



3.3 Hosting an awareness event

In this section we give some tips on how to arrange a successful awareness raising event and some ideas of what you can do.

Tip 1: Use topical story which relates to refugees

Some people might be interested in topics which are also about refugees but they might not think about it in that way.

For example, there has been a lot of interest in the Iraq War but it is usually not talked about as a refugee situation. You could arrange an event attracting those interested in this political issue and focus on Iraqi refugees.

Other topics could be: Palestine, Environmental disasters

Tip 2: Join with another society

Collaboration is always a great way to reach new people. If you host a joint event then you will automatically get many members from the other society to come along who may have been unlikely to go to a STAR event.

For example, you can hold a debate with a 'Debating Society', a play with a 'Drama Society', or a broader human rights event with Amnesty.

Tip 3: Don't mention refugees!

This may sound odd but you don't need to mention refugees in your publicity at all. Hold a fun event and then make sure that people will pick up information when they are there – this is awareness-raising by stealth!

For example, host a band night, then maybe (a) hand everyone a leaflet as they come in, (b) put up posters all around the venue with clear facts on, (c) have the band or host say a few short messages before, during or after (not too much otherwise the audience may get slightly irritated).

Tip 4: Link event to a particular academic course

Have an event with information about refugees from a particular angle, such as law, history or literature.

For example, celebrate the 60th anniversary of the 1951 UN Refugee Convention with an event exploring this important piece of legislation and advertise through the law department. Students may be studying a module on refugee law and looking to find out more.

Tip 5: Appeal to what's popular

Don't be embarrassed to occasionally make use of something a little more fashionable than 'immigration'. This might be a celebrity, Hollywood film or a new band.

For example, Angelina Jolie is supportive of refugees and does work for UNHCR, which you might be able to find information or documentaries about.