

Guidelines for a Successful Sacred Sites Open House

Registration:

[-Click here for the Online Registration form-](#)

Please complete our online registration form. This ensures your site will be published in our online guide quickly!

At the end of the form, you will be asked to upload three to five photographs of your site or to email these files to sacredsites@nylandmarks.org. Clear quality photos go a long way in promoting your site in our online guide. Please include at least one exterior photo. Close-up photos of architectural details are also welcome, as they help highlight the unique character of your site.

Changes to your registration information can be made by contacting Christina Crichlow, at sacredsites@nylandmarks.org or 212-995-5260.

To be included in this year's Sacred Sites Open House complete your registration by April 18, 2019.

Late registrations will be accepted, but we cannot guarantee that your site will be listed in our online guide, maps, or included in press releases.

Publicity:

Announce your participation to your congregation or parish. Recruit volunteers to greet guests and help with any planned activities. Encourage members of the congregation to attend the event and keep reminders posted on notice boards or in service announcements so that everyone is aware that people will be coming to visit.

Publicize the Sacred Sites Open House on the congregation's web site, in social media posts and in newsletters. Tag the Conservancy in your posts, #nysacredsites2019. Like us and follow our Sacred Sites promotions at www.facebook.com/nylandmarks/ and on our Instagram: @nylandmarks.

Draft a press release to inform local TV and radio of your participation. Contact local newspapers with letters to the editor or submission to a community calendar of events. **A Sample press release is available here.**

Create flyers to post in libraries, at your local historical society, or neighborhood shop windows.

Extend personalized invitations to elected officials, civic groups or organizations that rent space within the building. **An example invitation letter is available here.**

Plan Your Event:

Plan your participation around what works best for your own site. We require a commitment to participate at least one day for a minimum of 3 hours; the rest is up to you. Our annual theme should be considered a guide, and not a requirement. Some successful activities include guided tours, refreshments, organ demonstrations, choir performances, book sales, and local history lectures. Host a planning meeting to figure out how your site can best participate, and then put out an announcement to recruit volunteers.

Guided tours are a great way to share the history of your site and engage visitors.

Brochures are also helpful; [here are some examples from past participating sites](#). Register by April 18th, and we'll send you a printable handout.

In the week leading up to the Sacred Sites Open House weekend have a "get ready" orientation meeting for volunteers. Provide them with the information they will need to oversee special activities and/or greet visitors.

Coordinate with other sites in your community to increase visitor participation. Invite nearby religious sites to participate with you or look up participating sites on the Conservancy's [website](#). Email sacredsites@nylandmarks.org for a list of potential sites nearby.

Day of the Event Tips:

Open doors will bring in visitors! Display clear signage that you are a participating site and have a greeter at the door to welcome visitors. Not only does it make participating sites easily identifiable and welcoming, it is also a way to bring in foot traffic from neighbors walking by. Encourage visitors to post photos of themselves at your site, with the tag #nysacredsites2019.

After the Event:

Post pictures of your Sacred Sites Open House experience on social media tagged #nysacredsites2019. After the weekend, an online survey will be emailed to each participating site; constructive feedback helps us enormously in planning next year's event.

Thank You for Your Participation!

Questions? Contact Christina Crichlow at sacredsites@nylandmarks.org or 212-995-5260.