

## WHY DEVELOP A YEAR-ROUND CALENDAR?

### Reasons from Public Science Experts from around the U.S.

**CREATES TOUCHPOINTS.** Annual calendar provides year-round touchpoints for your key stakeholders, partners, and audiences.

**BUILDS COMPREHENSIVE DATABASE.** You'll be able to gather more information about who is doing what in the area, which can be used to make your Festival even more effective.

**GATHERS DATA-DRIVEN METRICS TO UNDERSTAND TANGIBLE BENEFITS.** Through web analytics, event attendance and evaluation, you'll be able to make the case for what style of calendar and posting works best for your community.

**YOU'RE ALREADY THE EXPERT.** You already know how to do this. By virtue of planning and curating a festival calendar, with a few tweaks, you already have the internal know-how to create a year-round version.

**FEEDS YOUR FESTIVAL.** By providing a resource that promotes events beyond the run of your Festival, organizers get the chance to meet new people, new partners and new audiences.

#### OTHER BENEFITS:

- ***Events not during your Festival ... are not during your Festival.*** You have more bandwidth to attend events, get ideas, and network. Plus you can promote your Festival as both a benefit to partners and a "must do" happening for audiences.
- ***You can find new audiences.*** Organizers can make strategic decisions for future programming based on untapped regions and resources in their communities. These holes in serving the public will become more readily apparent after taking a year-round approach.
- ***Furthers your lead.*** Your organization positions itself as one of the pivotal thought leaders for public science in your region, which can lead to multiple levels of strategic growth and impact.

## POTENTIALLY THORNY QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER BEFOREHAND:

**MOTIVATIONS.** What are your primary motivations for developing a year-round calendar? The answer to this question will determine appropriate style, staffing, how you'll market the calendar, and how you'll curate posts.

---

*“Science Pub RVA is a fully curated listing of public science events for adults in the Richmond, VA area. We have an audience of about 200K. Our calendar is updated each Sunday. No one else was doing it. It was meant to meet a need.”*

*– Cynthia Gibbs, creator of Richmond, VA's first community-wide science calendar*

---

**POLITICS.** Is your organization OK with promoting other events? Competing events?

**STAFFING.** How will you do the work? There's no “one size fits all” solution. There are a few models out there that include devoting paid staff time, leveraging key partnerships, and volunteer-driven efforts.

**BUDGET.** At present, most successful online community science calendars appear to be labors of love. However, there is a sense from the community that with the rise of science festivals the time is ripe to find funders.

**BUY-IN & MOMENTUM.** Will you have a critical mass of partners and events to make the calendar useful and worth everyone's while? How will you get events submitted and posted?

**SUSTAINABILITY.** What is the long-term sustainability plan for your calendar's upkeep and maintenance?

**MEASURING SUCCESS.** How will you know you've been successful? How will you share that info with your stakeholders?

**HOW DIFFERENTIATE YOUR FESTIVAL FROM YOUR YEAR-ROUND CALENDAR?** From different sites, different web page skins, to completely different branding, there are a number of strategies for this.

## FINDING THE RIGHT SOLUTIONS FOR YOUR CALENDAR

**MOST COMMONLY: A WEBSITE OR WIDGET.** What software is best for your needs? What are the fees associated? Are there free or open-sourced options? (Answer: Yes. But you'll need to do homework.) Please see the INPUT FROM A WEB EXPERT for suggestions.

**A STRICTLY SOCIAL MEDIA APPROACH:** Exploring event promotion outside of your Festival through your current social media feeds is a good way to test the market and see if the community is hungry for more. Odds are, you'll find that they are.

**PARTNERING WITH OTHER WELL-ESTABLISHED CALENDARS (E.G. RADIO STATIONS, NEWSPAPERS, OTHER WEBSITES).** As you'll see in our case studies, some science calendars have developed rich partnerships with pre-existing calendars, setting themselves up well for success. Perhaps your community doesn't need a new solution. But, in all likelihood, it does need your expert curation and input on upcoming science events.

**WHO IS YOUR AUDIENCE?** Is this calendar for adults? Families? Children? All the above?

**SUBMISSION CRITERIA.** What details does your intended audience have to have? What do you need to know about the submitter? (Tip: Don't overthink this. It should be very similar to what you're already doing for your Festival.)

---

*“Our first focus is to list PUBLIC science events, ones which are unique (not daily). We confirm that each is for the public and not for the technical community. Next, we develop trust with staff and empower editors to make decisions. We reject one to two events each month (which don't meet criteria).”*

*– Kishore Hari, Bay Area Science Festival & Science Calendar*

---

**EVENT CURATION.** How will events come to you and get posted? Will your team scour the web looking for the right events? Will you train partners to submit events to you? How does the information migrate from what's submitted to what gets posted? (Tip: The more seamless, the better. But there, of course, is the rub.)

**HOW WILL YOU EDIT EVENTS AND UPDATE THE INFORMATION?** How often? How critically? How will you relay information to and from your partners?

*For suggestions related to these points, we invite you to review the Input from the Web Team document and the Closer Look at specific calendars documents.*