RSA Fellowship
Planning your Fellow Event
Introduction

We believe that Fellows connecting with other Fellows is at the heart of what the RSA is all about. It speaks to our 260 year mission of enriching society through ideas and action, and is the kind of grass-roots social movement that our Power to Create approach is based on.

So we want to help you get the most out of your Fellow Event, helping you connect, network and unleash your own Power to Create!

Getting started - Useful contact details

In your area web section

This is where your local chair and regional manager’s contact details can be found. It’s also where we promote the latest events and news from your region. This section showcases the latest local projects and is a great place to understand what’s going on in your region.

thersa.org/fellowship/in-your-area

MyRSA

By updating your profile in MyRSA you’ll be able to search for like-minded Fellows – and invite them to your event!

Using the RSA Fellowship brand

Contact your regional manager who will be able to supply you with a logo and brand guidelines.
# Types of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open Dinner</td>
<td>Debate topical issues over an informal meal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Themed conferences</td>
<td>mixed debate and discussion with invited speakers and practical workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Networking</td>
<td>structured networking where people get the opportunity to increase their contacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open space meetings</td>
<td>aimed at getting people to talk about things they’re interested in, with no fixed agenda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project-development workshops</td>
<td>look at a particular issue or challenge, ask attendees to work together on ideas that they could take forward afterwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership events</td>
<td>joint events with other organisations, taking various formats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live-streaming lecture</td>
<td>create an event around one of the RSA lectures that has been/is being live-streamed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecture and/or debate</td>
<td>lecture given on a specific topic with panel and audience debate to follow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Event Checklist

When organising an event, your first point of contact is your Regional Manager

- Identify the purpose of the event
  - Target audience
  - Key messages
  - Is it a one-off or start of a series?
  - Set a budget

- Have you spoken to the regional/national team?
  - Does it fit into their existing calendar of events?
  - Are they able to offer support, either logistical or financial?

- Choose your event type
  - What is the best platform on which to communicate your message?
  - Consider the audience (demographic/numbers)

- Choose your venue
  - Use existing partnerships?
  - RSA Spaces
  - Capacity
  - Equipment
  - Facilities
  - Catering
  - Accessibility
  - Transport links
  - Price
  - Parking
  - Disabled access

- Market your event
  - Advertising
    - Communications strategy
    - Timeline of communications leading up to event
  - Invite-only / public event
    - Communications through regional programme manager
    - Press release / newsletter
    - Through social media sites/
    - Fellows’ own platforms

- Event follow-up
  - Thank speakers/attendees in follow up email
  - Feedback forms
  - Blog
How to develop your idea
RSA Factsheet

Stage 1
- **Why this idea?**
  What issue are you trying to resolve?
  What do you want to achieve?

Stage 2
- **Has anybody thought of this before?**
  If not, why not?
  If so, what can you learn from them?
  Why is yours different?

Stage 3
- **What and who do you need to succeed?**
  What resources do you need?
  Can you get any support in-kind?

Stage 4
- **How will you measure success?**
  What will you measure?
  How will you make sure you measure it from the start?

Stage 5
- **How will you set this up?**
  And what do you need from the RSA?
  Catalyst  Crowdfunding
  Skillsbank  Contacts
How to develop your idea
RSA Factsheet

You’ve got a great idea for a new project? Fantastic! Welcome to the start of your idea development journey. There are a few questions to ask which, based on our experience, helps to shape your idea from the start.

Stage 1: Why this idea?
You’ve identified a great idea and want to get the ball rolling. From the start, make a clear list of issues you’re resolving and achievements you’re aiming for – let’s call this the jump point. This is both for clarity of thought now and future-proofing – so when you’re knee-deep in funding applications you can remind yourself of where you’re going and why.

Is this the right solution? Projects develop over the course of their lifetime, and sometimes the right answer isn’t glaringly obvious. Using your initial plans, you can and should regularly question if you are going in the right direction. You can also clarify your impact measurements using your idea plan.

Stage 2: Has anybody thought of this idea before?
And if not, why not? Sometimes projects, with all the best intentions, fail for very legitimate reasons. Do an initial scoping of the market – a quick internet search, looking at social enterprise support organisations like UnLtd and Nesta, and asking your friends and colleagues may unearth these projects.

Knowing where projects went wrong can help you to avoid similar pitfalls, and also help you to clarify where you fit in the market. You may also be able to share learning and resources with projects working on similar issues – they could be an RSA Fellow. And it might be that somebody has already addressed the problem you’re looking at – and just needs support scaling up or replicating in other areas.

Stage 3: What and who do I need to make this successful?
With a strong idea, a clear message and the right network of contacts you may be able to source in-kind support without the need to part with money. Work out what resources you need (eg location, IT capacity, promotional materials) and who you need (eg marketing support, project development support, a legal framework), then cost these up. Having a financial value is useful, and having in-kind support is invaluable.

Stage 4: How do I measure this?
Knowing how you’re going to measure the impact you’re having is invaluable, and will enable you to build the evidence base to scale up. Make sure to measure what it is you’re trying to achieve, with a combination of qualitative (stories) and quantitative (data) information.

Stage 5: How do I go about setting this up?
There are a lot of tools and resources available to help start-up ideas. Through the RSA you can apply for the RSA Catalyst fund, where you can apply for up to £7,000 and non-financial support. Find other Fellows who can support your project through SkillsBank. Other sources of funding exist - speak to your Regional Manager to find out more.

Stage 6: What next? Pick a route of RSA Engagement

- **RSA Catalyst**
  Get a grant, get help from other Fellows and gather financial support from the crowd.
  [thersa.org/catalyst](http://thersa.org/catalyst)

- **RSA Regional Team**
  Talk to your regional RSA staff member to discuss your idea or project
  [thersa.org/fellowship/contact](http://thersa.org/fellowship/contact)

- **RSA Project Engagement Team**
  Get in touch with the team who are seeking out high potential project ideas and supporting work on the RSA’s Change Aims
  [thersa.org/fellowship/contact](http://thersa.org/fellowship/contact)
The RSA was built around the notion of people coming together to share ideas and improve society. This still holds true today and we encourage Fellows who are keen to bring others together through networks to explore issues facing their communities and the wider world.

Please consider the following important questions:

- What location/topic will be the focus of the network?
- Why do you want to bring Fellows together?
- Why do you think people will come and take part?
- What do you want to achieve with the network?
- How will your network function and be managed?

Setting up a network requires time and energy but the rewards are worth it.

The RSA will support you by:

- Meeting you to finalise your network idea
- Promoting your network
- Setting up a booking webpage
- Making connections with local Fellows and the regional Fellows team
- Offering advice and case studies to develop your network
Guidance for Fellow-led Thematic Networks

Thematic Networks within the RSA’s Fellowship are Fellow-led efforts to focus activity, events and projects around a specific topic or thematic area. There are a number of successful networks currently operating across the Fellowship, however the approach that they take and the structure they follow currently varies considerably.

In order to help maximise the impact of these networks, the consistency of their delivery, the quality of the support they receive and the opportunity for Fellows to create new networks as appropriate, we suggest the following standard practices should be adopted through the Fellowship Council:

- **Naming Convention:** RSA Fellows’ *xxx* Network
- **Governance/Reporting:** Fellow-led thematic networks should be open to Fellows interested in participating, and may also include non-Fellows keen to contribute to the work of the RSA. Thematic networks should liaise with, and report to, the relevant Regional and/or National teams for the areas that they are working in – in this way, thematic network activity can be supported by the R/N teams, and build into relevant development plans.
- **Promotion:** From the connection with the R/N teams, promotion and advertising of thematic network activity can be carried out through R/N mailings, and flagged up with the Fellowship newsletter and other RSA communication channels as appropriate.
- **Events Booking:** As standard practice Fellowship events should look to use the main RSA Fellowship eventbrite account for event management. This allows for centralised collation of information and data; standardisation of advertising, logo use and styling; and support from the Fellowship team for Fellow-led thematic network activity. The relevant Regional Programme Manager for each area can assist networks with accessing this information.
- **Logo:** Fellow-led thematic networks, working with their relevant R/N teams, may use the RSA Fellowship logo for their promotion.
- **Fellowship Council:** Building on the collaborative relationships between the Fellow-led thematic networks and the R/N teams, the R/N teams will take the responsibility for feeding back on Fellow-led thematic network activity in their areas to the wider Fellowship Council, therefore facilitating cross-RSA sharing of ideas, activity and learning.

Fellows leading network activity are called Network Leads. Joint Network Leads can share responsibilities and share skills.
Promoting your event

Get in contact with your RSA regional manager through the Fellowship/in your area section of the website.

They will be able to give you specific, tailored advice about the best way to make sure the right people know about your event!

General rules for promoting a good event include:

- Be clear about what your event is all about – the Fellowship has a huge diversity of interests so the more clarity you can bring to your event the better!
- Say, when, where, what’s it all about and how to get there!
- MyRSA lets to see who’s nearby that might be interested – and contact them in the way that works best for them
- Social media is a powerful tool – some platforms like Facebook have a lot of ‘built in’ events tools that will help you reach a wider audience
- Use your local and personal networks to invite key attendees and speakers
- Send an email reminder a few days before your event to your attendee list

Tell us all about your event!

We want to know about your event! We sometimes feature the best Fellow Events and projects on our website, and we’re always interested to find out more about what’s going on in the Network.

Contact us on Fellowship@RSA.org.uk