Host Site FAQ:

For Prospective Host Sites in the Beginning Stages of Preparation

What is Mind Trekkers?

The Mind Trekkers is Michigan Technological University's traveling K-12 outreach initiative founded in 2010. Coordinated by Michigan Tech's Center for Educational Outreach, the group brings the excitement of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) directly to K-12 students. Mind Trekkers attends expos and events throughout the nation to showcase engaging, hands-on experiments and activities. Undergraduate and graduate student volunteers serve as a pipeline, connecting thousands of prospective students to higher education and STEM career opportunities while enjoying one-of-a-kind opportunities and experiences. Mind Trekkers is inspiring our next generation of leaders to seek answers and get excited about STEM education.

What does a Mind Trekkers event look like?

A Mind Trekkers event is a hybrid: part science fair, part carnival. It is a high-energy, upbeat atmosphere that promotes hands-on learning and interaction between volunteers and attendees. Each table will have a demonstration and attendees will be free to move about them at their own pace. A typical event is a Friday/Saturday structure with Friday being a field-trip day for schools only (our focus is on middle school students for these days). Saturday is open to the general public and the entire community is invited to join us.

Who attends a Mind Trekkers event?

Our events typically host between 2,500 - 6,000 attendees over the course of two days. The first day is geared towards middle school students and teachers. The second day is open to the public - families of all ages are welcome to attend for free!

How much space does an event require?

Our events can have a very large footprint. Typically we will use an entire gym and surrounding area, or extend into an outdoor tent, if weather permits. An event can take over 20,000 square feet and hosts 130-150 tables, as well as open space for some demonstrations. Additional room for volunteer lunches, a teacher's lounge, and storage will also be needed.

What other requirements do Mind Trekkers events have?

Mind Trekkers will require access to Wi-Fi, water (both indoors and a hose outside for explosions), and will require access to power throughout the event site.

What kind of support will Mind Trekkers need from my staff?

Mind Trekkers will need support from a variety of host staff including On-site Coordinators, Facilities, Public Safety, Custodial Staff, Dining Services (or Catering), and IT or A/V departments.

On-site Coordinators: We will need a point(s) of contact to collaborate with throughout the planning process. Duties will include working with Michigan Tech's Mind Trekkers Coordinator to develop a layout for the event; work with other on-site departments for various needs; and help to coordinate school/partner registration (partners are other local organizations who also host demonstrations).

Facilities: Facilities will be required to help set up the event layout, provide the necessary power to the tables, get water access, and other building-related duties that accompany events.

Public Safety: Public Safety officers will be asked to attend both days of the events in case of an emergency. Our events host high volumes of attendees and Public Safety would be critical in helping ensure safety throughout the event.

Custodial Staff: Mind Trekkers events have a need for many garbage receptacles throughout the event that will need to be changed throughout each day. Mind Trekkers try to keep our areas as clean as possible but additional help is always appreciated.

Dining Services: Lunches will be provided to volunteers who stay through an entire day. On-site Dining Services are one option for these meals and assist with the setup and teardown of lunches.

IT or A/V: Mind Trekkers will need access to overhead sound systems, a microphone, and various A/V needs for a VIP lunch, if done.

What other groups (partners) typically host demonstrations at a Mind Trekkers event?

Other organizations hosting demonstrations at a Mind Trekkers event are referred to as partners. Sponsors who are hosting tables in addition to their financial contributions would be under this category. Partners are usually community businesses, outreach groups (robotics teams, Boy/Girl Scouts, museums), professional societies (i.e. American Chemical Society), or academic departments on campus if the event is being hosted at a college.

What is the evolution/timeline of planning a Mind Trekkers event?

Once a host site and dates are established, a joint effort between the site and Michigan Tech begins. Fundraising is among the first steps that the partner institutions will take. The amount of funding needed for each event will vary based on a number of factors, including: the number of Mind Trekkers volunteers needed; associated travel costs; the number of schools attending; demonstrations desired; and so on.
After the funds have been raised, school and partner registration for the event will begin.

From there, Michigan Tech and the host site will collaborate over the months leading into the event on logistics, layout, timelines, supply delivery, and other necessary details to put on a great show.

What are the benefits of hosting a Mind Trekkers' event?

The host of a Mind Trekkers event will have thousands of students at your facility who are becoming excited about learning and continuing on to post-secondary education. Your facility will be promoted through the local news, TV, radio, and social media - and will be a hotspot for the whole community during the event! You will also have the option to host a VIP lunch where local business and education leaders are invited to speak about the importance of STEM outreach.

What does a VIP lunch entail?
Local business and education leaders will meet for lunch, usually on the Friday of the event. Speakers typically include a representative from Michigan Tech, someone on behalf of the leading event sponsor, and a representative from the host site. This is an opportunity for the host to create additional support for additional outreach in your community.