Exit Report - Template

| Name | Mitchel Daniel |
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| Contact email: | mitchel.daniel@mail.utoronto.ca |
| Task/Role | Plenary Committee |

Just leave a section blank if you don’t feel the question applies to your task.

| Describe your role/task: Selecting, inviting speakers and organizing the stay of the Plenary speakers |
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| What did you wish you had known beforehand? | List important info or decisions you may have to know in order to complete your task/role. For example, you can’t start fundraising until you have a budget. |
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| Contacts | Figure out reimbursement system before speakers arrive, because it’s easier to get receipts, boarding passes, etc. before they leave. |
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| What worked? | We invited the speakers 6 months in advance, which is important because many faculty are busy and you need to allow time to invite alternates. In your first email inviting the speaker, include a well-written message (0.5 to 1 page long is about right) that makes clear the prestige of the invitation, the audience they will be presenting for, and the appeal of the conference (e.g. high-quality talks from people at a range of stages in their studies/careers, in a collegial setting).  There was one plenary committee member in charge of writing the bio and introducing a plenary speaker and this 1:1 ratio evenly spread out the work. For making contact with the speakers, having one primary contact for each phase worked best. We split up the roles where one committee member invited the speakers, before the conference another requested talk titles and abstracts and confirmed travel plans, and after the conference another member was responsible for collecting reimbursement documents. |
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| What didn’t work? | List the things that you would change or do differently to save yourself time/energy/$ if you had to do the task again.  We gave the speakers a rough idea of the type of conference (e.g. large undergraduate contingent), but I don’t think we got this point across effectively, and the talks may not have engaged undergraduates as well as they might have. It would be good to stress this to speakers in future as soon as they are invited, so they can think about gearing their talks to their audience. |
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| Give a general timeline to completing the task. | At least 6 months beforehand, invite speakers. Once the speakers have confirmed, you can begin budgeting around their expected travel and accommodation costs.  About 3 months beforehand, get in touch about travel plans (mainly important for anyone that will fly/train in) and arrange accommodations. Offer to book the speaker’s hotel and transportation.  About 1 month beforehand, send speaker info about the talk length and any other expectations.  At least two weeks before the conference, confirm plans and request abstracts and talk titles. Within the week before give them contact info (email and phone number) in case any issues come up. Ask the speakers to keep their receipts/boarding passes for reimbursement. Prepare a short (e.g. 1-minute) introduction for each speaker.  During the conference, make sure organizers are around to help the speaker/answer any questions. |
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| Do you have any online accounts or account information to pass along? | Give id and passwords for account you may have used and the next group could take over (Facebook, Twitter, etc.). |
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| Future Goals | Communicate talk title and abstract deadlines more effectively to speakers. |
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| Other comments | We got cool gifts that were local (represented Toronto) and had broad appeal (decaffeinated tea, interesting jam, notebooks, mugs) and conference spirit (t-shirts!). One member took responsibility for gifts. |
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