

HOW TO ORGANIZE A NETWORKING EVENT TO ENCOURAGE DIVERSITY IN FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

An example from the National Mermaid Network based in Trondheim, Norway

D11.3 – Bridges Knowledge triangle



Blue Competence Center were with the support from the European Commission and the BRIDGES project, proud to be able to arrange an event that aims to strengthen women's positions in the work life. The event is part of the Mermaid Network's mission to bring women from the fishery and aquaculture sector together.

The Mermaid Network wants to create an inclusive arena that will enable and enhance diversity and equality, and thereby contribute to better possibilities, new perspectives and enhanced competence and innovation.

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bridges
AN AQUACULTURE
INITIATIVE

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THIS GUIDELINE

This guideline can be used by anyone who is planning an event that aims at network connectivity. Please note that this guideline is based on creating a specific networking event for women in the fisheries and aquaculture sector, but you may use the elements showcased in this guideline based on your local context. In preparing this guideline we chose to use the experiences we have gained along the way combined with inspiration from Open AI – ChatGPT*, to create the best plug and play. In addition to these points, we will encourage you to use search engines (like google) or Open AI to find good solutions and sources.

*ChatGPT is an artificial intelligence generator and can be utilized to enhance productivity in a wide range of topics. Its versatile applications make it valuable for tasks such as drafting different texts, brainstorming ideas and learning new concepts. At the bottom of this guideline, you will find a step-by-step explanation of how this tool can be used, generated by ChatGPT.

CONTEXTUAL SUMMARY



Once a year, women from all over the world visit the city of Trondheim to attend Nor-Fishing* or Aqua Nor**. In connection with the annual fair, the Mermaid Network organizes a social gathering to connect women from different parts of the fisheries and aquaculture sector. During the event the award ceremony announcing this year's winner of the mermaid, merman, and ocean company prizes is held.

This event is becoming an important networking arena which aims to raise current issues related to recruiting and retaining women in the industry. Events like this are an important contribution to the Bridges project and the society as a whole, because it ensures a safe arena that aims to include young females and others that do not have a network in the industry. Another important factor is that this event and networking arena offers a platform that provides the opportunity to become better acquainted with career options and relevant contacts.

*Fisheries fair, **Aquaculture fair



EVENT BREAKDOWN SUMMARY

When planning an event there are some important steps to take into consideration:

1. BUDGET

Fundamental for effective planning is to start with a clear budget frame. This will ensure that the project remains on track, resource allocation, risk management and that the event delivers value to stakeholders.

2. DEFINE THE EVENT GOALS AND TARGET AUDIENCE

Determine the purpose of the event and what you want to achieve. Set clear goals that align with the purpose of the event and define the target audience who will benefit from attending.

Example: The Mermaid Network (TMN) arranges an annual gathering first and foremost to support women working in the industry. TMN is an inclusion network and therefore it is also important to not exclude anyone.

Example: The Mermaid gathering focuses on networking, but also has a clear goal to highlight important themes. This is done by awarding people in the industry for positive changes. These are the awards and the criteria for being nominated to a prize:

- **The Mermaid of the year**
is a person who works and excels positively in the industry.
- **The Merman of the year**
is a person who is an ally and promotes diversity in the industry.
- **The Ocean Company of the year**
promotes diversity and works towards a better work environment for diversity and inclusion in the industry.

The winners have been nominated by the network and selected by a jury.



3. SELECT THE EVENT TYPE AND FORMAT

Decide the type of event that aligns with the purpose and suits a successful implementation. Then choose which format that suits the event and whether it should be in-person, virtual or hybrid.



Example: If your goal is to collaborate on knowledge work, exchange or collect ideas and valuable input, you might want to arrange a **workshop**. If the goal is to discuss a particular topic of common interest or to reach agreement on disputed issues, you might want to arrange a **conference**. If the goal is to gather small groups for recurring meetings to focus on specific themes each meeting, you might want to arrange a **seminar**. If the goal is to cultivate relationships, you might want to arrange a **networking event**.

4. COMBINING THE “KNOWLEDGE TRIANGLE” WITH THE EVENT

The “Knowledge Triangle” involves the synergy benefits, when connecting VET schools, universities, students, researchers, teachers, industries, and innovation experts to get together and solve industry or societal challenges. The main objective of such an event is to encourage educational discussions, collaborative research and innovative idea sharing to create a vibrant atmosphere that fosters learning and further collaboration. This will contribute to enhancing the event’s impact and outcome.

Tip! When organizing an event using this concept, focus on bringing together diverse participants and experts on the subject matter.

5. SELECT DATE OF THE EVENT

Before selecting the date of the event, it is wise to do some research to see if there is an existing or similar event that takes place in your local context. When selecting the date, you should consider if your event might benefit from the synergy, if connected.

Example: The mermaid network has chosen the date of the mermaid gathering to be during the week of one of the biggest fairs globally for aquaculture and related industry.



6. CHOOSE LOCATION

Here are some things to consider when choosing the location for the event.

- Is the venue centrally located or is it easy to get to by local transport?
- Does the venue accommodate the desired number of participants?
- Does the venue offer catering or serving included in the rent or do you have to take care of this in addition?

Remember to become familiar with the venue’s safety and fire regulations.



7. TIMETABLE

Creating a timetable involves careful planning and coordination and ensures to make the event runs smoothly. Here are some basic steps:

1. Define the event details: date, time, location, number of participants etc.
2. Make a list of all the activities that are taking place during the event, estimate the duration of each activity and assign who's responsible for making it happen.
3. Create a draft schedule and arrange the activities in logical order:
 - Setup, opening ceremony, main sessions, meals, breaks, entertainment, and rig down.
 It is important to plan buffer time in between the activities.
4. Communicate or share the timetable with the speakers, presenters and organizers.
5. Have a backup plan in case of unexpected situations such as speaker cancelations, technical issues, or weather changes if you're planning the event in an outdoors venue.

8. INVITATION AND PROGRAM CONTENT

The invitation should contain all the necessary information related to the event and its unique selling point, in an attached program:

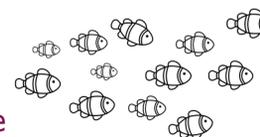
1. Tailor the invitation design to appeal to the target audience and create a catchy headline for.
2. Highlight key information like date, time, venue and a brief overview of what those invited can expect: the *program*.
3. Use images or illustrations that align with the event theme.
4. Include a call-to-action for RSVP and registration (name, company, allergies etc.)
5. The program will highlight the benefits off attending the event by showcasing what the attendees will gain or experience by participating.

Example: By using a program like eMarketeer* it is possible to tailor the invitation and keep track of who's invited, who signs up for the event and additional information (register allergies, other needs, tips for next year's catering, nominations etc.).

*eMarketeer is an all-in-one marketing tool focused on leads. eMarketeer makes it possible to generate, manage and deliver qualified leads to sales.

FINAL TIPS AND THINGS TO CONSIDER

- Do research to see if there is a call for funds corresponding to the event, or research if companies that suit the event would want to contribute with sponsored funds or donations.
- It is also smart to check if there is possible to get a deal that leads to discounts on catering, venue or other things towards the event, to minimize the expenses.
- Remember to invite all project partners or other people that might be relevant for the event.
- Evaluation of the event and feedback: After the event has been completed it is useful to organize an evaluation to know what went well and can be improved.



It is important to be critical of the information provided by ChatGPT or any other AI language model. While these are powerful tools, they are not infallible and can sometimes generate incorrect or biased information.

A step-by-step guide on how to use ChatGPT (generated by ChatGPT)

NB!

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1. Access the platform:

Visit the platform or application that provides access to ChatGPT. This could be OpenAI's official website, or any other platform integrated with the ChatGPT API.

2. Initiate a Conversation:

Start a new conversation by typing a message or prompt in the provided text box. This can be a question, a request, or any topic you want to discuss.

3. Send Your Message:

Once you've entered your message, send it to the ChatGPT system. The system will process your input and generate a response based on the context of the conversation.

4. Receive the Response:

ChatGPT will generate a response based on the input you provided. The response will appear in the conversation window shortly after you send your message.

5. Continue the conversation:

You can continue the conversation by responding to ChatGPT's messages. Ask follow-up questions, seek clarifications, or request more information to engage in a meaningful conversation.

6. Review and Edit:

After receiving a response, you can review it to ensure it meets your needs. If necessary, you can edit your previous message or provide additional context to get a more accurate response.

7. End the Conversation:

When you're done with the conversation, you can simply stop sending messages. If you're using a platform with a chat interface, there might be a specific button to end or close the conversation.



From the Mermaid Network and the use of ChatGPT

ChatGPT is known to be efficient in the search of knowledge and in giving tips to streamline a process. We had planned an upcoming social event and workshop, so I asked ChatGPT if it could generate a program for the event



The question I asked ChatGPT:

Can you create a program referring to a social workshop based on this text? (use the generator to find a simple and social method for a workshop that creates a network).

Additionally, I would like you to identify different points that need to be addressed to create a local group, do we need a leader, a board, people to manage the group, etc.?

This is the invitation text that has already been published on LinkedIn: the Mermaid Network invites you to a mermaid gathering on Frøya. Join us for a pleasant evening of networking and a workshop. All sea people, mermaids, mermen, and sea companies are warmly welcome! Tuesday, Nov 21, at 18:30-20:00. This will be a pleasant evening focusing on networking and a workshop. We will conduct a social workshop together to figure out what is wanted and needed to establish The Mermaid networks first local group in Hitra and Frøya. We already know that there are many women with good experience and dedicated from the time with the network WomenPower. We warmly welcome everyone interested in contributing! If you want to share the invitation with other #Mermaids, #Mermen, and #SeaCompanies, you like Havfruenettverket, and then you are part of the gang!



This was ChatGPT's generated answer:

Certainly! Here's a suggested program for the social workshop based on the text:

Program for Mermaid Gathering: Networking and Workshop

Date: Tuesday, November 21

Time: 18:30 - 20:00

Welcome and Registration (18:30 - 18:45)

- Registration of participants
- Welcome greeting from the Mermaid Network

Introduction to the Mermaid Network (18:45 - 19:00)

- Brief presentation of the Mermaid Network
- Objectives for the evening

Networking Session (19:00 - 19:30)

- Icebreaker activities to promote interaction
- Opportunity for participants to introduce themselves and their connection to the marine environment

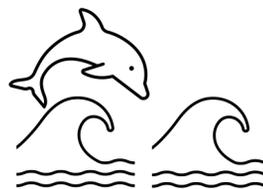
Workshop: Formation of Local Group (19:30 - 19:45)

- Brief presentation of the purpose of local groups
- Group work to identify needs and desires for the Mermaid Network's local group in Hitra and Frøya
- Discussion and idea exchange

Summary and Planning (19:45 - 20:00)

- Summary of workshop results
- Planning for the next steps and how participants can contribute





ChatGPT continued with this answer:

After the workshop, it may be useful to have an open discussion about the practical aspects of forming a local group. Here are some points that can be addressed to create a solid foundation:

1. Leader and Board:

- Need for a leader to coordinate the activities of the local group.
- Discussion on the composition and tasks of a board, if applicable.

2. Activities and Meetings:

- Identification of possible activities and events that the local group can organize.
- Discussion on the frequency and format of meetings.

3. Communication:

- Establishment of a communication platform for the local group.
- How to disseminate information and involve members.

4. Collaboration with the Mermaid Network:

- Clarification of the relationship between the local group and the overarching the Mermaid Network.
- Possible ways to collaborate.

5. Volunteer Roles:

- Identification of volunteers who can take on specific tasks or roles in the local group.

HOW WE USED THIS INFORMATION

The answer generated by ChatGPT contained a program and suggestions that suited what we needed. We decided to use it as is; a starting point with timed activities and talking points relevant to the event.

Source:

[Website: ChatGPT](#)

