

Toolkit

Speed Networking

Planner's Guide

Speed networking events are designed to give Net Impact members the opportunity to connect with experts in different fields through a round-robin style meet and greet. Attendees will rotate amongst a few experts with opportunities to ask questions and meet other like minded peers.



Preparation

Pick a Location

Identify possible locations that would be a good fit for your event. Consider previous event locations where you can receive a generous discount or have a good relationship with the manager. *Quick Tips:* Restaurants with private rooms that can accommodate at least 40-50 people often work well. For students, larger rooms available for you to reserve on campus work well.

Choose a Date and Time

Select a few possible dates and keep them in mind when selecting a venue, reaching out to speakers, and planning for optimal attendance. *Quick Tip:* Keep in mind key dates, like holidays, school events, or other things happening in your community

Find Your Experts

Reach out to your networks to find experts that align with the interests of your members (you can also do a quick survey of members for suggestions). *Quick Tip:* Create an email template to send to prospective experts.

Incentive Attendance

Charging a fee, even if it's just \$5-10, incentivizes people to attend since they will have already made an investment prior to the day of the event. You can charge different amounts for Net Impact members vs. non-members.

Event Promotion

It is important to market all of your chapter's events. Different events will call for different techniques but channels to think about include email, your website, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. Student chapters should think about their school's resources and how people on their campus learn about programming.

Quick Tip: Make sure to edit your Chapter's microsite on the Net Impact website so your event will be added to the global Net Impact calendar.



Execution

Food

If you plan to serve food, work with the venue ahead of time to coordinate the menu, amount of food to serve, time food is served, and include vegetarian options. If it is a public space or campus venue, you may be able to buy snacks and bring them in.

Registration and Signage

Make sure to create signs to direct attendees towards the exact location of the event. Set up a registration table at the entrance to check attendees in and welcome them to the event. *Quick Tip:* Set up the registration process for success - have a box or bowl to collect business cards, extra cash for attendees paying on-site (if applicable), name badges and markers, a list of volunteers and their contact info, an outline of event activities with start and end times, and a list of VIP guests.

Logistics

To save on prep time, have attendees make their own name tags at registration. Mark each table with a small sign with either numbers or letters. Have a bell or whistle for the host to use to signal when it's time to change tables.

Rotation System

Plan out how much time is spent at per table, direction attendees go when it is time to rotate to next table, factor in how much time it takes to rotate tables. Attendees will rotate in small groups through a cadre of special guests. We recommend having at least one expert per table. Your experts should come from a cross-section of fields both in the nonprofit and for-profit sectors, as members have diverse interests.

Select a Host

The event host will be announcer at the event. Their role includes: 1) Welcome everyone and explain speed networking directions, 2) Keep track of time and ring the bell when it is time to change tables, 3) Conclude event and thank VIP guests for participating

Follow Up

Be sure to send "Thank You" emails to the experts and VIP guests thanking them for taking the time to come to your event. *Quick Tip:* Send a quick survey after the event to see what people thought and to gather feedback to make your next event even better.