



**LLP Leonardo da Vinci | PARTNERSHIPS  
Cultural Events Management  
Context of Logistics**

**Report on qualifications for cultural events managers and  
best practices in the context of logistics  
for cultural events.**

The report consists of the following parts:

1. Introduction
2. The scope of duties of cultural event logistics managers
3. Education (preferred majors) and preferred hard skills (e.g. languages, computer skills, fund market knowledge) and soft skills (personal attributes) necessary for this job
4. Training needs
5. Best practices

**1. Introduction**

The management science of logistics is an essential tool for the cultural event manager to identify the practical elements of an event or festival and their relevant operations. Logistics is effectively an analytical tool to manage cultural events by identifying the essential categories of work required. Logistics is central to the whole event operation. The techniques and tools of logistics are an essential part of a project approach to cultural event management.

It is worth understanding the origin of the term which comes from the original Greek, perhaps the Greeks were the first effective cultural event managers in history. The term is *logistikos* meaning 'with ability in calculating'. The term was used by the Roman army in supplying and operating its armies across the Empire but reinforces the concept that logistics is the organised management and implementation of a pre created plan.

Cultural event logistics in the modern context means the efficient supply of the product (the event) to the customer (the audience) and the effective supply of facilities to the event site, at the event site, during the event and effective breakdown and withdrawal from that site in an orderly and organised fashion.

The cultural events logistics manager has to be a negotiator, a purchaser, a negotiator, equipment manager, a maintenance manager, a people person, a map and plan maker, a party animal.

Thus there are new challenges for a cultural event logistics manager, whose scope of duties (the given example applies only to work connected with logistics for a cultural event) covers, among others:

## **2. Scope of duties of cultural event logistics manager – examples**

### **A) Management of technical studies prior to the set up of the event**

It covers all activities such as:

- A background understanding of the history, context and concept of cultural events as an essential prerequisite
- Analysis of the needs of the event with the event creator, the artist, the management.
- Feasibility study – establishing logistical issues with this specific venue in mind
- Understanding the constraints that limit the capacity of the event
- Set-up plan and the study of the site
- Technical requirements of the site and the performer/artist
- Interpretation of the performers' needs including the use of partitions, sound systems etc.
- Material and technical manual for the use of all staff
- Scenography technicals including the art of representing objects in perspective, especially as applied in the design and painting of scenery, sets or back drops.
- Technical symbols.
- Security regulations
- Communication and negotiation to ensure the logistical imperatives are followed.

### **B) Planning of necessary installations to organize events**

It covers all activities such as:

- Planning and coordination human and material resources
- Coordination and control technicians
- Verification of the required standards
- Adjust technical means to constraints of the event – be responsive to changing conditions

- Update technical data
- Health and Safety rules and all relevant legislation
- Working rules involving height and clearances – entrance and exit procedures
- Electric clearances
- Qualifications and clearances external personnel/staff
- Technical framework
- Software, specialized in event management
- Stage techniques
- Planning techniques and tools
- Signage

### C) Management of Participants

- Basic human psychology knowledge and appreciating the relevant level of communication required from staff to artists to VIP's.
- Transport logistics and meeting and greeting all participants
- Catering at all relevant levels.
- Explain technical characteristics and functionalities of the workscene
- Regulate relationship between technical team and participants
- Evaluation and optimisation of the course of the show
- Content of the event - appreciating the content and be aware of the importance to artists and performer.
- Program artists and participants in a way that allows optimum performance.

### D) Security management of the event

- Establish relevant security for the event
- Alert the community on particular risks
- Provide technical advice to security commissions
- Apply safety regulations
- Verification and control installations
- Security establishments
- Establish legal and technical security rules
- Create an evacuation plan in the instance of a variety of possible events
- Basic first aid
- Technical urgency interventions
- Legal framework civil and criminal liability

### E) Public relations

- Welcome and audience information
- Ensure listening convenience and visual comfort of the audience
- Supervise application of safety instructions in case of emergency
- Intervene in a sensitive way with the persons of the audience, who are acting at the expense of their security and the security of others
- Characteristics of the target audiences – the difference between a classical music audience and a rock crowd.
- Basic hosting knowledge
- Pedagogical knowledge
- Re-inforcing the links between the PR team and the media
- Ensure photographers' safety where relevant and ensure they understand the rules of the event.

#### F) Equipment management

- Inventory of the equipment
- Definition of material or equipment needs
- Supervision maintenance
- Management of the premises and the material condition of the infrastructure
- Optimise equipment management
- Programming of works and their realisation to the advantage of the event
- Diagnostic techniques and methodology
- Administrative procedures and acts
- Budgetary management and public purchase knowledge

#### G) Team management

It covers all activities such as:

- Check qualifications and accreditation of the team
- Planning of work schedules
- Management of work planning
- Conflict prevention and management
- Adapt management to situations and the team
- Foster exchanges between team members
- Knowledge of individual and collective psychology
- Tools for operational activity management
- Team management techniques
- Conflict resolution and mediation techniques

**3. Education (preferred majors) and preferred hard skills (e.g. languages, computer skills, logistics knowledge) and soft skills (personal attributes) necessary in the culture events logistics manager job.**

There are a defined number of skills for the role. However given the rapid growth in this aspect of the cultural sector there are still a number of senior operatives who have learned their skills as a result of working through the ranks and learning their skills on the front line. Nonetheless there are a number of academic and course options which are currently valuable in this area.

**Higher Education**

Increasingly for a number of people who seek the highest roles in such organizations then a University Degree in a related area is valuable.

For those who come from a cultural background and are musicians or artists then their qualification might be in this area of expertise and further practical training in event logistics would certainly be valuable.

**Further Education**

There are a number of areas including technical and engineering in which a 16+ qualification in this area would be important. There are a variety of logistic skills that would help in terms of this career which are transferable from other industries.

**School Level**

Increasingly there are ways that children who are under 16 and learn some of the basic elements o logistics that would enhance their CEM career.

And necessary soft and hard skills:

- Hard skills (e.g. language, computer skills, logistics knowledge)  
Very good working knowledge of written and spoken English, knowledge of another foreign language. Advanced computer skills (MS Office environment)
- Technical skills (including good knowledge of all the roles of technicians: lights, sound, electricity, infrastructures...)
- Soft skills (personal attributes)  
Communication skills, good work organization, managerial skills (particularly in the context of distribution of tasks in accordance with team members' skills and ensuring their fulfilment), orientation on fulfilment of set targets, diplomatic skills in problem solving and discussions with grant providers, flexibility

#### **4. Training needs**

Our survey of logistics managers and lower level managers suggested that the training needs were as follows:

- Academic qualifications were seen as relevant to current job.
- Background skills acquired in an academic environment were always valuable
- Academic research and planning techniques were important skills.
- A relevant academic qualification helped in areas like Fine Art, Drama, Music.
- Often pursuing an academic course after beginning a career can be valuable and helpful.
- Revisiting skills can be valuable as is finding a relevant area where you might need upskilling – short courses in relevant areas.
- Marketing qualification proved to be useful
- The area of jobs and practical experience was almost universally seen as vitally important.
- For many go into a cultural arena was because it was 'in the blood'.
- There is often fundamental commitment to the 'content'.
- Progress achieved through the creation and management of events moving from small to large is an important part of training for logistic operations.
- Technical awareness – helps so as you appreciate the needs of the technical staff.
- Being a performer/actor/painter means you can talk to the artist and understand their position.
- A capacity for being able to creatively appreciate the event and manage the creatives.
- Vital roles including, health and safety, stage management, event logistics, and marketing, PR, financial knowledge.
- There was a theme that an appreciation of the creative and cultural was important for the events manager
- Learning new skills throughout your job, learning through errors, learning by doing was considered vital.
- Discovering talent and developing it as a manager.
- Knowing how different venues have different issues.

#### **On the job influences are vital**

- Working in different environments.
- Learning from practioners who are at the top of their game and then enables you to aspire to be better.
- Great organisations like Womad, The Arts Council, Professional bodies, Leonardo participants
- Learning from a commercial event and understanding the pressure of funding and revenue.
- Having great bosses.
- Observing, attending, and critiquing other events.

#### **Professional Development is vital**

- Getting involved, mentoring, watching, observing and evaluating.
- Organisation, leadership, management.
- Continuous professional Development
- Learning communication skills

- Being able to understand and appreciate audiences – you are doing for them!

### **Acquiring the soft skills through a training environment**

- The capacity to ‘conceive’ an event – be imaginative
- Networking and building contacts
- Organisation
- Communication
- Adaptable planning skills
- Calm and ‘cool under pressure’
- Flexibility and time management
- Ability to research and understand the ‘artist’
- Team management.
- Reading a balance sheet.

### **The vital role of vocational requirements**

- These are developing and not firmly fixed across Europe.
- Utilising the growing sector of organisations allowing creative training in a ‘real’ creative environment
- Trained people with their own expertise can become great managers – people must be bright, open minded, intelligent with common sense.
- Specific short course like ‘Finance for Non Finance Managers’ ‘Technology and Staging – the latest development’.
- Valid industry conference run by practitioners for the sharing of ideas.

### **5. Best practices across Europe**

There are a host of excellent event and best practices across Europe too many to mention. However it is the success of the cultural event industry that has led to the surge in demand across the continent for such individuals skilled in logistics in this field. The following are sources identifying the success of first class logistical management.

<http://www.festival-avignon.com> Avignon Festival

<http://www.avignonleoff.com> Avignon Festival fringe

<http://www.ucc.ie/about> University College Cork

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk> Scottish Parliament

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Millennium\\_Dome](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Millennium_Dome) Commentary on the Dome

#### **The following are interesting case studies for examination:**

<http://www.arts.vic.gov.au> Resources for community project evaluation

<http://www.ukbap.org.uk/ebg/library.asp> Visitor Expenditure Model example  
<http://www.efa-aef.eu> Edinburgh Festivals economic impact  
<http://www.keynote.co.uk> Example of a market research company  
<http://www.berlinale.de> Berlin Film Festivals  
<http://www.filmfestivals.com> European and other film festivals  
<http://www.northseajazz.nl> North Sea Jazz Festival  
<http://www.northsearoundtown.com> North Sea Jazz Festival.co.uk The O2 Arena

CREDITS TO

ALFMED – IDEM – MIKE OWEN