

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO'S

Grand Challenges

Event Planning Guide

A practical guide for planning Grand Challenges-related meetings, workshops, symposia, poster sessions, and hybrid events.

Contact: [Grand Challenges](#)

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1. Purpose and Overview

The UNM Grand Challenges Event Planning Guide supports University of New Mexico faculty, staff, researchers, students, and community partners who are planning events connected to Grand Challenges initiatives.

The guide may be used for lectures, workshops, stakeholder feedback sessions, team-building meetings, poster sessions, hybrid events, and online-only events.

Event organizers are responsible for confirming current reservation procedures, room availability, technology needs, catering deadlines, parking arrangements, and applicable UNM policies before finalizing an event.

2. Before You Begin

Begin by identifying the purpose, audience, scope, and expected outcomes of the event. These decisions will drive the room setup, technology needs, registration process, catering plan, and communications strategy.

Key Planning Questions

- What do you hope to achieve by holding this event?
- Is the purpose to share information, gather feedback from stakeholders, build a team, highlight research, or something else?
- What event design will best serve the purpose?
- Will everything happen in one room, or will breakout spaces be needed?
- Will any portion of the event happen online?
- Are there time or location constraints, such as a specific campus location or speaker availability?
- How many people are expected to attend?
- What is the event budget?
- Will grant funds be used? If so, have sponsor restrictions been reviewed?

Grant-funded events: If using grant funds for an event, the funding agency may have additional restrictions or policies. Contact Contract and Grant Accounting for guidance: <https://cgacct.unm.edu>

Organizers' Responsibility: Event organizers are responsible for confirming current reservation procedures, room availability, technology needs, catering deadlines, parking arrangements, and applicable UNM policies before finalizing an event.

3. Choose the Event Format

Lecture or Speaker-Focused Event

Best for transmitting information. Generally requires one room, a podium, microphone, laptop, and screen for slides. Seating may be arranged at round tables, in classroom style, or in rows of chairs.

Workshop or Feedback-Focused Event

Best for collaborative work, idea generation, and group discussion. May use one large room or multiple smaller rooms. Round or conference tables work best when encouraging conversation.

Team-Building Event

Best for research teams or working groups. Plan for one room per team when possible, using conference table setups.

Poster Session

Best for sharing research, showcasing projects, and encouraging informal discussion. Consider an extra room or a larger room that can accommodate poster boards and circulation.

Hybrid Event

Works best for lecture-focused events but can be used for workshops and team-building with careful planning. Include a moderator to support Zoom attendees and use collaborative tools such as shared documents.

Online-Only Event

Best when speakers or attendees are not in Albuquerque or when travel is impractical. Plan for online engagement, technical support, and recording needs.

4. Reserve Space

Reserve space as early as possible. Classrooms and other spaces that host classes may not be scheduled until the Registrar has assigned semester class locations.

Free Spaces at UNM

Central Classrooms

Classrooms may be requested through the Registrar. Classrooms cannot be finalized until after semester classroom assignments are complete.

Classroom request: <https://registrar.unm.edu/schedule-office/request.html>

Scheduling through the Registrar: <https://registrar.unm.edu/faculty--staff-resources/scheduling--classrooms.html>

Central classroom spaces and capacity: <https://registrar.unm.edu/faculty--staff-resources/central-classrooms.pdf>

Roberts Room and Scholes 101 Conference Room, Scholes Hall

Roberts Room capacity is approximately 60. Scholes 101 capacity is approximately 18. [Contact](#) or 505-277-4664. Bring a laptop and confirm needed cords and equipment in advance.

Library Spaces

UNM Libraries provides room reservation information online.

Library rooms: <https://library.unm.edu/services/rooms/>

James & Gail Ellis School of Business

Includes Jackson Student Center and classrooms in McKinnon Center for Management. Submit the online request and follow up [here](#) and/or [Cristina Mooney](#) or 505-277-6148. For technology, request support on the room form and follow up with [Anderson](#) IT. Schedule a technician 15 minutes before the event and request a slide advancer if needed. Food information is required on the room request form. External guests may need access assistance for locked exterior doors.

Room reservations: <https://business.unm.edu/reserve-a-room.html>

Ortega Hall Room 335

Contact the [Department of Spanish and Portuguese](#). Fall semester requests may need to wait until August, and spring requests may need to wait until January, after classroom schedules are established.

Physics and Astronomy and Interdisciplinary Science Building (PAIS)

Rooms include PAIS 1010 Workroom, PAIS 2120 Coop Room, and PAIS 22124 Coop Conference Room. Review room descriptions, photos, capacities, and schedules before submitting a request. For questions and confirmation, contact [Carla Sakiestewa](#).

PAIS room information: <https://physics.unm.edu/about/room-reservations.html>

PAIS room request: <https://isco-op.unm.edu/meeting-space/room-request-meeting.html>

Technology & Education Building / College of Education and Human Sciences

Rooms include TEC 130, 160, 220, 280 Computer Lab, and 290. Contact [Christopher Isham](#). For technology help, contact [Charles Dye](#).

Basehart EPSCoR Conference Room

Contact the [Grand Challenges Office](#).

Paid Spaces at UNM

Student Union Building

Check SUB space availability online by browsing spaces under Campus Event Calendars. To reserve space, call the SUB at 505-277-5498. A contract will be emailed for signature and a departmental index will be required for payment.

SUB availability: <https://ems.unm.edu/EmsWebApp/>

Continuing Education Conference and Meeting Space

Continuing Education Conference Center: <https://ce.unm.edu/conference-center/>

5. Plan Virtual or Hybrid Participation

UNM Zoom licensing and access:

<https://webmeetings.unm.edu/licensing/access.html>

UNM MediaSpace: <https://mediaspace.unm.edu/>

- Make sure the person setting up the meeting knows which Zoom functions will be used.
- Confirm who will record the meeting and where the video will be stored.
- If using a waiting room, designate someone to monitor and approve entry.
- For hybrid meetings, make sure speakers know where the camera and microphone are located.
- Plan how online attendees will hear audience comments. Ask speakers to repeat questions or assign someone to type in-room questions into Zoom chat.
- If using breakout rooms, name the rooms and add participants in advance when possible. Save the meeting as a template for similar future meetings.

Suggested Hybrid roles:

- Event host: welcomes participants and keeps the agenda moving.

- Zoom moderator: monitors chat, waiting room, and online questions.
- Room technology lead: manages microphones, camera, projector, and slides.
- Presenter support: helps speakers before and during presentations.
- Registration lead: checks in attendees and distributes materials.
- Note taker: captures discussion points, questions, and follow-up items.

6. Arrange Speakers and Presenters

External speakers and presenters may require additional review, documentation, travel planning, and payment processing. Review relevant UNM policies before making commitments.

Speakers from off campus: <https://policy.unm.edu/regents-policies/section-2/2-2.html>

Travel policy: <https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/4000/4030.html>

Foreign nationals: <https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/2000/2180.html>

PCard travel allowable and unallowable purchases:
<https://pcard.unm.edu/pcard-for-travel/allowable--unallowable-purchases.html>

Honorarium payments: <https://ua.unm.edu/honorarium-payments.html>

Suggested information to collect from speakers:

- Full name and title
- Institutional affiliation
- Presentation title
- Short biography
- Headshot, if needed for promotion
- Presentation abstract
- AV/technology needs
- Travel preferences and hotel needs
 - Book flight and hotel using a PCard when appropriate or allow the speaker to book and seek reimbursement after the event if allowed.
- Honorarium information, if applicable
 - Payment or reimbursement documentation
 - Reimburse speakers after the event for allowable per diem and ground transportation.
- Dietary restrictions
- Emergency contact, if appropriate for travel

7. Arrange Attendee Travel and Visitor Information

UNM local hotel information: <https://purchase.unm.edu/local-hotel-information/index.html>

Campus maps: <https://css.unm.edu/campus-maps/index.html>

Visit Albuquerque digital visitor guide: <https://www.visitalbuquerque.org/plan-my-trip/travel-tools/guides/2026-visit-albuquerque-digital-visitors-guide/>

8. Set the Agenda

- Schedule presentations according to speaker availability.
- Arrange for workshop facilitators when needed.
- If attendees will move between rooms, leave transition time between sessions.
- Consider feeding attendees for events lasting three or more hours or events scheduled across mealtimes.
- Include breaks throughout the day.

9. Set Up Registration

Registration should collect enough information to support communication, logistics, accessibility, and catering needs. Information that may be helpful to collect:

- Name
- Email
- Job title or field
- Institution or organization
- Questions for presenters
- Dietary requirements
- Accessibility accommodation requests
- Questions for speaker or panel
- Permission to share contact information with other attendees

Suggested template for accommodation requests:

If you require an accommodation to participate in this event, please contact [event contact name/email] by [date]. Requests made as early as possible will allow event organizers to best meet participant needs.

Suggested programs for creating registration forms

Google Forms: <https://forms.google.com>

Microsoft Forms: <https://forms.office.com/>

10. Create and Share the Event Announcement

UNM Events Calendar: <https://unmevents.unm.edu/>

UNM brand guidelines and logo usage: <http://brand.unm.edu/>

- Create a concise title and event description.
- Include date, time, location, registration link, and contact information.
- Use approved UNM branding and logo guidance.
- Share through newsletters, email lists, and other appropriate channels.

11. Reserve Technology, Furniture, and Equipment

For space in the SUB, furniture and audiovisual equipment can be arranged through SUB staff at 505-277-5498.

UNM Special Activities and Movers: <https://fm.unm.edu/services/special-activities-and-movers.html>

- Poster boards or pinboards
- Tables and chairs
- Microphones
- Projectors and screens
- Laptop and slide advancer
- Extension cords and power strips
- Directional signage

12. Order Catering

Hospitality policy: <https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/4000/4000.html>

UNM Catering: <https://food.unm.edu/catering/index.html>

External catering guidance: <https://pcard.unm.edu/policies-and-procedures/approved--prohibited-uses.html#FR>

- UNM catering orders typically require lead time. Confirm ordering deadlines early.
- External vendor timelines vary. Larger events should be planned earlier.
- Free events often have no-shows. Avoid excessive over-ordering when possible.
- Share updated catering needs with the venue contact if plans change.
- When food is provided, planners should collect dietary restrictions during registration and consider common needs such as vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, and allergy-sensitive options.

Alcohol at Events

Alcoholic beverages may be allowable at hospitality events when customary and reasonable, but all on-campus alcohol use must be consistent with UAP 2140 and is generally limited to beer and wine. The amount spent on alcohol may not exceed 30 percent of the total amount spent for food. Alcohol generally may not be purchased with University funds for on-campus events attended only by University employees. Contract and grant funds may not be used to purchase alcohol as a hospitality expense.

Use and Possession of Alcohol on University Property:

<https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/2000/2140.html>

- A licensed bartender is typically required to serve alcohol. On campus, this may be arranged through UNM Catering.
- Begin alcohol planning early due to added approvals and restrictions.

13. Order or Prepare Supplies

Create a supply list at least two weeks before the event to allow time for ordering and preparation.

- Attendee packets: folders, pens, swag, agenda, maps, materials, feedback forms
- Event supplies: name badges, holders, flip charts, sticky notes, markers
- Room supplies: pens, rubber bands, stapler, paper clips, power strips for all-day events
- Presentation backup: flash drives with presenter slides

14. Set Up Parking

Department hang tags: <https://pats.unm.edu/parking/unm-departmental-parking/index.html>

Visitor parking: <https://pats.unm.edu/parking/visitors.html>

For a parking garage code, call Kathy at PATS at 505-925-9580.

15. Printing and Name Tags

- Agenda
- Activity instructions
- Icebreakers
- Name badges
- Feedback forms
- Attendance sheets
- Other event-specific materials

16. Event-Day Setup

- Set up registration table.
- Lay attendee materials on tables.
- Prepare the front of the room.
- Check technology.
- Load slides to laptop.
- Complete Zoom microphone and camera checks.
- Place agenda at the front of the room.
- Confirm catering setup.
- Place trash bins in visible locations near food and doors.

17. Break Down After the Event

- Collect name badge lanyards if they are not being kept by attendees.
- Collect feedback forms.
- Pick up reusable supplies such as folders, pens, or materials not taken by attendees.
- Collect and dispose of trash and recycling.
- Send follow-up communications, slides, meeting minutes, recordings, and next steps.

18. Accessibility and Inclusive Event Planning

All event planners should consider accessibility and inclusion as part of the planning process.

- Select accessible event spaces.
- Include accommodation request fields in registration forms.

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- Plan for captioning or transcripts when recording virtual or hybrid sessions.
- Offer dietary options when food is served.
- Make event materials available electronically when possible.
- Ensure online attendees have meaningful opportunities to participate in hybrid events.

Appendix A: Event Planning Checklist

Planning and Purpose

- ☐ Define event purpose and goals
- ☐ Identify audience and estimated attendance
- ☐ Confirm event format: in person, hybrid, or online
- ☐ Confirm budget and funding source
- ☐ Review grant restrictions if applicable

Space and Technology

- ☐ Reserve event space
- ☐ Confirm room capacity and setup
- ☐ Request technology support
- ☐ Test microphones, screens, Zoom, and presentation equipment
- ☐ Arrange furniture, poster boards, or special room setup

Speakers and Agenda

- ☐ Invite speakers or presenters
- ☐ Review applicable speaker, travel, honorarium, and foreign national policies
- ☐ Collect speaker bios, titles, and presentation needs
- ☐ Finalize agenda
- ☐ Prepare facilitator assignments if needed

Registration and Promotion

- ☐ Create registration form
- ☐ Collect dietary and accommodation needs
- ☐ Post event to UNM Events Calendar
- ☐ Use UNM brand guidelines for materials
- ☐ Send reminders and logistical details to attendees

Food, Parking, and Supplies

- ☐ Order catering
- ☐ Confirm catering final counts and setup
- ☐ Arrange parking or provide visitor parking instructions
- ☐ Prepare agendas, name badges, supplies, and feedback forms
- ☐ Print signage and participant materials

Day of Event and Follow-Up

- ☐ Set up registration and room materials
- ☐ Complete technology check
- ☐ Monitor schedule and attendee needs
- ☐ Collect feedback
- ☐ Send post-event follow-up and materials

Appendix B: Resource Links

Resource	Purpose	Website
Contract and Grant Accounting	Grant-funded event guidance	https://cgacct.unm.edu/
Registrar Classroom Request	Classroom request information	https://registrar.unm.edu/schedule-office/request.html
Registrar Scheduling and Classrooms	Scheduling resources for classrooms	https://registrar.unm.edu/faculty--staff-resources/scheduling--classrooms.html
Central Classrooms PDF	Classroom inventory and central classroom details	https://registrar.unm.edu/faculty--staff-resources/central-classrooms.pdf
University Libraries Rooms	Library room reservation information	https://library.unm.edu/services/rooms/
Ellis School of Business Room Reservations	Jackson Student Center and McKinnon Center reservations	https://business.unm.edu/reserve-a-room.html
PAIS Room Information	Physics and Astronomy room information, seats, and technology	https://physics.unm.edu/about/room-reservations.html
PAIS Room Request	PAIS and Interdisciplinary Science room request form	https://isco-op.unm.edu/meeting-space/room-request-meeting.html
SUB EMS Space Availability	Browse Student Union Building spaces	https://ems.unm.edu/EmsWebApp/
UNM Continuing Education Conference Center	Conference and meeting spaces	https://ce.unm.edu/conference-center/

UNM Zoom Licensing and Access	Zoom access and licensing information	https://webmeetings.unm.edu/licensing/access.html
UNM MediaSpace	Cloud recordings access for Zoom recordings	https://mediaspace.unm.edu/
Regents Policy: Speakers from Off Campus	Policy for speakers from off campus	https://policy.unm.edu/regents-policies/section-2/2-2.html
Travel Policy	UNM travel policy	https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/4000/4030.html
Foreign National Requirements	Foreign national policy requirements	https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/2000/2180.html
PCard Travel Allowable/Unallowable Purchases	PCard travel guidance	https://pcard.unm.edu/pcard-for-travel/allowable--unallowable-purchases.html
Honorarium Payments	Honorarium payment guidance	https://ua.unm.edu/honorarium-payments.html
Local Hotel Information	UNM negotiated hotel rates and hotel information	https://purchase.unm.edu/local-hotel-information/index.html
Campus Maps	UNM campus maps	https://css.unm.edu/campus-maps/index.html
Visit Albuquerque Digital Visitors Guide	Albuquerque visitor guide	https://www.visitalbuquerque.org/plan-my-trip/travel-tools/guides/2026-visit-albuquerque-digital-visitors-guide/
Google Forms	Registration form option	https://forms.google.com
UNM Events Calendar	Post UNM event information	https://unmevents.unm.edu/
UNM Brand Guidelines	UNM brand guidelines and logo usage	http://brand.unm.edu/
UNM Special Activities and Movers	Furniture, poster boards,	https://fm.unm.edu/services/special-activities-and-movers.html

	special event setup	
Hospitality Policy	UNM hospitality policy	https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/4000/4000.html
UNM Catering	UNM catering information	https://food.unm.edu/catering/index.html
External Catering/PCard Food Guidance	External catering guidance	https://pcard.unm.edu/policies-and-procedures/approved--prohibited-uses.html#FR
Use and Possession of Alcohol on University Property	Alcohol use policy	https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/2000/2140.html
Departmental Parking	Department hang tags and departmental parking	https://pats.unm.edu/parking/unm-departmental-parking/index.html
Visitor Parking	Visitor parking information	https://pats.unm.edu/parking/visitors.html

Appendix C: Contacts

Contact/Office/Email	Purpose	Phone
Grand Challenges	General event questions and Basehart EPSCoR Conference Room	
Scholes Hall	Roberts Room and Scholes 101 Conference Room	505-277-4664
Ellis School of Business Rooms	Jackson Student Center and McKinnon Center room support	
Cristina Mooney	Ellis School of Business room support	505-277-6148
Anderson/Ellis IT	Technology confirmation for Ellis School of Business rooms	
Spanish and Portuguese Department	Ortega Hall Room 335	
Carla Sakiestewa	PAIS room questions and confirmation	
Christopher Isham	COEHS/TEC room reservations	
Charles Dye	COEHS/TEC technology help	
Student Union Building	SUB room reservations	505-277-5498
PATS Parking Contact Kathy	Garage parking code support	505-925-9580