

welcome hat

TOOLKIT

Welcome Hat is a celebration that jumpstarts newcomer and returnee inclusion to the local community through the anointment of a warm faux-fur lined hat and a showcasing of the city's resources. You may want to start with a pilot/test event, but then think about a regular schedule, since there are always newcomers (we are testing once every 3 months).

Want to create a welcome event in your community? Check out this step-by-step process:

1. Find some partners

- Find out what organizations in your community also want to welcome newcomers – perhaps your local neighborhood associations, community organizations, social service organizations, cultural institutions, city departments.
- Reach out to them to gauge their interest in participating in a welcoming event. Click [here](#) for a sample email invitation.
- Clarify each partner's goals and what they can contribute to the event (from staffing to funds to in-kind activities).

2. Select a venue for your event(s)

- Ideally find a civic venue that is supposed to be for everyone, rather than a private event venue - for example, your local history center, library, museum, or community center; ideally your host venue will also be an active partner in the events.

3. Plan your first event

- Establish your hook! What will you leverage to get people in the door and get them excited about your event and their new home. For us, it was handing out faux-fur hats, maybe for you it's something different and unique to your community. Whatever it is, come up with a theme and craft your program around that theme.
- Logistics - Make a timeline, budget, and program for your event. Click [here](#) to see a sample program and [here](#) for a sample budget for Welcome Hat events.
- Engage your local artists, vendors, and dignitaries – we had live local music at each event, along with a local breweries and local restaurants providing free samples. We also invited a local dignitary to speak at each event during our “welcome hat ceremony” – this include the Mayor, City Councilmembers, On-Air Talent, and more! In addition to presenting the hats, speakers also gave some insider tips to newcomers.
- Set up ticketing or way to capture guest info. You'll want to create an email database of newcomer information to notify guests of other welcoming & additional Welcome Hat events. This could be an online registration before the event or a sign-in sheet at the event. Sample sign-in sheet [here](#).

4. Reach out to your vendors/participants

- Reach out to all of the community organizations that you think should be there. Libraries, transportation, cultural institutions, community groups, networking groups, etc. For a full list of the vendors that we engaged over the first year, click [here](#). For a template email to send to vendors, click [here](#).
- Once you have secured your vendors, send reminders as the day of event draws closer (1 month, 2 week, 1 week, day before) encouraging your vendors to also help spread the word about the upcoming event.

5. Outreach & marketing - Identify how and where newcomers get their information

- Where do you need to go when you move to a new city in order to feel settled and connected? Local churches, gyms, grocery stores, coffee shops, breweries, etc.
- Ask these places to help promote your event through fliers or even include your information in their newsletters – be sure to provide them with all the information they need. See sample fliers [here](#) and promotional materials [here](#).

6. Day of management

- Set the stage! Make sure the event layout and flow is conducive to connecting people with each other and the community organizations present.
- Be welcoming! See the Welcoming Ambassador toolkit [here](#) for training Ambassadors.

7. Following the event

- Review attendance and create a newcomer email database
- Send a survey to attendees and vendors to see how experience might be improved for future events. Click [here](#) for a sample survey.
- Send a thank you to vendors and volunteers, keeping them in the loop about upcoming events and inviting them to attend your next Welcome Hat event.

8. Stay connected

- Don't loose touch with your list! Email guest with details for upcoming events and invite them to come back to other Welcome Hat events to stay c
onnected!

Welcome
HOME

