

## Math Festival Guide

### What is a math festival and why organize one?

A math festival is an event to celebrate mathematics. Imagine an open space with 5 or 10 or 30 stations, with one activity per station. Students walk around freely and stop to explore the activities that call their attention—activities that have been developed with such care that any person, regardless of age or background, can enjoy them. The goal is to have students leave the festival being able to say, “This was fun! I can do this! When is the next one?”.

### General Planning

Consider the following questions prior to organizing a math festival.

- What is my audience?
  - Think about the age range of students you want to serve. The 10-14 age group is the sweet spot, as students are beginning to develop their math identity, but students as young as 5 or as old as 18 can enjoy the experience just as much.
- How many people do I want to reach?
  - It could be an event for 10 people or hundreds of people.
- When do I want to do it?
  - If you're experienced, give yourself 2 months of lead time. If you lack experience, we recommend 4 to 6 months.
- Who's going to help me?
  - Think about how many people your team requires and what roles each will play (host, facilitator, floater, usher, marketing and social media expert, etc.)
  - Think about identifying and recruiting facilitators for each activity station.
- How long should the event last?
  - We recommend between 2 and 3 hours.
- Where do I want to host it?
  - Look for an open space, like a school gym or cafeteria—preferably free—with tables and chairs already available.
- How much money do I need and how do I get it?
  - We recommend low-cost events organized and staffed by volunteers.
  - Some hosts require close to no money because they repurpose available resources.
  - Consider funds for materials, locale or equipment rental, snacks, and a way to compensate your volunteers.

### Facilitators

The first key for hosting a successful festival is to recruit excellent facilitators. Think about teachers, professors, college students, and retired professionals. Occasionally, you may also consider high school students.

Read our [Facilitator Guide](#) to study our approach and learn what qualities to look for when recruiting facilitators. Give yourself time to train them at least two weeks in advance. Such training should focus on learning their activities and understanding how to apply our teaching approach.

## Activities

The second key for hosting a successful festival is to find high-quality activities. Securing great facilitators and great activities are the perfect combination for hosting a memorable event. We recommend [JRME activities](#) because:

- They have been developed as “low-threshold/high ceiling” activities, providing easy access for younger students while challenging the most advanced.
- They are play-based, discovery-based, and student-centered, giving students the agency to make meaningful choices in a low-risk environment.
- They involve manipulatives that allow students to play with math in a tactile and visual way.
- There are over 70 activities with more than 30 apps that allow students to continue exploring the activities after the end of the festival.
- They are accompanied by activity-specific facilitator guides.

## Logistics

- Personnel
  - Build a good team and delegate responsibilities.
  - Make a timeline of duties and tasks.
- Locale
  - Avoid paying for locale rental. Approach school and community leaders and ask them to let you use their space free of charge.
- Registration
  - Select a registration method of your choice.
  - Use a photo/video release waiver.
- Materials
  - Find a place with available chairs and tables. Avoid renting them out.
  - Determine if you need to purchase any manipulatives or games.
- Marketing
  - Make a flyer at least one month in advance. Contact us for samples and our logos.
  - Approach school and community leaders and ask them to promote your event.
- Assessment
  - Prepare assessment questionnaires for both volunteers and participants to collect feedback with the purpose of improving your next events.

## Budget

We recommend hosting low-budget events.

- Determine a budget for materials and resources.
- Decide if the event will be free-of-charge or if you will charge a nominal fee.
- Consider selling booth spaces or asking local vendors to donate materials.
- Seek the support of academic institutions and community organizations.
- Determine how to compensate your volunteers (gift cards, merchandise, food, etc.).

## Follow-up

- Provide feedback to us through our post-event questionnaire.
- Think of ways of giving continuity to the festival experience. Consider using it as a platform to launch a [math circle](#).
- Identify and recruit students and volunteers for your next math-related activities.

## Timeline

Tasks	Lead Time
<input type="checkbox"/> Contact <a href="#">CYFEMAT</a> or <a href="#">JRME</a> .	3-6 months
<input type="checkbox"/> Decide audience, time, duration, and place.	3-6 months
<input type="checkbox"/> Build a work team.	3-6 months
<input type="checkbox"/> Determine budget.	3-4 months
<input type="checkbox"/> Identify and secure funds for copies, materials, and snacks.	3-4 months
<input type="checkbox"/> Decide if the event will be free or fee-based.	3-4 months
<input type="checkbox"/> Select the registration method, along with a release waiver.	2-3 months
<input type="checkbox"/> Recruit facilitators and other volunteers.	1-2 months
<input type="checkbox"/> Select <a href="#">activities</a> .	1-2 months
<input type="checkbox"/> Choose a name for the event.	1-2 months
<input type="checkbox"/> Design a flyer to distribute by email (.pdf) and post on social media (.png).	1-2 months
<input type="checkbox"/> Purchase materials (puzzles, chips, pencils, markers, floor mazes, etc.)	1 month
<input type="checkbox"/> Train facilitators.	1 month
<input type="checkbox"/> Make copies and laminates.	1-2 weeks
<input type="checkbox"/> Send a reminder to registrants.	1 week & 1 day
<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare the site with chairs, tables, pencils, paper, etc.	2-3 hours
<input type="checkbox"/> Welcome facilitators.	1 hour
<input type="checkbox"/> Set up a registration table.	1 hour
<input type="checkbox"/> Compensate facilitators and send them the assessment questionnaire.	At the end of festival
<input type="checkbox"/> Send an assessment questionnaire to participants.	At the end of festival
<input type="checkbox"/> Complete and return the assessment questionnaire for hosts.	At the end of festival
<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare for the next festival!	The day after the festival
<input type="checkbox"/> Consider establishing a math circle or club.	After the festival