



**PHILADELPHIA  
SCIENCE  
FESTIVAL**

## PLANNING AN ASTRONOMY NIGHT EVENT

Throwing a star party is easy and extremely rewarding! Below are some tips to help you plan your own successful event.

### PRIOR TO THE EVENT:

#### Publicity & Marketing

Marketing is the key to a successful turnout for any event. If you are hosting an Astronomy Night Star Party as part of the Philadelphia Science Festival, promotional materials can be ordered through the Partner Portal (<http://www.philasciencefestival.org/my-account>.) Be sure to promote your event via social media channels and distribute any promotional pieces early and often!

#### Staffing

Make sure you have engaged more than enough support staff for your anticipated crowd. The Philadelphia Science Festival will provide one volunteer to help with way finding, crowd control and event evaluation. If you anticipate a need for more support, please let someone at PSF know immediately, and every attempt will be made to honor your request.

#### Logistics and Event Set-Up

While the astronomer assigned to your site will determine the best spot for viewing the night sky, try to anticipate crowd flow prior to the start of your event by thinking through the following:

- Where should materials, directional signage (for bathrooms, parking, etc.), and support staff be stationed to ensure that participants have access to everything happening on site?
- Will the site require any additional illumination near the materials or activities table or for walking?
- Locate the tables and chairs that you will need, trash cans, and maybe a few large rocks to prevent papers from flying away.
- Will you provide any snacks or hands-on, astronomy related activities? Determine ahead of time where you'll want to set-up these stations.
- Prepare any copies for activities.

**NOTE:** PSF directional signage templates are available for download on the Partner Portal (<http://www.philasciencefestival.org/my-account>).

**If you are using a venue that is not your own,** anticipate the basic building functions:

- Do you know how to turn on/off the lights?
- Do you know who has a key to the facility and how you will gain access on the day of the event?
- Do you know how to unlock the bathrooms? Turn on the water?
- Do you know where to locate the closest electrical outlet in the event that an astronomer needs one?



## ON THE DAY OF THE STAR PARTY:

### Preparation

- Get there early—at least 1.5 hours before participants will arrive. This should give you plenty of time to complete set-up for the event.
- Set up any tables, chairs, trash receptacles, and additional lighting.
- Make sure bathrooms are unlocked and that water is turned on and ready for use.
- Put out any way finding signs or station volunteers to help with attendee direction.
- Set up materials for distribution. Be sure to prevent them from flying away.
- Once volunteers and staff are onsite, brief them on job assignments and answer any questions they have regarding tasks.

### Materials and supplies to have on hand:

- Step-stool(s) to enable smaller attendees to look through the telescopes
- Should participants bring their own flashlights, have trimmed red balloons or red film and rubber bands to cover the flashlight lamps. Doing so helps to soften light pollution in the viewing area
- Star Maps, which can be downloaded from [www.skymaps.com](http://www.skymaps.com)
- Materials to do any other activities you have planned



City Skies is a collaborative program between community centers, The Franklin Institute and NASA. The program points out that the night sky is available to everyone, everywhere, without special equipment. There are many exciting things to see from your neighborhood, including the Sun, Moon, Planets, and even the International Space Station.

Information provided by Derrick Pitts, Chief Astronomer and Planetarium Director at the Franklin Institute

Presenting Sponsor:



Created by Philadelphia's science, cultural and educational institutions and organized by The Franklin Institute.

