



FRIENDSHIPCOLLABORATIVE

Building Bridges Between Science and Faith

Your Guide to Organizing a Successful Workshop

www.friendshipcollaborative.org

PREFACE

Thank you for your interest in hosting a Friendship Collaborative Workshop. We believe you will find it a most rewarding experience during which you will provide scientists and Evangelical Christians with an opportunity to engage in conversation, perhaps for the very first time, about their shared concerns over the current environmental crises threatening our planet.

Scientists will learn about the Christian landscape and how to reach out more effectively across the cultural divide. Faith leaders will learn about the decline of the global environment, including climate change, and why it is important to reach out to their congregation about the consequences.

We hope that you will find this guide useful in preparing you for what to expect throughout the process as well as providing some important project management considerations. Please feel free to use these resources as required, or modify them to suit your unique circumstances.

We wish you much success and look forward to hearing all about your workshop soon.

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1. Evangelical Leader / Scientific Leader Selection

The choice of evangelical and scientific leader will have a large impact on the success of this project. It is important that both leaders are committed to the Friendship Collaborative philosophy and fully understand what is expected of them.

Questions to be considered by all potential facilitators before committing to hosting an event include;

- ◆ Do I have sufficient time to invest in this project?
- ◆ Do I have the confidence to promote this to my colleagues so that they will be interested in participating, or am I worried that they might think I am a little crazy?
- ◆ Do I have a good network of potential participants that I can approach?
- ◆ Do I think I can communicate and work effectively with the scientific/evangelical leader?

It is important to identify and agree to your individual roles early on in order to facilitate a constructive working partnership throughout the planning and implementation of your workshop.

You may find it useful to identify a team of willing volunteers to assist you in areas such as administration, promotion, budgeting, catering etc.

2. Event Planning

2.1 Selecting a Date

Consider this carefully and give yourself plenty of time for event preparation and recruitment of participants, but not so much time that you lose interest.

Liaise with your keynote speakers to ensure their availability.

Be mindful of potential clashes especially in the academic timetable. It is vital to avoid times where essential activities occur in the departments you are interested in recruiting from. You may want to consider sounding out a few key individuals first.

2.2 Selecting a Venue

The ideal venue is one that is conveniently situated for your target audience but not so convenient that it will encourage participants to dip in and out of the workshop according to their other commitments. Traditionally the venue is located at a college / university or a large well known church. Holding your event at a small, lesser known church may discourage attendance by scientists.

It is an all day workshop therefore needs to be comfortable. Ideally your venue will be large enough to accommodate one large "round table" style seating area for the presentations, plus break away tables for small group discussions. It is therefore essential to consider the acoustics of the room and your audio-visual equipment needs.

Your venue will need to be accessible, be close to restrooms and have adequate parking facilities. A kitchen area is very useful to help moderate catering costs.

Can you get your venue for free? If not, try to keep costs moderate or explore the possibility of sponsorship. Perhaps one of the academic departments or a local church might be willing to contribute?

2.3 Budget / Additional Funding

Funding for your workshop is available thanks to the generous support of

1. The Creation Care Fund (www.creationcare.org)
2. The Harvard Medical School Centre for Health & the Global Environment
www.chge.med.harvard.edu

Please establish your available budget by contacting Don Bromley. It is possible that the Friendship Collaborative organization may be able to cover the cost of bringing a speaker to your workshop.

It is therefore essential to book keep effectively. Reimbursements can be claimed by sending original receipts to Don Bromley.

You may wish to co-ordinate your workshop with other appropriately related activities and may find that other departments may be willing to offer some form of sponsorship. This is of course acceptable but it is vital that all sponsors are given some form of recognition at the workshop.

3. Project Management

The keys to effective project management are leadership, communication, planning, realistic deadlines, teamwork, motivation & satisfaction! It is therefore vital that all of team members feel fully informed and know what is expected of them. Most importantly is that your agreed objectives are regularly reviewed, so that you do not fall behind your agreed deadlines.

There are a number of useful project management tools available online that you may or may not choose to use. Basecamp HQ for instance is inexpensive, allows effective communication between team members, has a "to do" list with automatic email reminders, and has the ability to post a document on which all team members can comment.

Finding availability for meetings can be a challenge but these are vital to keep motivation and momentum. www.doodle.com is a very helpful online tool for scheduling meetings and is free.

Creating a project timeline (see appendix 11.1 for an example) should keep you on schedule. Three months is a sensible amount of time for planning and implementation.

4. Recruiting Participants

Your workshop should be a "by invitation only" event. Limiting numbers to 12-15 scientists and 12-15 evangelicals has proven to facilitate both large and small group discussion effectively. Please refer to appendix 11.2 and 11.3 for examples of a cover letter and invitation. It is advisable to have your agenda available to be sent out with the invitations so that participants know what to expect. A sample agenda can be seen in appendix 11.4.

It is vital to start the invitation process early, it is all too common to find that potential participants are very interested but already have a schedule conflict. Sometimes having a few key "pre-committed" participants helps secure a positive response from others.

Initially lead pastors and senior faculty were targeted but more recently it has become apparent that incorporating a mix of more junior staff and even doctoral students, brings a vibrant edge to the discussion with greater enthusiasm for follow up activities.

It is up to you whether you wish to make your invitations face to face, by phone or by mail/email, but experience shows that a follow up phone call is the key to securing attendance

5. Catering

If your workshop is an all day event we recommend supplying:

Hot beverage service plus light baked good on arrival

Lunch (no unsustainable sea food please)

Afternoon coffee & cookies

If possible try to use a caterer that uses recyclables and if you can, provide jugs of water and one glass per participant, rather than disposable plastic bottled water.

Please try and be responsible with your budget by selecting a reasonably priced caterer.

You may want to consider taking your key note speakers out for a meal after the event.

6. Liaison with Speakers

Your keynote speakers will prepare and deliver the presentations and moderate some of the discussions. It is important to find out what their audio-visual needs will be.

If you want to include a handout of their presentations in participant packs please establish that the speaker is willing to provide one, and then give them your deadline for enabling photocopying.

If your speaker is from out of town, you may need to organize transportation and accommodation for them. Please plan this in advance and make sure you send them a copy of their itinerary well in advance.

7. Liaison with Participants

It is important to keep track of your invitees and their responses. Once they have made a definite commitment to attend you might want to consider adding each participant to an email group.

This will allow you to send out intermittent updates and keep your participants interested. Try not to bombard them with too much information, just the essentials.

It will also allow you to establish any special requirements (dietary / access) and a method for collecting their short biography.

Most workshop participants expect to be sent some preparatory reading, you may want to consider sending out one key science and one key faith related article, to be read in advance.

Please make sure that every participant receives an agenda and venue details in advance of the workshop.

8. Co-ordinating the Workshop

To ensure that your workshop runs smoothly, you may want to consider having;

1. A moderator to introduce the speakers, keep time and lead the group discussions
2. An event organizer to meet & greet, liaise with caterers, keep refreshments topped up etc.

It makes for a very stressful day if the key speakers have to additionally fulfill these roles.

A countdown checklist starting one week before the event can prove invaluable and will consist of items such as; confirm final numbers / confirm venue & room layout / confirm catering / compile participant packs / confirm speaker transport & accommodation / confirm AV needs.

If possible try and do the bulk of your set up the night before the event, otherwise be sure that there is enough time on the day of. It may be worthwhile establishing the earliest access time to your venue BEFORE setting your event start time.

Be aware that you may get some "unexpected attenders" who received your invitation and thought it would be okay to attend despite not having responded either

way! A guest list, pre-printed name tags and possibly even a sign that says “by invitation only” may reinforce the fact that your event is exclusive.

Small group discussions: We advise that each small group comprises 6-8 people. If possible try to designate well mixed groups in advance and assign a willing group leader. The group leader will be responsible for moderating the discussion and feeding back to the larger group. Giving each leader their discussion points in advance of the workshop should allow them adequate preparation. You may want each group to discuss the same topic, or alternatively you can assign each group a different topic.

9. Participant Packs

It has become tradition for the host venue to supply a double sided cardboard insert folder with their logo, for each participant, but this is not essential. Contents should comprise:

- Workshop Agenda
- Participant List (plus or minus short biography)
- Speaker Presentation Notes
- Key Science Article/s
- Key Faith Article/s
- Event Sponsor/s information

It may also include:

- Pre & Post Event Survey - to allow you to evaluate your event
- Planned Follow-up Events
- Partnership Events

10. Follow Up Events

The hope is that your workshop will just be the FIRST step in opening up channels of communication between people of science and faith in your area.

In order to encourage your participants to continue the dialogue begun at your workshop, you may as a group want to discuss some ideas for follow up activities. Alternatively you could have an event pre-planned, that you can encourage people to sign up to immediately.

For ideas and resources please refer to the Friendship Collaborative Website.

11.1 Sample Project Timeline

(assume event to be occurring on week 1 of month 4)

Sample FC Event Organization Timeline												
Activity	Month 1				Month 2				Month 3			
	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Agree team & roles												
Select & book venue												
Finalize event agenda												
Design invitation & agenda												
Compile invitation list												
Send Invites & ensure regular follow up												
Event Planning with speakers												
Consider catering options												
RSVP Deadline – finalize participant list												
Assign & confirm small group leaders												
Send confirmatory details to participants												
Request participant bios & catering needs												
Deadline for receipt of speaker handout notes												
Confirm Catering												
Compile Handout Packs												
Confirm room set up with venue												
Plan / Book Follow up activities												

11.2 Sample Introductory email / cover letter

Dear

On behalf of Pastor Ken Wilson of the Ann Arbor Vineyard Church, I am delighted to invite you to the upcoming Friendship Collaborative Event at the University of Michigan Botanical Gardens on March 20, 2009.

The Friendship Collaborative originated as a joint venture sponsored by The Harvard Center for Health & the Environment and the National Association of Evangelicals and aims to build bridges between faith and science utilizing their common goal of protecting the environment. The University of Michigan event is being hosted by Dr Howard Hu, Professor of Environmental Health Science & Epidemiology and will be led by Pastor Ken Wilson (Ann Arbor Vineyard Church) and Dr Carl Safina, President of the Blue Ocean Institute

To help you make your decision you may be interested in reviewing the following links:

<http://www.friendshipcollaborative.org/>
<http://www.creationcareforpastors.com/>
<http://www.carlsafina.org/>
<http://kenwilsononline.com/>

If you would like to speak to Pastor Ken Wilson directly his cell phone number is

I have great pleasure in extending you a formal invitation and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Karen Healy
Event Organiser

11.3 Sample Invitation



FRIENDSHIP COLLABORATIVE

Building Bridges Between Science and Faith

Dear

In November 2006, a group of top environmental scientists participated in a retreat with evangelical leaders to discuss their common concern for protecting the environment. Two of the retreat participants, Carl Safina and Ken Wilson continued to build a bridge of friendship and mutual understanding following the retreat. They want to spark a vision for a new period of cooperation between secular science and evangelicalism and believe that in order to respond to the global environmental crisis, we cannot afford to believe the worst of each other; we must learn to believe the best and to search for common ground, rooted in the best that science and faith have to offer.

You are one of a select group of scientists and evangelicals invited to participate in “The Friendship Collaborative: Building Bridges Between Science and Faith”, hosted by Dr Howard Hu, Professor of Environmental Health, at the Matthaei Botanical Gardens, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, on March 20, 2008. The Friendship Collaborative aims to be a day of round table discussion and bridge building with a group of open minded scientists, evangelical leaders and pastors, led by Carl Safina and Ken Wilson. This will be their third Collaborative event, following two successful workshops at The Ohio State University and The University of Akron.

It is believed that scientists will learn about the diverse evangelical American landscape so as to reach out more effectively across the cultural divide; evangelical leaders will learn about some of the most pressing environmental concerns, including climate change. Together we will search for new avenues of mutual understanding within our respective communities for the sake of our threatened planet.

We would be delighted if you could join us on Friday March 20, 2009 to help change the conversation between people of faith and people of science here in Michigan. For further information and/or to book your complimentary place, please contact Karen Healy, event coordinator, via email (karen.healy@mac.com) NO LATER than January 20, 2008.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Carl Safina
President, Blue Ocean Institute

Ken Wilson
Senior Pastor, Vineyard, Ann Arbor

Dr Howard Hu, M.D., M.P.H., Sc.D.
University of Michigan

MARCH 20, 2009

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN, ANN ARBOR

11.4 Sample Agenda



FRIENDSHIP COLLABORATIVE
Building Bridges Between Science and Faith

8.30 - 8.55: Arrival, Coffee & Baked Goods

9.00: Welcome & Introduction; Dr Howard Hu, The University of Michigan

9.15 - 10.15: Presentation & Roundtable Discussion - Moderated by Carl Safina, Blue Ocean Institute

A threatened planet requires working together across cultural divides. New efforts on the part of leaders within the scientific and evangelical communities. A summary of the global environmental crisis and the new opportunities for scientists and leaders of evangelical faith to seek common ground.

10.30 - 11.30: Presentation & Roundtable Discussion - Moderated by Ken Wilson, Vineyard Church of Ann Arbor

An orientation to the American Christian landscape and environmental concern. The diversity within American Evangelicalism and the historical factors behind the mutual distrust between the science and faith communities. The recent rediscovery of environmental stewardship among American evangelicals as a moral and spiritual imperative.

11.45 LUNCH

12.30 - 1.30 Presentation & Roundtable Discussion - Moderated by Carl Safina

The global environmental crisis requires effective advocacy by scientists. The need for scientists to engage a wider audience offers a unique moment in history for working together across the cultural divide. Why our respective communities need each other. How scientists can become effective evangelists for the environment to evangelicals.

1.30 - 2.30: Presentation & Roundtable Discussion - Moderated by Ken Wilson

Addressing climate change with a faith perspective informed by science. Cultural reasons for the climate of suspicion regarding this issue in the faith community and the changes underway to undermine this suspicion. How evangelicals can add new energy to address a global concern.

2.45 - 3.45: Small Groups Mixing Scientists & Evangelical Leaders (plus a light refreshment)

A time to share personal perspectives on the material presented and explore ways to work together for the sake of a shared concern for the environment.

3.45: Closing Roundtable Discussion - Moderated by Carl, Ken & Howard

Focus on practical steps participants may wish to take to continue and expand the dialogue between our respective communities.

4.30: CLOSE OF DAY

Dr Carl Safina
President, Blue Ocean Institute

Ken Wilson
Senior Pastor, Vineyard, Ann Arbor

Dr Howard Hu, M.D., M.P.H., Sc.D.
University of Michigan