

Student Group Event Planning Guide

This document is a quick start guide to processes and resources for student groups organizing an event. We strongly recommend you begin with an event planning checklist [such as this one](#) to ensure your event stays on track and on time. If you would like more guidance on planning your event, please complete the attached form and email sp2studentlife@sp2.upenn.edu.

Additional event planning resources:

- [Plan Awesome Events!](#)
- [Grad Student Center event planning checklist](#)

Forming a Student Group

Students wishing to form new student activity organizations will be "recognized" by the Administration following review of a mission statement and a petition signed by at least five members of the current student body. If you're interested in starting a new student group, [complete this form](#). Please note that to start a student group you need to have at least a chair, a finance chair, and a faculty/staff advisor. Once approved, a representative from the Student Affairs Office and/or SP2 Student Government will contact you regarding a budget proposal for the current semester. Groups created mid-semester may not be eligible for funding.

Scheduling Your Event

To ensure availability of space, tech, and people to attend your event, you will want to choose the right date! This should be done as soon and as early as possible, before *any other* arrangements are made. There are many factors to consider when choosing a date for your event. It is often beneficial to determine a general time frame of one or two weeks when you would like to hold your event, and then consult the following calendars. If there is a specific space you know you want to host your event in, start by determining that room's availability and then check the calendars to make sure your event won't overlap with a similar or competing event.

- [SP2 events calendar](#)
- [SP2 academic calendar](#)
- [GSC events calendar](#)
- [GASPA events calendar](#)

Reserving a Room

There are several options for student organizations wishing to reserve a space for their event. It's recommended you reserve your space two weeks in advance to ensure availability and to ensure a smooth event set-up. Please keep in mind that the SP2 Student Affairs team does not have authority over spaces outside of the Caster Building. Please refer to the policies and procedures regarding room reservations on each individual webpage.

- [Reserve a space in Caster](#)
- [Reserve a space in the Graduate Student Center](#)
- [Reserve a space in Huston Hall, Irvin Auditorium, outdoor space, etc.](#)
- [Reserve a space in the LGBT Center](#)
- [Reserve a space in the Penn Women's Center](#)

Room Set-Up/Facilities Services

Room set-up needs are included in the [room reservation request form](#), so please fill out the request form accurately. For additional facilities needs, please contact sp2facilities@sp2.upenn.edu

Student Event Funding

It is important to develop a detailed budget which includes all expenses. Once such a budget is prepared you can then begin to determine how to pay for the event, and to what extent you will need to rely on [external funds](#). The SP2 Student Government is responsible for the allocation of student organization funding provided by GASPA. Only a member of the leadership board of each student group is eligible to request funds used for student activities. Each student group will submit a budget request to the Finance Chair and President for the academic year. Funds requested must be itemized for each activity proposed and formatted using the Budget Proposal Form provided by Student Government.

Student groups may utilize student group funding for:

- Food
- Beverage
- Transportation
- Rental fee
- Speaker gifts
- Supplies
- Registration fees

- Other approved expenses by the Financial Office

Publicity

The following resources are to help spread the word about your upcoming event. Please refer to each resource individually to learn about the procedures and timelines of when your event advertisements must be submitted and when you can expect them to be shared. You can use websites such as Canva or Visme, or Microsoft PowerPoint, to create flyers and infographics about your event.

- To advertise your event on the SP2 Student Affairs Instagram, or in the lobby of the Caster Building, please contact SP2StudentLife@sp2.upenn.edu with your flyer.
- Advertise on your club's Instagram, website, or Facebook page
- [Submit an event](#) to the [SP2 Events Calendar](#).
- [GASPA weekly newsletter](#)

Catering

If you plan to serve food at your event, you may want to consider creating a RSVP or registration form in order to get an accurate count of how many people will be attending your event. To pay for catering via purchase order, you must use a pre-established Penn Vendor. Using a company that is not already a Penn Vendor will result in the student club submitting for reimbursement process. As you are communicating and planning with your chosen caterer, please remember **do not sign any contracts provided to you.** Please send any contracts that need to be signed to [student affairs](#).

If you wish to serve alcohol at your event, The University of Pennsylvania does not have a liquor license. Therefore, the host of an event must provide their own wine & spirits, and it must be purchased within Pennsylvania at a Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board store or from Specialized Wine & Spirits. Only Approved Caterers with liquor liability insurance are permitted to provide bar service and serve alcohol at events on campus. Please thoroughly review [the university's guidelines](#) for this type of event. You can find a full list of Penn Vendor's that provide [catering here](#).

How do I buy swag for my group?

The University has several vendors who are licensed to use the SP2 logo. If a student group is interested in making products bearing the SP2 logo they should speak with [Bre Bonner](#) in the Student Affairs office for additional information. All items with the SP2 logo must be approved by the University's licensing department before the purchase order will be approved. Students

are welcome to order items without the school shield or official logo; these items do not need to be pre-approved by the University's licensing department.

Recommended swag vendors:

- Club Colors
- Barash Group LLC
- 4Imprint
- Bodacious Promotions Inc
- Search for any item or vendor on [Penn Marketplace](#)

How do I request a Purchase Order (PO) number?

The Purchase Order (PO) is the University's primary authorized buying method. A PO is created and processed through Penn's financial system. All PO requests need to come from the member of the leadership board that submitted the Budget Proposal Form. Below are the steps to requesting an invoice:

1. All invoices should first be sent to SP2StudentLife@sp2.upenn.edu (Cc bryannab@upenn.edu) for approval.
2. Someone from the Student Affairs team will confirm and approve the invoice.
3. Please send the approval email and the invoice to sp2finance@sp2.upenn.edu **only**. Please do not send your invoice to the personal email address of a staff member in the Finance Department. They also will not accept the request without the approval email from Student Affairs.
4. SP2 Finance will send you a PO number and this number can be sent to the supplier.
5. All POs must be submitted BEFORE your event.

Please feel free to reach out to SP2StudentLife@sp2.upenn.edu with any questions!