

Hosting a Successful For the Birds Concert

The Big Picture

- Book a venue and date
- Make a plan to fund the performance
- Create promotional materials
- Invite climate groups and/or clean energy businesses to table at the concert
- Promote the concert
- Plan day-of logistics



Finding a Venue and Date

We have performed intimate house concerts in small living rooms for 20 – 25 people up to public performances in venues seating 200 or more. There are no technical requirements for the venue. A grand piano is ideal, but not essential (we can bring an electric keyboard). We bring, set up and run our own sound system, digital projector, and projection screen (10'x6'). We do not need additional technical support. Past venues include churches, community theaters, retirement homes, private homes, a piano store, a coffee shop, and a restaurant/music club.

It's best to propose multiple concert dates to find a date that works for all five band members.

Our digital projector can display images clearly with a fair amount of ambient light, but if the concert space is filled with daylight, you might need some window coverings.

Funding a Performance

Our fee for a For the Birds performance in the greater Seattle area is a minimum of \$1000 (\$200 per musician).

There are lots of ways to fund a performance.

- The hosting venue may have financial resources to contribute.
- You can sell tickets (or have a suggested donation). See [Sell Advance Tickets Online](#) below.
- You can ask local businesses, organizations and/or individuals to help underwrite the concert. See [Reach out to Potential Financial Sponsors](#) below.

For the Birds Reserve Fund: At the end of each performance, we sell CDs and ask for donations to help fund future performances. If necessary, we use these reserve funds to help pay the musicians. *We don't want money to be a stumbling block to getting the For the Bird's message out to as wide and diverse an audience as possible.*

If a concert makes money – that is, ticket sales and/or sponsor donations exceed concert expenses (band fee, marketing expenses, etc.) – we request at least 50% of net profits be donated to our For the Birds Reserve Fund to help underwrite future performances of For the Birds as needed. Thank you! If the concert is marketed as a benefit concert for a group or organization, of course this wouldn't apply.

>> Sell Advance Tickets Online

[Eventbrite](#) is an online service for selling tickets in advance. If tickets are a **fixed price**, there is a base fee to set up an event plus a fee for each ticket sold. If tickets are a **suggested donation**, Eventbrite fees are minimal. I recommend a suggested donation of \$10 - \$20 per ticket. \$5 for seniors and kids. I'm happy to set up Eventbrite ticket sales for you.

According to some website research:

In general, tickets for live events have a very predictable sales curve:

20% Of Tickets sell within 2 weeks of the On-Sale.

30% Of Tickets sell between the on-sale period & 2 weeks before the event. (Maintenance Period)

50% Of Tickets sell during the final 2 weeks (The Closeout)

Some events have VERY late buyers: Artists playing rooms with no fear of a sellout (Local Bands, Small Club Shows).

>> Reach out to Potential Financial Sponsors

I created these read-only documents in GoogleDocs. **If you want to edit or use them, first choose File Make a Copy.**

- Sample [Sponsor Ask Letter](#)
- Sample [Concert Description](#)
- Sample [Sponsor Program Insert #1](#)
- Sample [Sponsor Program Insert #2](#)
- Sample [Sponsor Program Insert #3](#)

>> Host a Benefit Concert

The For the Birds performance is in itself a worthy cause deserving of financial donations, and after our concerts, some people are inspired to give us money to support future performances. Our mission: *To use the power of artistic expression — live music, spoken words, images and poetry — to connect our*

audiences deeply and emotionally to the scientific realities of climate change, and to inform and inspire them to act now to address it.

With the right groundwork and support, For the Birds can raise significant money for another group or organization. Here's what I highly recommend to host a concert fundraiser.

- Have a clear fundraising goal that is climate-related with broad public appeal.
- Build a coalition of local groups/individuals to help spread the word, help organize and promote, volunteer at the concert, etc.
- Have the hosting venue and/or sponsors fully fund the concert in advance. Then all ticket sales/donations can be advertised as **All proceeds go to <xxxxx>**. This is inspiring. Ticket prices can be higher than typical. Even people who can't make the concert may buy a ticket if they know all of their money is going directly to the organization.

>> Book a Tour

To make out-of-town concerts affordable, we will likely:

- Book multiple For the Birds concerts on one out-of-town trip (schedule a tour). We are professional musicians often hired for weddings and private events that pay much more than the typical For the Birds performance. *Scheduling multiple out-of-town performances back to back makes it more affordable for us to turn down local gigs to travel.*
- Request host families to put the musicians up overnight and/or provide a meal or two. We're five people (one married couple), very friendly, and super easy to have around!

Create Promotional Materials

You are welcome to copy and tweak the promo pieces from prior For the Birds concerts instead of creating them from scratch (see below). In fact, it's pretty easy for me to do most of this for you.

>> Create Eventbrite Page

>> Create Facebook Event

[Sample Facebook event](#)

>> Create Posters and Flyers

[Sample blue FTB 8.5 x 14 poster](#)

[Sample white FTB 8.5 x 14 poster](#)

[Sample blue FTB 8.5 x 11 poster](#)

[Sample white FTB 8.5 x 11 poster](#)

[Sample FTB Flyers](#)

>> Write Press Release

[Sample Press Release 5/16/25](#)

[Sample Press Release 9/22/24](#)

[Sample Release 12/2/22](#)

[Sample Press release 3/17/19](#)

[Sample Press release 5/3/19](#)

[Sample Press release 9/27/19](#)

Reach Out to Potential Partner Organizations

In my experience, engaging “Partner Organizations” to help promote the event can significantly boost turnout. Unlike a Financial Sponsor, Partner Organizations do not donate money to the event. But they do help promote the concert by sharing about it within their own community networks, email lists, social media, etc. These are typically environmental groups (e.g. Audubon, Citizens Climate Lobby), local churches, and more. In return, they are acknowledged in the concert promotions and at the concert. They are invited to table at the concert as well. This is a great opportunity for them to share more widely about their mission and purpose!

Sample [Information sheet for Potential Partner organizations](#)

Sample [Partner Program Insert #1](#)

Sample [Partner Program Insert #2](#)

Invite Clean Energy Businesses to Table

Consider inviting clean energy businesses to table at the concert. For example, a heat pump installer, or a solar panel company. The goal is to encourage concert attendees to take immediate concrete actions to lower their personal carbon footprint. After the concert, they could talk to an expert about how to make their home more sustainable. Perhaps they'll schedule an appointment for an estimate. In my dreams, people could test drive an EV right after the concert!

Promote the Concert

It's recommended that concert promotions begin 6 - 8 weeks in advance. That is, get the promo pieces out in your community. Spread the word far and wide and encourage people to buy advance tickets and attend the concert.

>> Send Email “Blasts” to Personal Friends and Community

Reaching out to personal networks is without a doubt the best way to get people out to the concert. As many individuals as possible should draft their own email about the concert and send it out to their own friends and contacts.

SUPER IMPORTANT: Send the email to yourself, and put all the email addresses of the people you're inviting on the bcc: line. You do not want to be sharing all the recipient email addresses with everyone.

For the best response, you should send multiple email invites to the same people. Perhaps a Save the Date email 6 - 8 weeks in advance. Then a reminder 4 weeks out. Another 2 weeks out. And another the week of the concert. More is even better! People are busy, they forget, they need multiple touches. They will appreciate the reminder.

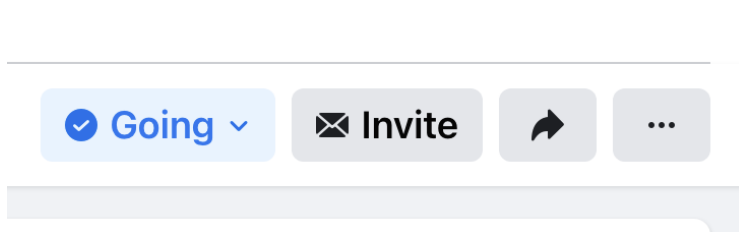
To include a concert poster in your promo email:

1. Save the poster to your hard drive as a JPG.
2. Open the email.
3. Click the Insert Photo icon (Gmail), upload the JPG, choose the "Inline" option, and click Insert.

>> Promote the Facebook Event

To successfully promote on Facebook, as many Facebook users as possible should do the following:

1. Click to view the Facebook Event. You should see these buttons to the right:



2. Click the Going Button.
3. Click the Invite Button and invite your "Friends."
4. Click the Right Arrow button. Write a personal message. Then click the Share Now button to post the Facebook event on your personal Facebook page.
5. Go to your personal Facebook page. Refresh your screen if necessary to see the Facebook Event.
 - Click the "Like" button.
 - Click the 3 dots in the upper right-hand corner and choose "Pin Post" to pin the Event at the top of your Facebook page.

Consider [Boosting the Event From Your Event Page](#).

>> Share about the Concert in Other Ways

In addition to email blasts and sharing on Facebook, promote the concert however you can. Share in blog posts, newsletters, and bulletins. Post on other social media, like Instagram and Tik Tok. You don't have to do all of this, but the more platforms you share on, the more people will hear about it.

Make announcements at public gatherings. Tell your friends and family about the concert. Word of mouth is great! You can print small flyers to give them as a reminder.

[Sample FTB Flyers](#)

>> Submit the Event to Online Community Calendars

Most local media have an online calendar you can post on by yourself. It can take weeks for community calendars and media to review and post upcoming events, so contact them as early as possible.

>> Share Posters in Your Community

Print posters as needed and post at churches, community centers, libraries, coffee shops, grocery stores, etc.

>> Submit Press Releases to Local Media

The internet tells me you should aim to submit a press release for a concert 2 - 3 weeks in advance. I have been interviewed in advance for feature articles in local online and print newspapers. I was interviewed in advance for a local radio podcast. Advance publicity like this can really pump up attendance.

Day-of-Logistics

The band needs to load into the concert space about 1.75 hours before the concert begins. For example, for a 7:30 pm start time:

5:45 pm - Load in equipment, set up the sound system, set up the screen and projector, set up instruments, figure out lighting, etc.

6:45 pm - Band sound checks.

7 pm - Doors open for guests.

7:30 - 9 pm - Concert

9 - 10 pm - Band members talk to people, answer questions, etc. Break down equipment.

I print and bring generic concert programs to all of our For the Birds performances. See source file here: [8.5 x 11 double-sided paper, folded in half](#).

To add your own specific information to the program, you can create and print a half page to insert inside the generic program. See Sponsor/Partner Program Insert samples above.

Volunteers:

- Someone to open the door early for the band to set up.
- A few people to set up chairs and tables as needed for the concert, and to break down afterwards.
- If there is a fee to attend the concert, 1 or 2 people at the door to sell tickets or accept donations. If needed, I can provide ways for people to pay digitally using Paypal, Zelle or Venmo.
- Someone to introduce the performance. An introduction isn't required, but it's a great time to share briefly about the venue, the hosting group or a climate group.

Tables:

- If there is a fee to attend the concert, you'll need a table at the entrance to sell tickets or collect donations.
- Small table or stand near the entrance to put out concert programs.
- Small table for displaying our CDs.
- Table(s) for invited climate group(s) to put out materials?

If you have any questions (or suggestions for making this document better), please let me know.

Thanks!

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