

Opening Ceremony

An exciting community event as we kick off the Games with a spectacular celebration of the opening ceremony! Our festive gathering will feature lively music, delectable food from local vendors, and a variety of engaging activities for all ages.

Experience the thrill of Sport-themed games, enjoy captivating performances, and connect with fellow sports enthusiasts as we come together to honor the start of this global event.

The highlight of the evening will be watching the opening ceremony live on a big screen, allowing us to share in the pageantry and excitement as the world's greatest athletes unite in the spirit of competition.

Don't miss this opportunity to celebrate with friends, family, and neighbors, and to be part of a memorable night filled with joy and community pride!

The opening ceremony can be organized in several phases. You can choose from this guide the strategies that suit you.

We suggest the following format:

Phase 1: Parade (30 to 40 minutes)

Phase 2: Festival (1 to 2 hours)

Phase 3: Game zone and/or sports zone / inclusive sports zone (1 to 2 hours)

Phase 4: Gathering and awards ceremony (30 to 40 minutes)

Phase 5: Watch together the competitions or the opening ceremony (2 - 3 hours)

You can change the order and number of phases as you wish, for example: There can be a Phase 2 and a Phase 3 separately depending on the time and availability of people, or there can be only Phase 2 and not 3, or Phase 3 and not 2, etc.



Welcome and Gathering

Start your event by incorporating some of these suggestions to get everyone excited about having a good time together. This part sets the stage for the rest of the event. Select and organize what suits your context best.

- Welcome everyone in an open and warm atmosphere
- Explain the context of the event and what participants can expect today
- Opening speech by a local politician or a member of the administration, an active or retired athlete, a local celebrity, etc.
- Presentation of local dances or songs
- Singing the national anthem together
- Overview of the upcoming program – Give people options and the freedom to choose activities
- Choose other activities based on your context and preferences

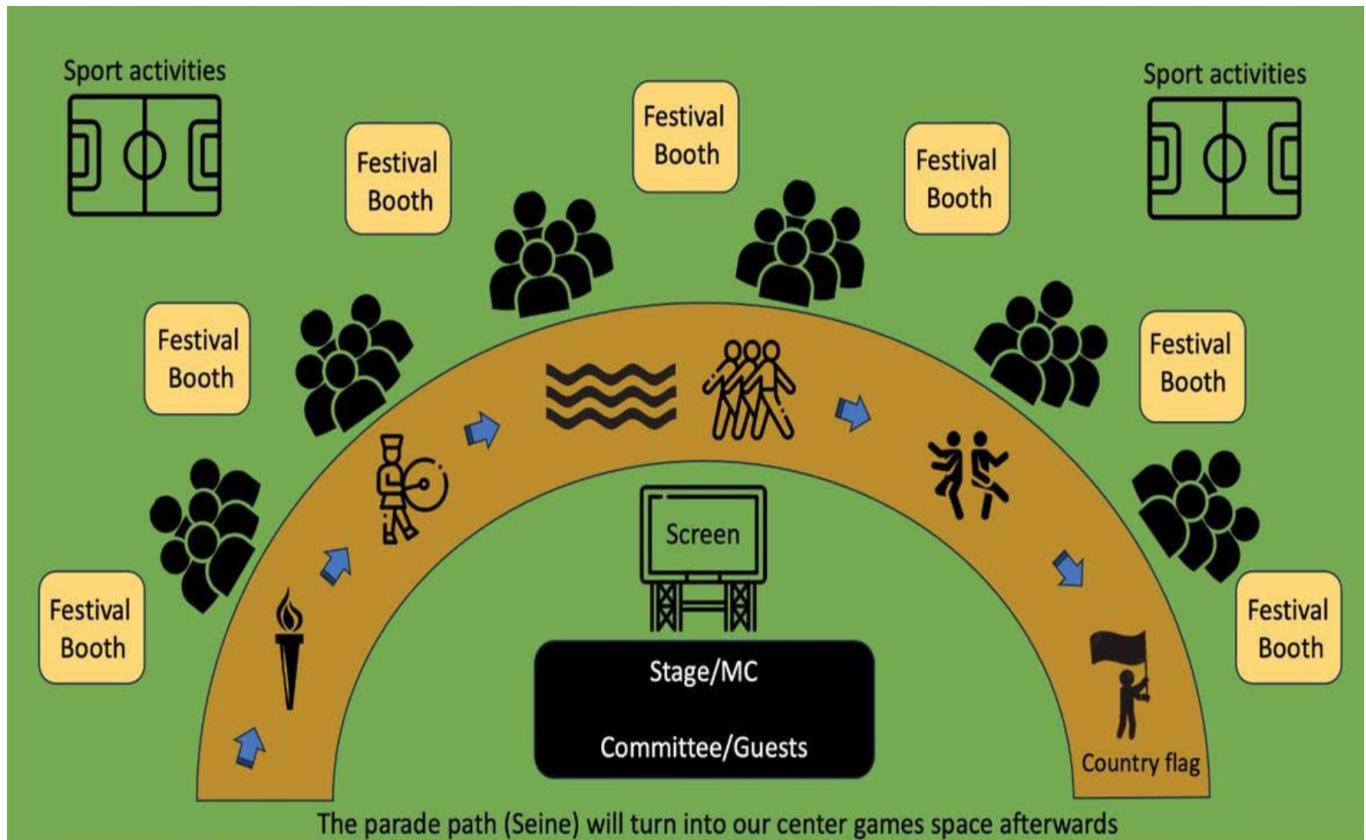


Parade

The whole community is invited to gather in a public area and watch the parade, similar to what will be on the Seine River a few hours later. There is an MC who introduces each group in the parade as the crowd cheers.

The parade may be led by that nation's flag followed by community leaders / sports stars / etc. Each community determines what their parade looks like. There will be traditional dress and a celebration of all things French and locals appreciate.

- There may be dancers / gymnasts / sports teams/ scouts / community groups / schools. Every group is acknowledged and celebrated. We want to emphasize that in both the parade and the following activity, the participants are the stars.
- The local leaders welcome everyone and give a speech. When it is completed, a local personality runs in with a torch and if possible, a cauldron is lit.
- Speeches from athletes (recordings of speeches of local or international athletes) can be a good way of highlighting their heroes and engaging the community.
- The MC would guide the program offering very clear details of what the program is like and it includes an invitation to the closing ceremony.



Sports zone

Matches, small competitions, and workshops take place here, organized by local sports clubs. The activities can explore individual sports such as jumping, running, discus throwing, and archery, as well as team sports like football, basketball, volleyball, badminton, etc.

This zone provides an opportunity to present and discover these different sports for children, adolescents, and anyone wishing to practice a sport.

We are looking for talented players as part of the project, with the aim of integrating them into local clubs or creating new clubs and sports teams if necessary.

Sports Zone booths

We aim to create a dedicated space where sports clubs and local associations can showcase their activities, allowing people to connect with them. Here, different sports and skills will be taught, offering a wide range of opportunities for all participants. Competitions will be organized, accompanied by technical evaluations by experienced coaches, to identify talented players.

There can also be fitness sessions and opportunities to organize competitions in ping pong, spikeball, darts, etc.

This place aims to be a meeting point for all those who wish to discover, learn, and engage in various sports activities.



Gathering, awards and closing ceremony



Like major sporting events, it is always pleasant to reward the efforts of the various participants as well as the winners of the competitions organized throughout the day.

Also, consider:

- Inviting a celebrity, athlete, or local official to give an official speech and talk about the importance of sports for society.
- Encouraging participants to connect with the different sports clubs and associations present to sign up and continue participating in the sport that interests them.
- Informing participants and spectators about upcoming events that will be organized and inviting them to participate, challenging them to bring at least one friend next time.
- Presenting a local dance or inviting participants to dance together.
- Introducing the teams and athletes who have won the competitions and presenting them with awards.



Games zone

For those who are not as interested in sports activities, it is possible to include non-sporting competitions such as performances, singing, or dancing.

During the program, we are looking for potential leaders for future children's games.

Kids games booths

This is a program for children using games to engage children, adolescents, and families, making them have fun, learn, and enjoy together.

The principle of the game zone is to include everyone. Since interests vary from person to person, some may prefer reading or creative arts over sports, or enjoy family activities such as games. To cater to this diversity of tastes, it is best to offer a variety of workshops and booths. This way, everyone can find an activity that interests them and fully enjoy the event. By diversifying the options, we ensure that everyone, regardless of their interests, feels included and has a good time.

Activities

- “In the Pond/Out the Pond”;
- Water Balloon Volleyball;
- Limbo;
- Sack Races;
- Egg & Spoon Race;
- Three-Legged Race;
- Giant tug of war;
- Keeping a large beach ball in the air;
- Karaoke;
- Inviting everyone to join in a dance;
- ...



Watch parties

Opportunity:

Providing a safe, fun, and engaging atmosphere for people to enjoy watching a sports game, ceremony, or event to build relationships through celebration and common passion.



Requirements:

1. Meaningful pretext (what brings us together, i.e.: celebrating World Cups, Olympics, sports finals);
2. hospitality (building a familial environment), generosity and kindness, being willing to reach people;
3. Must be free of charge and inclusive of all supporters, nationalities, abilities;
4. An atmosphere of celebration and non-conflictual behavior between supporters, with emphasis on celebration and fun;
5. Good connectivity, appropriate technological equipment, updated subscriptions, right channels and legalities on viewing numbers;
6. Consider snacks if financially and logistically possible;
7. Make sure the space is accessible to all abilities! Wheelchair accessible, subtitles for the deaf, appropriate audio for the blind, etc.;
8. A great way to educate people on a new or different sports through teaching/games including about rules, history, players, or teams;
9. Use international games or events to learn about and appreciate the diversity of other cultures - have people of a participating nation share some of their traditions? Food? Songs, games, haka, anecdotes, stories, etc.



Process:

Before the event:

- Confirm and abide by legalities of the number of persons viewing (private or public); rules around promoting the event - i.e., public flyers, social media, etc., only word of mouth, and whether adverts can be played or not;
- Target invitations to specific people groups such as students or for everyone including families;
- Set up the screen, audio, and location.

During the event:

- Consider having a team focus on technical logistics ensuring audio quality, commentary language, sub-titles, Sign-Language Interpretation, or extra support for persons with disabilities;
- Consider a team-leading icebreaker game for meet and greet - to connect with others;
- Have team members focusing on hospitality and welcoming (preparing food and drinks for everyone, greeting people and engaging in conversation - especially with those that come alone, etc.)

After the event follow-up:

- Invite people to the next watch party or some other event
- Plan follow-up activities beforehand that are fitting for the people that you are inviting

Activities:

Consider these activities at an appropriate time – pre-game, half-time, or post-game/event:

1. Perhaps share a meal or light refreshments
2. Quiz - about the sport, or the countries participating
3. Show a video testimony of an athlete/ invite a (former) athlete to speak
4. Some games or fun activities (ice breakers, small challenges, quick 5-minute workout or stretch, ...)

Posture:

- Warm, welcoming, full of hospitality, celebration and fun.
- Select games that are appropriate for the target group - students, entire family, youth group, men's group, women's group, etc.



Festival

Opportunity:

A small, fun community celebration that brings people together from the neighborhood. A move from isolation to engagement, to an experience of genuine community where people see and appreciate each other.

Requirements:

- Meaningful pretext (what brings us together, i.e.: celebrating the World Cups, Olympics);
- Greeting and invitation;
- Hospitality, generosity, and kindness;
- Free of charge and inclusive;
- Games selected with sensitivity to what is happening with the crowd and how they are interacting;
- Emphasis on community celebration and reflection;
- No other community engagement clashing with date;
- The life of the team is a role model example;
- Open environment;
- Clear next steps in place on how to continue working with the community.



Process:

Engagement:

Games that are easy to join or watch - MC to give information on the day.

Participation:

Build a sense of belonging - all to feel seen and loved, especially children.

Celebration:

Harness the building excitement for the community after the festival.

Activities:



Phase 1 - Engagement

Choose activities that invite and motivate people to join in. They should be easy to understand and require no prior knowledge of the game. Here are a few examples:

In The Pond, Out the Pond

Ask all the players to stand in a circle and hold onto a rope. Then place the rope on the ground - this will represent your pond.

When the game leader says "In the pond" - all the players jump forward over the rope into the pond. The game leader says "Out the pond" - all players jump backwards over the rope to the outside of the pond.

The game leader can also do the opposite of what he says. Players must always follow what the leader says, not what the leader does.

Players who make a mistake are eliminated and asked to enter the pond to act as judges, checking whether the remaining participants have made any mistakes.

Parachute Games

There are many versions of games with parachutes. Here are a few options:

- Move the parachute up and down to create a large half-round shape.
- Move the parachute up and down. The leader of the game then calls out to different people, for example "everyone wearing glasses". All the participants who wear glasses and therefore belong to the category called cross the parachute by running under it to the other side and grab the parachute again in a new position.

- Move the parachute and add one or more light balls on top. Try to move the ball in a circle.
- "Cat and mouse" - Ask one player to be the cat and stand over the parachute. Ask another player to be the mouse and go under the parachute. The other players move the parachute up and down while the cat tries to catch the mouse.
- ...



Phase 2 - Co-operation

In this phase, choose games that involve playing with other people. This will help create a sense of cooperation and belonging. Here are a few examples:

Relay races

- Three-legged race;
- Relay race with a sponge and water;
- Egg race;
- ...

Tug of war

How to play : An equal number of players take each end of the rope. The players start pulling the rope at the judge's signal. Each player pulls back as hard as they can. Teams continue to pull until the center of the rope (ribbon mark) crosses the judge's reference point.

Ball in the air

How to play: Group the players together and challenge them to keep the ball in the air by tapping it. Give the players a time limit, for example two minutes, or set a number of taps to reach and see if they can do it.

Dance (traditional, famous or common in the community)

Phase 3 – Celebration

This phase focuses on building a sense of community and uses fun activities that all participants enjoy doing together. Here are some examples:

- Group dancing (everyone is invited to learn a few dance steps and dance together afterwards);
- Hokey Pokey (stand in a circle with other dancers and follow the instructions in the song);
- ...

Posture:

- A commitment from us in the local community with a vision of being ready to serve it;
- A response to the needs of the community;
- Celebration and fun for all age groups and whole family;
- The participants are the stars, not the entertainment;
- A picture of “heaven on earth” leaving people wanting more.

Festival booth suggestions (list):

- trampolines,
- balloon sculpting,
- circus skills,
- crafts,
- food and drinks,
- face painting,
- rest area,
- board and card games,
- bubbles,
- spinning plates,
- cookie decorations,
- card making,
- throw darts,
- etc.

The U-Shape





Follow-Up:

After the festival, there is an invitation to attend something else that is happening in the community. When connections are made, they turn into relationships, as well as future partnerships. Individuals can discuss projects, future events, and other social community activities.



Inclusive sports zone

Adapted Sports:

Choose a sport and adapt it so it is inclusive of all abilities...e.g.

- Choose a larger ball to make it easier to hit/kick/catch;
- Use a lower net
- Increase the size and number of targets
- Tee up the ball to keep it stationary and easier to hit
- Play games on a table-top so people can play from a seated position
- Play cooperatively to see how many passes you make, instead of most goals scored
- Use brightly colored or audible balls for people with sight or concentration difficulties

Goalball

Goalball is a three-a-side sport for players with sight loss, who all wear eyeshades and play with a ball containing an internal bell to hear and locate it during play.

Arrange a mini Goalball activity:

Form a circle with legs apart and feet touching. Everyone closes their eyes or covers them with eyeshades or a scarf. Players roll the bell ball around/across the circle. Lose a point if the ball goes through your legs!



Sitting Volleyball

Sitting Volleyball is a six-a-side sport for players with reduced or no movement in their upper and lower limbs.

Try a mini-game

Blow up several balloons. Sit players on the floor in the form of a circle. Players work together to try and keep a balloon in the air for as many hits as possible. Increase the number of balloons or introduce a lightweight ball to make it harder. Divide the circle into two to introduce the concept of two teams playing against each other

Chill-out zone

For some people, particularly those with autism or complex needs, overstimulation can lead to extreme anxiety and associated problems and so they may need a safe place to escape and calm down. Create a safe space with beanbags and soft mats to make an environment where people can sit/lie down in a more comfortable setting which is less busy. The zone could be located in a gazebo and be managed by adults with pastoral gifts, and who are CRB-checked to maintain appropriate safeguarding procedures.

