

Cosmic Café Preparation Checklist

Most informal venues are unaccustomed to hosting events like a Cosmic Café. Arrive at least an hour ahead of time. You'll want to give yourself plenty of time to check the AV, arrange the seating, position a screen, test the video, and talk through the event with the venue staff.

Check/Review before arriving:

- ☐ That speaker, volunteers, and venue all know the date and time of the café
- ☐ The arrangement with the venue for food and drink specials (if any)
- ☐ The kind of computer the speaker will be using and the best format for the video clip
- ☐ Sample Cosmic Café schedule
- ☐ The brief overview of The Fabric of the Cosmos series
- ☐ Your notes for speaking/moderating/wrapping up
- ☐ Video clip description
- ☐ What you'll say to introduce the speaker
- ☐ Tips for helping a general audience understand the topic (e.g., key idea, focus questions)
- ☐ Description of the TV episode and a summary of its main points (PDF)
- ☐ Ideas for using The Fabric of the Cosmos coasters with café attendees

Bring with you:

- ☐ Signs or flyers to direct people to the café (if necessary)
- ☐ Sign-in sheet
- ☐ Pencils
- ☐ The Fabric of the Cosmos coasters
- ☐ Video clip on a computer, memory stick, and DVD (having all three can save many headaches!)
- ☐ Extension cord
- ☐ Multi-plug outlet strip
- ☐ Video cables to connect your/the speaker's computer to the TV monitor or projector
- ☐ Video projector (if necessary)
- ☐ Movie screen (if necessary)
- ☐ Giveaways (if any)
- ☐ Promotional materials about Fabric, your society/program, and the speaker's organization
- ☐ Camera and photo release forms so you can post the photos and use them for promotion
- ☐ Duct tape for posting flyers/signs, taping down extension cords, etc.
- ☐ Evaluation to assess the audience's experience of your café

To do at the Café:

- ☐ Welcome and orient volunteers (if any).
- ☐ Check in with the venue about the food and drink specials (if any) and names of the wait staff.
- ☐ Post signs/flyers to direct people to the café (if necessary).
- ☐ Set out sign-in sheet.
- ☐ Arrange tables and chairs to accommodate the anticipated number of people.
- ☐ Put several The Fabric of the Cosmos coasters on each table.
- ☐ Set up screen or hook computer up to the monitor.
- ☐ Check AV (computer sound, microphone [if you're using one], etc.).
- ☐ Test video clip to confirm cueing, start/stop, format, sound, etc.
- ☐ Put evaluation forms, giveaways, and other handouts in an easy-to-reach place.
- ☐ Suggest follow-up ideas from the wrap-up ideas to invite further conversation and exploration.