FREE STIB GUIDE · 8-MINUTE READ

How to plan an event with simultaneous interpretation

Lead times, booths, how many interpreters and receivers to book, the material interpreters need, what the venue must have, what STIB does and what stays with you, and a printable checklist.

FIRST THINGS FIRST

The 4 decisions that shape your event

With these four answers, STIB builds the proposal and the technical plan (languages, booths, interpreters and receivers) and returns a firm quote within 24 hours.

1. LANGUAGES

Which language the speakers use and which ones the audience needs to hear. Each output language is a channel on the receiver, with its own booth.

2. AUDIENCE

How many people will need a receiver. If it is still an estimate, give a range: it can be adjusted close to the event.

3. FORMAT AND VENUE

On site, online or hybrid. Address, type of room and whether there are parallel rooms.

4. DATES AND TIMES

Days, start and end time of each, and when the venue allows set-up.

LEAD TIMES

Timeline

4 weeks before (or more)

Book the interpretation. For busy dates and large events, 60 to 90 days is ideal. If time is short, get in touch anyway: urgent requests are handled subject to availability.

- Send the 4 answers above.
- Receive the proposal with languages, booths, number of interpreters and receivers.

2 to 3 weeks before

Sign the contract and settle the details.

- Final programme, with the time of each session.
- Contact person who will receive the team at the venue.
- If you want a recording, confirm it now: it is agreed in advance and contracted separately.
- Tell participants (sample message below).

Up to 7 days before

Send the material to the interpreters, even if it is not final. See the list under Material for interpreters.

The day before

Set-up and technical test, whenever the venue allows.

- Booths installed, receivers charged and the link to the venue's sound system tested.
- Updated slides and scripts can still be sent to the interpreters.

On the day

STIB's technical team (technician and receptionists) arrives at least 2 hours early to test every channel. Interpreters usually arrive 60 minutes before.

- STIB's receptionists hand out receivers at the entrance, together with registration, or the receivers are left on the seats, as agreed with you.
- A technician stays on site for the whole event.

After the event

STIB's team collects the receivers at the exit, dismantles everything and takes it away. Receivers are sanitised before every event. If a recording was contracted, it is delivered in the agreed format. Keep the glossary for future editions.

SIZING

How many booths, interpreters and receivers

ITEM	HOW TO CALCULATE
Booths	One per output language. A conference in Portuguese with interpretation into English and Spanish uses two booths. Mobile booths follow ISO 4043: sound insulation, quiet ventilation and a direct view of the stage.

ITEM	HOW TO CALCULATE
Interpreters	Two per language pair, taking turns every 20 to 30 minutes. On very long days or with very dense terminology, the interval can be shorter.
Receivers	The number of participants who will listen to the interpretation. STIB brings 10% extra as spares, to swap on the spot if one fails. LED headsets show the channel colour, so the technician can see from afar who is on each language.
Channels	One per language, plus the floor channel if the audience wants to hear the speaker through the headset.
No booth	For small groups, visits and meetings, whispered interpreting with a portable kit needs no booth. See the comparison of modes.

PREPARATION

Material for the interpreters

The more interpreters know in advance, the more accurate the interpretation. Send it up to 7 days before, even as a draft, and updates up to the day before. All material is handled confidentially.

- **Slides and presentations** from each speaker, preferably the original file.
- **Script and programme**, with the names and titles of the speakers and of anyone quoted.
- **Glossary, acronyms and product names** of the company or sector.
- **Videos with audio** to be shown, and the script or subtitles if available. The video sound must go through the venue's sound system to reach the booths.
- **Speeches read aloud**, which tend to be fast: having the text in advance makes a big difference.

On highly technical topics, a 10 to 15-minute talk between speakers and interpreters before the session clears up terminology.

INFRASTRUCTURE

What the venue needs to have

- **Space for the booths** at the back or side of the room, with a direct view of the stage and screen, away from kitchens, noisy air conditioning and foot traffic.
- **A power point** near the booths and the transmitter.
- **An audio feed from the sound desk** to the booths, carrying the stage microphones, videos and audience questions. STIB integrates the interpretation system with the venue's sound and, if the venue has no sound desk, can provide one.
- **Loading access** and set-up allowed the day before, or with enough lead time on the day.
- **A support table at the entrance** where STIB's receptionists hand out and collect the receivers, ideally next to registration. If receivers are to be left on the seats, this is agreed with STIB in advance.

DIVISION OF TASKS

What STIB does and what stays with you

STIB	YOU (ORGANISER)
Conference interpreters, in pairs per language pair	Languages, programme and number of participants
ISO 4043 booths, consoles, transmitters and receivers, with 10% spares, sanitised before every event	Space for the booths, power and an audio feed from the sound desk (if the venue has none, STIB can provide one)
Transport, set-up, testing and dismantling	Venue access and set-up time
On-site technician for the whole event	An organisation contact on the day
Receptionists who hand out and collect the receivers	Support table at the entrance (or receivers on the seats, if agreed) and notice to participants

STIB	YOU (ORGANISER)
Contract and electronic invoice, including for public bodies	Material for the interpreters up to 7 days before

Contracted separately, if you need them: recording of the interpreted channels (agreed before the event), transcription and subtitling. Payment by Pix, bank slip (boleto), transfer or credit card in up to 4 instalments. NGOs receive a discount.

COMMUNICATION

How to prepare participants and speakers

A notice before the event avoids queues and questions at the entrance. Copy and adapt:

> "Our event will have simultaneous interpretation into [languages]. You will receive your receiver at the entrance, together with your badge (or find it on your seat), and choose the channel for the language you want to hear. Volume is adjusted on the device itself. On your way out, simply return it at the same desk."

For speakers

- Send slides and script in advance; updates up to the day before.
- Always speak into the microphone, including during audience questions: anything that does not go through a microphone does not reach the booths.
- Speak at a natural pace and avoid reading too fast.
- Let the team know beforehand if you will show a video with sound.
- See the full speaker guide.

PRINT IT

Checklist for an event with simultaneous interpretation

Planning

- [ ] Source and target languages defined
- [ ] Number of participants (or range) defined
- [ ] Format defined: on site, online or hybrid
- [ ] Venue, dates and times confirmed

- [ ] Proposal approved and contract signed
- [ ] Recording contracted, if needed

Before the event

- [ ] Final programme sent to STIB
- [ ] Material sent to interpreters up to 7 days before
- [ ] Videos with audio flagged and tested
- [ ] Booth space and power reserved
- [ ] Audio feed from the sound desk agreed with the venue
- [ ] Receiver hand-out agreed: support table at the entrance or on the seats
- [ ] Participants informed about the receivers
- [ ] Speakers briefed

On the day

- [ ] STIB team received at the agreed time
- [ ] All channels tested before doors open
- [ ] Receivers handed out at registration or on the seats
- [ ] Collection organised at the exit

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FAQ

Common planning questions

How far in advance should I book simultaneous interpretation?

How many interpreters do I need per language?

Do I need a booth?

When should I send material to the interpreters?

Can the interpretation be recorded?