

CTS Pre-camp Overview

Teams,

If you are interested in running this camp to connect with your community and expand your team, we want to highlight the importance of being prepared. This is not limited to just having funding, or administrative approval. For the whole camp to run smoothly it is crucial to organize beforehand. Here you will find what we believe to be the most important steps to run your own Changing the SySTEM. This packet is meant to inform you about the basics of planning CTS, with more information and resources on each step to be released in our full packet.

1. **Acquire adequate funding.** Hosting CTS requires lots of funding as a non-profit camp. If sponsor donations aren't enough to cover the costs, we recommend applying for grants. Resources can be found under the Grants section. We also encourage reaching out to local businesses, holding a fundraiser event, and promoting yourself on social media as some of the starting steps to collect the necessary funds! The cost of the camp is adjustable based on its length and the price of lessons, so adjust accordingly. An example budget will be attached in the upcoming packet release.
2. **Set camp dates, as early in advance as possible.** This will mean checking your school district calendar and making sure dates don't interfere with your intended school audience. Make sure there are no conflicts such as sports games, band concerts, or community events.
3. **Reserve a venue for your camp.** This could mean rooms within your high school, a gym or outdoor set up with tents, a local park, or any other venue with lots of space that you can use for several days. This will ensure that no one else will be in whatever space you want to use. We have often used the library and commons before, as well as several classroom porches. Send an email to the principal, and student advocate/front office secretary to reserve space in your school. If using another venue, make sure to contact the person in charge of scheduling the space for that location.
4. If taking a field trip with campers, **reserve transportation** as soon as possible, bus, van, carpool, etc. Also ensure that you have parent permission on consent forms, and that the parents sign any other consent forms needed for the field trip ahead of time. If the field trip is expensive, it may be a good idea to consider an additional fundraiser ahead of time to cover that expense for all the campers.

5. **Start the staffing process for camp.** Make yet another fantastic google form and find team members willing to be counselors, teachers and general helpers. This may not be about the robot, but everyone should be involved! Teachers can either choose what lesson they want to teach based on their own interest/expertise, or you can assign each teacher a lesson, just as you will assign each pair of counselors a group of campers to direct. Example lessons can be found below in the lessons section. You should also work on a follow up lesson review that all teachers can fill out after their lessons have been taught, where they say what went well and what can be improved on, and give suggestions to the person who may teach their lesson next. Teachers should be responsible for finding their materials and should work with mentors and the camp director to ensure all needed materials are ordered for their lessons ahead of time. Counselors are the students in charge of staying with one group of campers and making sure everything goes smoothly with that group. It's always a good idea to meet with counselors ahead of time to discuss strategies for managing and interacting with your group of campers.
6. **Make a sign-up form for campers.** Collect name, grade, school, allergies, and/or shirt size. Include a section for additional comments if parents have any more information to share. Also in this form, collect photo consent - make sure to record somewhere which students do not have photo consent and then don't share their photo anywhere during/after camp, including on social media. Add an automatic response email (google form add on) to confirm the person has signed up for camp. You can attach the consent form as a pdf in this email. In that consent form (a template can be found in the Team Materials section below) you can explain where to send the check. Make sure you have the correct camp date(s) and prices on the consent form.
7. **Advertise, advertise, advertise!** Make a flier with a camp description, date(s) and time(s), and price (ex found in the marketing Materials section). Include the team email and social media in case anyone has questions. Send this completed form out EVERYWHERE! To any local schools, parent organizations, etc. The district publicist/coordinator may be able to send it out in the district newsletter. Grade/middle school principals and their secretaries, the school Instagram, and/or any local parents Facebook page are other resources. It is a good idea to make a document with all the parent emails of former students who have attended camps, as well as any other community connections your team has so the flier for an upcoming camp can also be sent out to them.
8. **Create a social media presence for the camp** by posting photos, info for parents, and updates about camp.

9. **Work on overseeing all needed purchases or activities.** If making/ordering shirts, bracelets, bandanas, etc. get together all the logos and materials and order everything ahead of time so you don't have to worry about late shipments. We encourage ordering from local businesses when possible.

10. **Contact and schedule guest speakers.** Guest speakers are a great way for campers and team members to hear about various STEAM careers and are also great connections to establish for the team, both for student internship and sponsorship possibilities. The best speakers are often from student contacts on your team. Ideally, speakers are from STEM related fields in order to have relevant material to teach the campers. Examples of some companies Team 7034 has contacted include Nike, TE Connectivity, and Space-X.

11. **Put together a camp schedule.** Classes, speakers, snack times, presentations, etc should all go on there in order to help all team members stay on time with the schedule. It's a good idea to print it out the day before for all team members helping with camp.

12. **Keep communicating with parents** - make sure they know the date and time, where to pick up and drop off, etc. Send info about consent form and day-to-day activities for the students if appropriate. If it's a colder day and you know you have an activity outside, you may want the camper to bring a jacket. Include all that info so parents and campers know what to expect, and make sure you keep checking the email throughout camp for last minute updates!

Organizing a camp is such a successful and fun way to extend your team impact and spread STEM throughout your community - especially getting girls interested in science and engineering. Remember, organization and communication are key to making your camp successful. If you have any questions or feedback, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Best of luck,

Team 7034