



Forest Of Reading Festival

Manual for Hosting Your Own Festival Event

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Table of Contents

About the Program and the Festival	3
Hosting Information.....	4
Committee Roles and Responsibilities.....	7
Timeline	10
Sample Budget (Based on 1,000 Attendees)	12
Suggested Questions for Volunteer Application.....	13
Forest of Reading Festival Contacts	14

About the Program and the Festival

About —

The Forest of Reading® is Canada's largest recreational reading program – more than 270,000 readers participate every year individually, or at their school or public library. This initiative by the Ontario Library Association offers ten reading programs for all ages, and each program consists of popular Canadian fiction and non-fiction titles. It is intended for readers across the country and those in Canadian international schools. The Forest occupies a major place of prominence in Canada's literary landscape and encourages a love of reading in people of all ages.

Goals of the Forest of Reading —

- To encourage children, young people and adults to enjoy reading
- To develop recognition for Canadian authors and Canadian books
- To contribute to the financial stability of the Canadian publishing industry
- To provide teacher-librarians, teachers, librarians, library staff and parent volunteers with a meaningful tool for improving literacy in schools and libraries
- To respond to community interest and needs

Official Wholesaler —

The Forest of Reading Official Wholesaler is tinlids Inc. Without their support, this program would not be possible.

Forest of Reading Festival —

Save the Date — May 12, 13, and 14, 2020

Our Forest of Reading Festival is a fun and exciting celebration of reading. With over 20,000 participants, the multi-day event is Canada's largest literary event for young readers.

This year's Festival will take place in Toronto, ON at the Harbourfront Centre. Satellite Festivals will also take place in London and the Waterloo Region.

Visit accessola.com/forest to access resources on how to host your own celebration.

Over 10,000 people attend the Festival in Toronto at the Harbourfront Centre. In addition to the award presentations featuring the nominated authors/illustrators, the days are packed with fun and engaging activities, including workshops put on by the authors/illustrators, roving entertainments, games, and giveaways. The authors and illustrators that attend the Festival are some of the most popular authors and illustrators in Canada.

In 2012, the OLA began its Festival expansion and now each year satellite locations are put on in additional cities. Satellite Festivals have been held in Thunder Bay, North Bay, Parry Sound, Ottawa, London, and Sault Ste. Marie. The first French Festival of Trees was also held in 2014 in Toronto. It is the first and only French literary festival of its kind in Canada.

The Festival of Trees has been described by one Forest winner as a "rock star concert for authors."

The Impact of the Festival

- Cultivates a love of reading in children and helps foster life-long readers
- Children get the chance to meet authors/illustrators from their favourite books and participate in educational workshops and fun activities
- Children receive free books, prizes, and other giveaways
- Children get to socialize with others and be a part of the largest literary event for kids in the country

Trademarks —

Most Forest of Reading Award programs are trademarked with either a ® or ™, so please ensure you are following the Brand Guide when using these programs for any purpose. Only registered sites are permitted to be using the Forest brand and its award program logos. The Brand Guide can be found on the Forest of Reading website under "Forest Resources," as well as the password website, under "General Resources."

Hosting Information

Forest of Reading Celebrations

Introduction

The Forest of Reading Festival is the culmination of the Forest of Reading Award programs and is held each year in Toronto in May. Young readers that attend report that the Festival celebration is a key incentive for their participation in the Forest of Reading and OLA would love to see more celebratory events happen across Canada. These events celebrate the books, the creators, being Canadian, the reading achievements of young people and most importantly linking reading to FUN!

The Forest of Reading Festival is the signature celebration which attracts over 12,000 participants, but any celebration, big or small, is encouraged and we want to help make this happen.

Celebrations that are the most successful host these four things:

- award ceremonies for the nominees;
- nominee workshops;
- autographing;
- exhibitors and/or engaging Canadian entertainment.

The OLA has some capacity to co-host local festivals/celebrations in conjunction with a local organizing committee of members, however the Forest of Reading staff can't be everywhere in May and instead would like to support growth in other ways. Travel arrangements, nominee attendance and field trip costs can often be challenging and prohibitive to get to one of the Festivals. The hope is that this guide will assist Forest of Reading registrants to have the tools they need to host their own event.

The information given is based on an event for approximately 1,000 attendees.

Hosting Information

Suggested Structure for Forest Celebrations

Award Ceremonies

- One 45-minute to 1-hour ceremony per 10 authors (shorter if less, but recommended to not have more than 10 nominees per event).
- Narrow down which age group you would like to be involved and which award programs are the best fit for your community.
- Each ceremony has a host to keep the event on time. This person introduces the nominees and the young readers that introduce them on stage. Local celebrities are best suited for this role. They need to be engaging, enthusiastic and can get the crowd excited.
- Each nominee is assigned a student presenter. Additionally, if there are enough students a sign carrier can be involved where they meet the nominee and hold a sign for the audience. The sign carriers are involved in parading nominees on stage but don't speak to the audience. The student presenters prepare an enthusiastic one-minute speech about the nominee and present this to the crowd. The nominee should be given one minute to greet the audience and make remarks

Nominee Workshops:

- 30-minute workshops that give participants the opportunity to meet their favourite nominees, ask questions, and learn about their work. Technical requirements are often needed for this based on the space allotted. Confirm if computers, screen, projectors and microphones are needed well in advance.

Nominee Autographing:

- Scheduled autographing should always be included and should not exceed 1-hour per nominee.

Roving Entertainment:

- Activities or entertainment that can animate a large space is important, particularly for those waiting in lines for autographing. For example, musical performers, roving entertainers, interactive games, displays by the local community groups, exhibitors such as first responders (Fire, Police Community engagement teams), sports teams, etc. are all good to include. The goal is to tie activities to the nominated books if possible, however this sometimes is not possible. All entertainment and exhibitors need to be engaging and appropriate for the age group in attendance.

Food Vendors:

- Participants are encouraged always to bring a lunch with them as the day is action packed. The venue or local organizing committee can arrange for food vendors to be on-site at no cost (their payment is the cost of food purchased by attendees). Concessions, food carts, food trucks are often used at these types of celebrations.

Hosting Information (continued)

Budget Considerations:

- Seeking Grant and Funding opportunities on behalf of satellite festivals, although funding is not guaranteed. OLA can help advise.
- Teaming up with the public library as a joint venture opens up a lot of opportunities and support. By experience this has been a successful partnership in many Festival instances since 2012.
- If selling tickets, ensure there is a management of tickets sales (price determined early and communicated widely) and the profit is used to go back into the event. The event should not be a money-making event and instead revenues and expenses should even out.
- Consider how you are going to decorate the venue with signage to make it appealing to the attendees, but also in the case of recognizing sponsors etc. – a consideration when looking at space to use.
- All nominees must be compensated for their travel and their time and this needs to be determined before they are confirmed to attend. All events associated with the Forest of Reading brand must compensate the author/illustrator.
- Seek additional sponsorships (cash/in kind) locally where possible.

Organizing/Planning Team Considerations:

- The committee should consist of approximately 15 members (per 1,000 attendees). This is to manage functions such as identifying an affordable/free venue, assisting with the schedule, sourcing entertainment, volunteer sourcing and management, running nominee workshops, liaising with local school and public library boards on student volunteers, local promotion and media, etc.
- Ensure the planning committee that is competent, and each member has a valuable role. Also ensuring there is representation from all sectors you are inviting to attend (school boards, library groups, homeschoolers etc.).
- Consider appointing a Chair of the committee to develop and create the schedule for the event (autographing, workshops, ceremony etc.).
- Ensure there is a member to manage author/illustrator schedules leading up to and on the day of the event and is directly in communication with the nominees.
- A further 30 volunteers on-site at the celebration to assist with way finding, activities, and support, etc.
- Ensure the books of the attending nominees are for sale. Reach out to the Forest of Reading's official wholesaler, of the local bookstore to support this initiative. Be sure to communicate what is for sale ahead of the event to attendees.
- Create and publish all press releases for the celebration and use local channels to publicize this event.

Committee Roles and Responsibilities

The Forest of Reading Festivals and celebrations need a local organizing committee. For Festivals these committee work closely with the Director of the Forest of Reading to ensure that the necessary steps are being taken for an excellent event. However, smaller celebrations that happen are run with little or no guidance of the Forest of Reading staff. It is suggested that if a Festival of 1000 people is anticipated than the committee should be about 15. The overall number of volunteers needed for the day of is about 30 people.

Chair of the Festival

1 person

- Ensures that all positions are filled with local members
- Oversees the coordinators and sub-committees
- Works closely with OLA and communicates to OLA on behalf of the committee
- Ensures there is a bus plan in place for unloading and loading attendees during the Festival day
- Responsible on the day of the Festival to ensure that all things run smoothly
- Responsible for staying within the budget that is managed by the committee and set at the beginning of the planning process

Ceremony Coordinator

1- 2 people

- Seek guidance from OLA based on previous Festivals
- Responsible for securing and acting as a liaison with ceremony hosts
- Ensure that script is completed (template provided by OLA)
- Work on the hosts script with Student Presenter Volunteer Coordinator and on the day of the Festival
- Be present 45 minutes before ceremony
- Ensures awards, certificates and extra scripts are behind stage
- Ensures host has everything they need (script, water, microphone etc.)
- Confirm stage set up is correct

Student Volunteer Coordinator

1- 2 people

- Responsible for sending out requests to ticket holders looking for young people to participate in the Ceremony as a presenter or sign carrier
- Coordinator will maintain volunteer application list regularly
- Maintaining a list of presenters and all contact information
- Connect with chaperone contacts regarding format of presentations etc.
- Collect all presenters speeches prior to Festival
- Contact chaperones before to ensure all details are clear and to ensure all permission forms for photos/videos are collected
- Work with Ceremony Coordinator 30 minutes before event to organize parade of authors to ensure all students are where they should be
- Send follow-up thank you notes to chaperones and presenters after the Festival

Roles and Responsibilities (continued)

Volunteer Coordinator

1- 2 people

- Send out requests for Volunteers for Festivals (February 1st)
- Create contact list for volunteers
- Assign volunteers to all aspects of Festival
- Create schedule for volunteers, including breaks
- Communicate three times before Festival with full schedule of events (6 weeks, 3 weeks and the week before)
- Lead information meeting in the morning of the Festival
- Be main contact on site
- Follow up after Festival with thank you notes

Decorating/Hospitality Committee

1-2 people

- Work with Chair leading into the Festival on VIP list from local community
- Responsible for researching local catering options for Green room and reception
- Ensure caterer has arrived and set up properly
- Decorate Green Room and Reception area and make it warm and welcoming
- Responsible for badges for all authors, committee members etc.
- Greet Authors/Guests and check everyone in and supply them with their badges and event details
- Ensure the Green Room is tidy and clean of dirty dishes, etc.
- Have a safe secure place for Authors/Committee members to leave their items that can be watched by Green Room Staff

Entertainment and Exhibitor Committee

3-4 people

- Work with Chair leading into the Festival on all ideas for entertainment
- Ensure that all parties are aware of the budget
- Source out local entertainment/bands for main stage
- Source out potential exhibitors for Festival based on venue to ensure there are stations for attendees to visit
- Source out local roving entertainment
- Entertainment committee will deal with all communication and liaise with Chair
- On site will ensure that entertainment and exhibitors have everything that is required
- Ensure that entertainers receive their payment on site
- Ensure entertainers are aware of their dressing rooms and the schedule/timing so that Festival stays on schedule
- Walk to all exhibitors twice during the day to ensure that they are okay
- Send out thank you notes post Festival

Roles and Responsibilities (continued)

Media Volunteer

1 person

- Create media alerts and press releases (templates available)
- Contact local media outlets with media alerts prior to Festival and press releases post Festival
- Generate interest in the Festival
- Promote with any radio, newspaper, online or television media
- Identify key players that could be interviewed on site
- Main contact on site for any media that comes to the festival

Sponsorship And Support Volunteer

1-2 people

- Work with Chair on sponsorship opportunities from any local sources
- Target organizations or companies that should know about Festival
- Work to invite key decision-makers to the receptions and the Festival

Workshop Volunteer (For Each Program)

3-4 people

- Work with Chair about schedule leading into Festival
- Communicate with Authors workshops to ensure all needs are met (tech, set up etc.)
- Organize schedule of volunteers/committee members that can convene each workshop (introduce author, give 5-minute warning, thank author at end)
- Check the locations before the event starts and make sure everything is set up as requested
- On site - Point of contact for the workshops within the program.
- Ensure authors are given their honorariums
- Connect with authors in the Green room in the morning and make sure they know where they are going
- Follow up with thank you notes to the author

General Volunteer – Overall Set Up

20-30 people

- Need to set up all signage, games, exhibitors etc.
- Autographing area to be set up with signage etc. Ensure flow will work.
- Set up workshop spaces
- Manage autographing lines
- Help with prize table and assist with set up
- Assist wholesaler/vendor if needed at bookstore
- Run games for prizes
- Help at stations that are not exhibitors

Timeline

Month	Local Committee's Duties
October to December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book Venue (ceremony/workshops) • Sort out technical requirements and book if needed • Book hotel blocks for authors • Confirm committee members • Host first meeting with committee
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm author attendance • Book travel arrangements (flights/train, if needed) • Communicate information about the Festival on social media and/or hosting organization's website • Market ticket sales • Source catering for green room (breakfast and lunch) • Source host for ceremony • Source roving and stage entertainment • Gather ideas on local community organizations that want exhibit at the Festival • Promote festival to school boards, homeschoolers, library patrons and local organizations • Book onsite first aid if not included in venue
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book rental vehicles • Confirm author workshops, descriptions, and get text • Confirm details for chaperone information pertinent to each Festival location • Connect with official wholesaler on book and merchandise sales onsite for Festival • Confirm with committee if a reception for authors and committee is feasible (resources/time) • Call out for student presenters for ceremony • Call out for Festival volunteers • Confirm catering for green room • Confirm host • Confirm roving and stage entertainment • Confirm games and engaging entertainment to have in venue other than workshops (interactive games, stations, arts)
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post all final Festival details for release after March Break • Finalize all committee and volunteer roles • Create and use script template • Finalize all signage (OLA can provide support) • Provide list of supplies needed • Notify media outlets of Festival • Volunteer chair to finalize roles and needs for the Festival • Confirm student presenters and contact chaperones • Chair to host a meeting (phone or in person) with committee to assess progress and gaps

Timeline (continued)

Month	Local Committee's Duties
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mail all wristbands and chaperone information/maps to ticket holders in early April • Ship all book prizes and large signage to local committee member • Finalize hotel rooms • OLA to finalize email communication to ticket holders • Connect with all venues, tech people and hotel/travel to confirm everything is in place • Early April: finalize list of volunteers and confirm their involvement in the Festival • Final script to be approved by committee • Confirm student volunteers for ceremony • Finalize all committee members onsite responsibilities
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cut off ticket sales 1 week prior to Festival • Finalize lists of ticket holders • Draft final email to all attendees • Connect with media and consider sending a media advisory to local media contacts • Volunteer coordinator sent final email to volunteers • All committee members to confirm all aspects of their roles are covered • Committee host a teleconference before the event
After Festival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair to follow up with thank you emails to each author • Each subcommittee to thank all people they used for the festival including Vendors, volunteers, entertainers

Sample Budget (Based on 1,000 Attendees)

Revenue is generated to cover the costs of workshops and travel fees for the nominees, plus venue rental, technical requirements and supplies. In many instances communities have access to all of some of these things, so this budget is simply a guide to help understand the needs.

Revenue

	Estimates
Ticket Sales (\$10-\$15/ticket, plus HST)	\$10,000 – \$15,000
Potential Grant Funding	pending
Sponsorship (cash)	pending
Sponsorship (in-kind)	pending

Fixed Expenditures

	Estimates
Nominee Workshop Fees (10 authors X \$150)	\$1,500
Nominee Travel (\$0.45/km or up to \$XXXX flat fee)	\$2,000 – \$5,000
Nominee Accommodations-Hotel (\$150/night)	\$1,500
Venue hire	\$3,000 – \$5,000
Technical Requirements-Equipment Hire (Projector, Screen, Audio systems, etc.)	\$3,000
Hosts/Entertainer	\$500
Signage/Poster Printing/Supplies - nominees, stage, autographing	\$2,000
Shipping of Materials/Prizes	\$300
Entertainment	\$1,000 – \$3,000
Green Room Catering & Reception for nominees and VIPs	\$1,500 – \$3,000
First Aid on site	\$300

Other Suggested Expenditures (Enhancements to Celebrations)

Advertising	These are suggestions to local organizing committees to help enhance their celebrations. Depending on the community it will depend if there is a cost associated. We encourage the committees to reach out to their communities for these items, as they are often available and will make the event more enjoyable for the attendees.
Promotional material	
Food Vendors on site	
Local/Provincial/Federal organizations	

Suggested Questions for Volunteer Application

- First Name
- Last Name
- Email Address
- Home City
- Phone Number
- Why are you interested in volunteering for the Festival?
- Any dietary or allergy concerns? If so, please indicate them.
- Any other considerations?

Commitment Questions (Optional and for Committee to decide if they will be ask these)

- What skills, experience or qualities would you bring to this volunteer role?
- How did you hear about the XXXXX Festival ?
- We may wish to contact a reference for this volunteer position. Please provide us with the contact information for someone (not immediate family) who can speak to your suitability for this role? (Name, email and how you know them)
- Do you have experience working with children? If so, tell us more.

Forest of Reading Festival Contacts

Programs and Event Information –

Forest of Reading® and Festival

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Forest of Reading Support Material and Merchandise –

The Library Marketplace
thelibrarymarketplace.com
Email: orders@accessola.com
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Social Media –

facebook.com/forestofreading
twitter.com/forestofreading

Websites –

General Information: accessola.com/forest
Password Website for Current Registrants:
forestofreading.com
Forest of Reading Festival: forestofreadingfestival.ca