

# Gala Planning Checklist

Who, What, When, Where, and Why – When planning a fundraiser gala, make sure you consider some key ideas as the foundation of your planning that you can return to throughout the process.

## Ask questions like:

- Who do we want in the room?
- What are the 3 main goals of the event?
- What do I want my guests to feel when they attend my gala?

Using the answers to these questions as your core ideals for the event will keep you grounded to your cause and mission. Utilizing a checklist like the one provided below for your high-level tasks can help you get started and keep you on track.

## 9-12 Months Before

Decide on a Date - research social calendars to limit competition with your event

Determine a budget - consider sponsorships and other support that will cover costs for venue, food and drink, professional services, entertainment and decor.

Reserve a Venue

Find Your "WHY" – Decide on the mission focus for the funds raised from this Gala, and work to incorporate this into your event theme

Book Entertainment and/or Speakers

Book a professional auctioneer or live fundraising specialist

Recruit Volunteers

## 6-8 Months Before

Create an event sales deck with theme, colors, fonts, logos and sponsorship opportunities

Plan activities and entertainment to include in sponsor information

Confirm Sponsorships + Collect Sponsor Logos for marketing purposes

Event + Fundraising Software – Get all your ducks in a row so ticket sales, registration, check-in, and more are a breeze for volunteers and guests alike.

Update Website and Social Media With Event Details and sponsors

Set Up Presale + Sponsorship Ticketing

Book Catering or decide on menu theme

### 3-4 Months Before

Open Ticket Sales to the Public – Be sure to include dress code, food selections, etc.

Confirm Speaking Materials and Information (Speaker Bios, Presentation Materials, etc.)

Order Printed Materials (Programs, Signage, etc.)



***The 1 month out mark is a crucial time to promote your gala with social media, email, and marketing blasts to maximize turnout and donations***

### 1 Month Before

Post Social Media Giveaway

Confirm Gala Itinerary with specific timelines (Dinner, Speakers, Games, Auction, Etc.)

Share Itinerary With Vendors

Do a Walk-Through of the Venue

### 1-2 Weeks Before

Send Guest Count to Caterer

Promote on Social Media and Include Donation/Ticket Link

Meet With Volunteers + Communicate Responsibilities

Open Mobile Bidding and send out to your guests

### The Day Before

Organize Centerpieces + Decor

Set Up Silent Auction Tables, Signage, and Favors

Rehearse Timing + Logistics

### Day of Gala

Utilize AES's On-Site Support Staff to handle check-in logistics

Keep a pulse on the fundraising real-time with an admin view from your auction service provider.

Enjoy connecting with your donors and sponsors while professional service teams handle the details.

Follow your timeline. This is an important detail to ensure fundraising success as well as respect your attendees' time and patience.



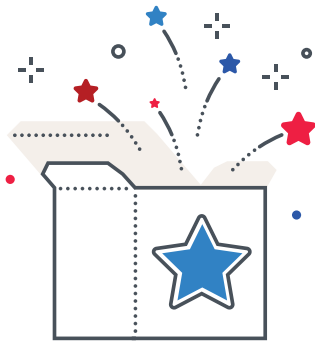
## Following Your Gala

Gather Insights from Event Reporting

Host a wrap-up meeting to go over successes and lessons learned, document the results

Thank Volunteers and Attendees for Their Contributions

Start Thinking About Next Year's Event!



Should you find yourself in need of professional guidance, event staff and cutting-edge technology for your next gala, please reach out to Auction & Event Solutions.

**We are here to help!**

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