

Event Preparation Package



◆ 920 ◆



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9/20 Event Preparation Package

What is 920?

920 is a day of action that aims to raise awareness about the properties and potential of psilocybin mushrooms. They are a valuable tool for neuroscience and psychology and also have profound cultural importance to human beings. In spite of the promising preliminary research, which implies that psilocybin is beneficial to the human being and can be taken quite safely, psilocybin is still quite illegal in the majority of the world.

The 920 Coalition organizes events around the world each year on September 20th (9/20) in the hopes of making progress in bringing psilocybin into general discourse and legitimizing the profound experiences that it is capable of providing.

What can you do?

There are a number of different events that you can host to participate in this movement! Below you can find some information on how to go about planning and hosting the following events:

- Speaker Event
- Movie screening
- Party/Concert/Gathering

If you are hosting an event, email contact@cssdp.org to let us know! We will update the CSSDP website and the 920 coalition. We will also send you a number of printable materials, such as a research summary package with research abstracts and accessible essays and a 920 educational pamphlet

Speaker Events

This format is great for engaging your academic community in discussion about this very relevant research topic! It is quite likely that many of your fellow students, and even your professors are interested in psychedelics and their potential, but are hesitant to discuss this openly. While there is certainly not the same level of stigma as there was even 10 years ago, many people still do not feel as though psychedelics are taken seriously. An open discussion on psilocybin mushrooms and the recent research that has been done can help to bring the psychedelic subject into public discourse. There are two main formats you can use:

1) Discussion Panel

- a. Here you can have several people discuss the subject of psilocybin.



- b. Make sure you assign a moderator to propose questions to the panel and to keep discussion going.
 - i. Another key role for moderators making sure that no one speaker dominates the discussion by addressing others on the panel specifically
- c. Have attendees submit questions. You can do this either:
 - i. in writing. This is beneficial in allowing the moderator to screen questions before asking. This ensures that all questions are relevant and inoffensive (you never know who's going to show up).
 - ii. You can also have attendees ask questions in person. If your event is sizeable, it may be beneficial to have at least one microphone available at the front of the room. If you have the resource, a wireless mic is also great and allows for a volunteer to bring it around to audience members instead of the audience moving to the microphone.

2) Conference

- a. With this format, several speakers will each get a time slot for an individual presentation
- b. The benefit of this format is that you can utilize free video conferencing services such as Skype or Google Hangouts to bring speakers into your event from afar. Unfortunately, not every university or college has researchers interested in psychedelic subjects but if you have a decent internet connection, you can draw upon the resources of the world.
- c. Consider doing a panel at the end of the event
 - i. Refer to the suggestions above on how to put together a successful panel
- d. Make sure to leave time at the end of each time slot for questions from the audience, especially if you don't plan on also doing a panel for all or some of the speakers at the end of the event.

Focus Points:

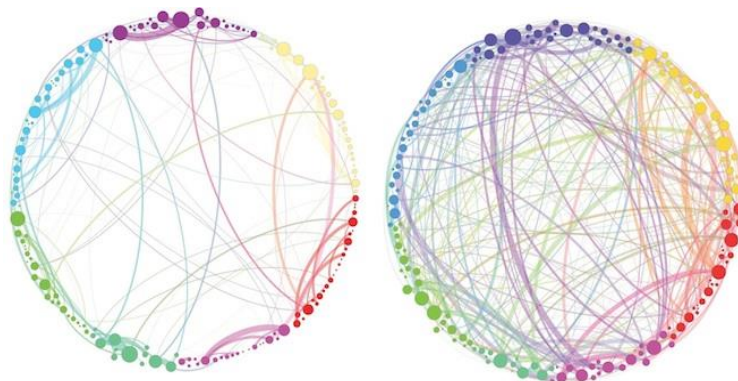
Psychedelic research is highly interdisciplinary. Psilocybin and other such compounds can be used as tools for psychology, neuroscience, even computer science. Their long history of human use also makes psilocybin mushrooms a subject of interest for anthropology and history. Here are a few topics that your event can focus on. Of course it possible to mix and match these, or to have no restrictions at all depending on who can present and who can attend your event.

Mental Health:

- There has been a pilot study showing that psilocybin may be effective in treating treatment resistant depression. See more [here](#)
- It has also been shown to be potentially effective [for end of life anxiety](#) and [nicotine addiction](#).
- Neuroimaging shows that psilocybin “shuts off” the default mode network. This network is characteristic of the brain’s resting state as well as self-reflective thinking and is overactive in a variety of mental illnesses including depression and anxiety. See more [here](#)
- Psilocybin, and psychedelics in general, are currently of interest for their capacity to lead to lasting changes in personality. The personality metric of openness is where change is typically measured and such changes are correlated to the occurrence of a mystical experience.

Neuroscience and Brain Network Modeling

- Network theory has been used to make sense of the data from neuroimaging studies. In short, network theory as a data interpretation method tracks and predicts functional connectivity, or how ordered sequences of neurons fire. It allows us to make cool [diagrams like this](#):



- The left image average neural connectivity under normal conditions. The right is average connectivity under the influence of psychedelics.
- Network theory allows researchers to observe the relative activity of networks that brains tend to have... like the Default Mode Network. It also allows for measurements of overall average connectivity. This has informed ideas about [psychosis](#), how the brain [actually works](#) and the [treatment of various mental illnesses](#).
- There is also at least one paper so far that relates the activity of the brain under the influence of psychedelics to the kinds of [neural networks used in computer science](#).. The effect of running dynamics similar to the psychedelic state is an optimization of the network's behaviour, allowing it to better work within the problem space it is built for.

Culture:

- Psychedelics have been used by human beings for [thousands of years](#). This is where your anthropology specialists come in...
 - o Who has utilized psychedelics in the past and why?
 - o What significance do psychedelics have in the cultures that use them?
 - The Aztecs and Mayans are well known to have used psilocybin containing mushrooms, calling it "teonanacatl", or flesh of the gods.
 - o What might responsible psychedelic use look like in Canadian culture?
-

Spirituality

- One of the primary areas of interests for psilocybin and other psychedelics is the capacity they have to initiate [mystical experiences](#).
- This allows scientists a unique look into states of mind that are often very difficult to access within a laboratory setting
- It also gives religious studies an area to apply knowledge of gnosis, prophecy and unitive experiences to determine if these states of mind are similar or perhaps the same

Finding Speakers:

- Are any of your professor's open supporters of psychedelics? If so, this is the perfect place to start for finding speakers!

- If you don't personally know of any faculty with an interest in psychedelics, begin by emailing around! Below you can find a template for an email soliciting potential speakers. Some researchers and professors who are interested in psychedelics may be hesitant to openly express this fact... Or it may just never come up.

- Relevant faculties to explore are psychology, neuroscience, religious studies and anthropology.

- The internet is great for setting up specialized events without having relevant speakers in your area. If you will be in a location with a good internet connection, invite speakers to present via skype or google hangouts! This can supplement your in person speakers to create a full and well rounded event.

- If there are no interested speakers at your school or at surrounding schools, explore options in the community. Many yoga studios and alternative medicine institutions also run workshops. Those involved might be interested in the topic of psychedelics and have some relevant knowledge. If exploring this option, please take care to screen people first; there are many unscientific and even unproductive ways to discuss psychedelics.

Location:

Your campus should allow you to book rooms for free as a campus group. Consider the following factors:

- 1- How many people might attend this event?
- 2- Will your speakers require a projector?
- 3- Is the room large enough that a microphone and audio equipment would be necessary?
- 4- If yes to 2 and 3, does your school require an activation fee for this equipment?
- 5- If you're planning the event for a weekend, keep in mind that there may be additional caretaking/security fees

Tickets

Decide if you want your event to be ticketed or not! You may want to raise money for your chapter, or for facilitating the psychedelic therapy movement. See section ___ on some organizations that you can donate to help facilitate psilocybin research.

Advertising:

Once you have a location and one or more speakers, its time to advertise! See the Advertising tips section on page 16.

Suggested Volunteer Roles

Volunteer Coordinator

- This person oversees the volunteers and acts as their main contact point.

Door People

- Takes care of ushering and checking tickets

Panel Moderator

- Have someone sociable, preferably with a good sense of humour, responsible for keeping the panel discussion going

Set up

- Have some people show up early specifically to set up the venue!

Tear down

- Make sure you know who is responsible for staying late and cleaning up

Technical folk

- Make sure you have people responsible for the projector, microphones and filming if any of these things are features of your event

Extras!

- Always allow for extra people... its rare for everyone who might say they'll show up to show up.

Final Checklist:

- Do you have additional volunteers to help set up the event?
- Did you make sure to factor in set up and tear down time into your room booking?
- Can you factor in free coffee? Everyone is happier at these kinds of things with free coffee

Documentary Screening

This is a simple event that can help get people talking about psilocybin. As it is still a rather recent development for these compounds to be taken seriously as a research project, there aren't too many documentaries on the subject but here are a few great candidates:

A New Understanding: The Science of Psilocybin (rent for \$6.60) -

<http://anewunderstanding.org/>

- A New Understanding: The Science of Psilocybin is a documentary based on approved research with the medicine psilocybin conducted by leading doctors at The Heffter Research Institute at UCLA, New York University, and John's Hopkins University
- It is rather recent and well informed
- The makers of this film allow it to be shown without cost for educational purpose, but ask that a donation be provided if possible

Little Saints: Eat a Mushroom, Talk to God (rent for \$5)- <http://www.littlesaintsmovie.com/>

- This documentary follows 6 travellers into South America where they undergo a healing ceremony with psilocybin mushrooms
- This came out just last year and features a number of interviews with researchers
- It can be rented for

How do Psychedelics Work on the Brain (free!) -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jT5dZDnJ6J4>

- This is a 45 minute lecture by Robin Carhart-Harris on the neuroimaging research performed with psilocybin at the Imperial College London
- He is one of the principle researchers in these studies
- This may not be as captivating to some as a fully produced documentary might be, but it is an excellent summary of what is known so far right from a primary source

Location:

- 1- Make sure the room you are booking has a projector and sound equipment
- 2- Check your university's policy to see if there are additional costs to activating this equipment
- 3- Allow your self enough time in the room booking to show up early and test the equipment and the film!

Party or Concert

This is a more laid back approach to the 9/20 gatherings but can be equally as effective. It's all about getting people talking! And who knows; you could end up networking the next wave of psychedelic scientists.

Things to Include:

There are a number of options for hosting a successful 9/20 party:

Display Art

- Get in touch with artists in your community and display some pieces at your event. It will be great for conversation starters and you're also integrating your community further by including more mediums
- You can allow the artists to sell their pieces
- See if artists might be interested in donating some pieces to be auctioned off for fundraising during the event. This is a great way to add to fundraising that can later be donated to psychedelic research

Psychedelic Storytelling

- This is an event series that was started by Psymposia and has been featured internationally at events of this sort. In short, it's an open mic for people to share stories of their profound and perplexing experiences with psychedelics. This is a great way to legitimize psychedelic experiences and the knowledge and meaning that people get from them. However, there are many unsafe ways to do psychedelics and so its beneficial to screen your story tellers if you don't know them.
- Start by asking people you know and trust who might have interesting experiences so that you have a few reliable speakers that you can fall back on.
- Have others either write a short summary at the event or talk with a moderator before being allowed to share their story.
- Make some time during your event, or even set aside a room specifically for this purpose!
- See [here](#) for some examples of psychedelic storytelling from Psymposia.

Open Mic

- Have the people perform! You could even dedicate a room (if it's a party) for open mic related things, which certainly includes psychedelic story telling.

Concert

- If you can manage it, renting out a venue for a concert would be a fun way of engaging the community. Make sure you find out:
 - Cost of venue
 - Cost for bands (please account for musicians in your budget!)
 - How much you will need to ticket the event at to cover all costs
 - Don't forget to make sure you can cover the costs even if you don't sell out... it's important to give yourself a financial window so that the event doesn't end up costing you money out of your own pocket

Food!

- Decide if you want to feed people. This always makes people happy.
- You can enlist your chapter members to help cook or bake something.
- To keep it thematically relevant, make use of mushrooms in your dish!

Décor Ideas:

- Black lights and UV reactive paint... engage your chapter members by making some psychedelic mushrooms and mandalas to set the atmosphere!



- You can also have a people painting station
- Paper Mache mushrooms:
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BegRc3fNJ2E>
 - <http://www.designdazzle.com/2014/04/make-giant-mushroom-prop-party-decor/>
- Pieces that resemble general psychedelic culture
 - Gnomes
 - Mandalas
 - Traditional psychedelic imagery
- Projection Mapping
 - This requires specific skills but if you have an arts school near by (or happen to be at an arts school!) then you might be able to find someone who can help. Projection mapping involves calibrating a projector to complex surfaces and can create a really cool effect.
 - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Projection_mapping
 - If you want to give it a shot yourself, here's a database of tools to help you create a projection mapping installation! Most, if not all of it is open source:
 - <http://projection-mapping.org/software/>

Advertising Tips

- 1) Make posters and put them up around campus and around town
 - a. Ask head shops, yoga studios, art galleries if they are willing to put up your posters! Many will be.
- 2) Email the departments at your school that are relevant to the study of psilocybin (see the list in the speaker section) that they send out information about the event to their mailing list
- 3) See below for a template on how to solicit department chairs and presidents in doing this
- 4) Flyers
 - a. Hand out at club events during orientation week
 - b. Most universities also have public spaces where tables can be rented throughout the year. Book a table space a week or two before the event and engage students! It often helps to give out food or coffee at these things. Make sure you check your university's policy about these things!
- 5) Contact your university and local newspapers!

Donation Candidates

MAPS – <https://store.maps.org/np/clients/maps/donation.jsp?campaign=11>

MAPS Canada – <https://store.maps.org/np/clients/maps/donation.jsp?campaign=6>

The Beckley Institute – <http://beckleyfoundation.org/donate/>

John Hopkins School of Medicine – <https://secure.jhu.edu/form/fjhm> (you will have to select the “Other” option when specifying where to direct your donation – this will allow you to specify that donations are to go towards psilocybin research specifically).

Heffter Institute - <https://heffter.org/donate/>