can be downloaded from the LBF website.



## The Festival

### What happens during the festival?

The festival opens with a launch event on the first morning. All event organisers, sponsors, partners and friends are invited to celebrate the opening of the event attended by key business leaders and politicians.

Events then take place across the region each day for the ensuing two weeks. The festival organisers will send out a daily news update featuring daily events, best photos and best ‘tweets’ of the day, so keep an eye out for these.

On the last day, a closing event will take place. This is an opportunity to celebrate the end of the festival and thank the partners, sponsors and all those that took part in some way, shape or form for their hard work and support. All sponsors, event organisers, sector leads, venue hosts and attendees are invited.

Statistics from the festival will be released and we will look back at the highlights that took place over the two weeks.

### Filming/Recording

The festival organisers will have a crew out and about throughout the fortnight. Unfortunately, not all events can be filmed, however we will try to capture events that we think will be visually exciting for the promotional videos.

For those event hosts holding digital/hybrid events, there is the option of video recording your online event, please let us know beforehand when we run through Zoom at your test meeting if this is something you would be interested in doing.

If you would like to film your own event and share online or via social media, that’s great but don’t forget to tag us! @LBFestival #LBF2020

### Dates for your diary

**Opening event:** Monday 2nd November (AM)

**Closing event:** the afternoon of Friday 13th November (PM)

## Feedback

### Feedback and Surveys

To build the Festival for 2021 we will be sending all attendees a feedback survey after they have attended an event. We kindly ask that at the end of your event, you encourage attendees to fill this out.

Shortly after LBF 2020, we will be sending you (the event organiser) a very short feedback form around your experience as an event host during #LBF2020. This feedback is critical in making LBF 2021 event better so please do let us know what

you think.



