

We can't tell you exactly how to start your own storytelling event because what works for The Moth might not be the best fit for your community. What we can offer are some guiding questions and ideas culled from our longtime staff to help you get started.

One caveat: we ask that you do not call your event “The Moth” or a “Moth StorySLAM.” (Though “Moth-inspired” is just fine!)

Pick a unique name

You'll need a name for your event to distinguish it from the rest. It can be as simple as 'The Storytelling Club in X City', or something more elaborate that speaks to the soul or your show. Make sure to look the name up so you know it's unique. That way it'll be easy to discover online, and you won't be stepping on another organization's toes. Again, please don't call your event 'The Moth'. The Moth can exist as it does because it is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, and any events held using our name that are not run by us could jeopardize our non-profit status. It's fine to say 'inspired by The Moth' if you think it will help people understand what the event will be like.

Choose a venue to match

Your choice of venue will greatly impact the atmosphere of the event, so consider if you want to create a casual atmosphere and host in someone's living room, in a public space like a church, bar or park, or if you'd rather make the event feel more established and co-host it with a partner organization such as a local non-profit or arts space.

Set a budget

Potential fees could include:

- Venue rental
- Staff to run lights, sound, photo, video or audio recording
- A host or MC fee
- A storyteller fee
- Refreshments
- Equipment such as a microphone, mic stand and speakers
- Marketing materials such as a program, flyers or print posters

How will you make money?

If it's important to you to cover your costs, consider charging a door fee, passing a donation basket or getting a local company to sponsor your event.

Build your audience in advance

Who do you expect to come, and how will you get the word out to them? A few suggestions are cross-promoting at an existing storytelling event, social media posts and ads, printed posters, submitting a listing in your local newspaper or finally calling in a favor with your ex that you're

finally chill with who is now a DJ to give your event a shout out on air. Or just use word of mouth.

Who are your storytellers?

Consider: is your event open mic or will you pick the storytellers in advance? If so, you're going to want to budget time to do research and outreach about who the compelling voices are in your area.

What stories will they share?

You can set a theme or common idea for the stories to focus on, or you could allow storytellers to speak about whatever they want. Is your event for true stories only, or is fiction allowed? Should stories be read or memorized? Will you screen the stories ahead of time? Will you set a time limit? How will you communicate that time is up to those who are speaking?

For the win

Moth StorySLAMs are competitive. We invite teams of judges to score the stories on a scale of 0-10 points and the winning teller goes on to compete in a Moth GrandSLAM. We also hold events without scoring. You could simply ask the audience to applaud to show how much they loved the story. Pick what you think is right for your community! The most important thing is that everyone feels supported and safe in the room.

Next steps

Do you want to record the night or let it be an in-person experience only? If you're going to record the event, you'll need to write up a permission form and have storytellers sign it ahead of time. Will you send the stories to the storytellers or post them online? Is this a one-off event, or will you make it recurrent? Where can people sign up to get information about future events?

Good luck!

More of The Moth's [Story Telling Tips and Tricks](#)