

COVID-19 Safety and Prevention Concept - MountainBytes Demoparty

Introduction

As per current expert voices, an end to the pandemic caused by SARS-COV-2 is not in sight for as long as a vaccine is not fully available to the global public.

Hence, our demoparty "MountainBytes" taking place on Feb 19th to 21st in Cham, ZG, will have to adapt to higher safety and prevention guidelines, to ensure the health of our visitors, partners and neighbours.

We are and remain a non-profit event and have to work cost-effective. Nonetheless we will keep our overall budget in line with this concept.

What is MountainBytes?

MountainBytes is a multi-day computer art festival, hosting international coders, graphics artists and musicians to create small artistic computer programs, called "demos". These also give this kind of event its name, "demoparty".

The focus of the event is the collaboration between its participants, as well as the different competitions in which our participants show off their skillset.

This naturally brings frequent close physical contact - people gather closely in front of a screen to finish their production, they laugh and dance and - traditionally - sleep on site in sleeping bags.

Guiding principles to our COVID-19 response

For our response to the situation, we have defined three head notes that define our actions and decision-making:

- Our visitors, helpers and communities' individual health has first priority, even above more systemic capacity concerns.
- The safety and health of everyone involved must not be subject to their financial means.
- We commit to transparency and an open conversation. Visitors and partners are part of our assessment process. We inform early and publicly about plans or changes to our prevention concept.

Additional measures for our visitors

Ticket refund policy

The ticket presale is an important instrument to ensure MountainBytes' liquidity and planning certainty. Hence we are glad about every visitor who buys their ticket early and ahead of time.

Nonetheless we commit to a full refund, if the situation worsens, the ticket holder shows symptoms of sickness or is concerned for their health.

We do not want our guests to bear the cost for any of the reasons above.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

We will provide free of charge disinfectants, masks and any further PPE equipment that is recommended by the BAG or requested by our visitors.

The demoscene is and has always been an open minded and familiar community, and we are confident that they will regard their fellow visitors' health.

The latest BAG infographics will be shown on the big screen as well as printouts visible in the hall.

Accommodation

Usually, visitors sleep in the location itself. We want to offer alternatives to avoid this. Not every visitor - namely artists, students and international guests from countries with lower income - can afford to stay in a hotel.

We are excited and grateful for the partnerships with the following hotels and hostels in the neighbourhood, that secure sleeping options for every budget:

- The SwissEver Hotel in Cham offers our guests rooms for 126 CHF per night
- The Ibis Hotel in Baar offers us rooms at 105 CHF per night including breakfast
- The Youth Hostel of Zug opens exclusively for us during their break. Six-bed rooms (ensuring a distance of two meters between the heads of the guests) are already available at 20 CHF per night, four-bed rooms at 25 CHF.

Accommodation booking will be part of our online ticket shop. The individual cancellation terms can be viewed in the hotels-section of our website.

Response to symptoms amongst visitors

There is currently no guideline to monitor temperature or verify proof of immunity in public events. We want to avoid such violations to personal rights, and will only reassess if there is a firm federal requirement to do so.

If a visitor is visibly sick or shows flu-like symptoms (even in case of a cold) they will be asked to leave the location and see a doctor. Switzerland is part of the European medical coverage network, the expense coverage is that for secured.

Seating and Collaboration

Usually our participants and artists work in groups, sitting for hours at a time in table rows and gather in front of a single screen to review progress of their entry.

We want to offer additional, comfortable working spots in the loftier foyer of the Lorzensaal, where the groups can gather and exchange in an aired environment, also making use of screen share programs.

The competitions are being portrayed on the stage's bigscreen. Usually, this means visitors gather closely together in front of the stage, huddled on the floor. We are currently reviewing options for comfortable seating options, that warrant a bigger distance between viewers, as well as adding a cool feature to our party.

We are also planning to open up the gallery for compo watching to our visitors. We will notify our event insurance about this change.

Tracking

It can be anticipated that Switzerland and other European countries will have introduced Tracking- and Proximity-Warning apps.

It is questionable if there will be a pan-European exchange between those efforts.

We will prompt our visitors upon registration to state their full name, an e-mail address and a phone number, which they will verify during entry. This data will be deleted four weeks after the event, and will not be used for any other purpose than to inform people in the event of an outbreak amongst participants.

Additional measures for organizers and partners

Of course all of the above will also be valid for staff on site.

Additionally, we determined core-duties that need substitution in case of an individual's quarantine. We are very happy about the offers from friends and other organizers to step up in this capacity.

The following positions have been assessed as infrastructural critical during the event:

- Beam Team Lead (Event Direction):
Big Screen content management, monitoring of signals via the different in- and outputs, team leadership.
→ an emergency cover has been found
- Network (Infrastructure Administration):
Supervises Partyservers, Internet availability and data infrastructure.
→ the team consists of two people that have no personal interaction in the two weeks leading up to the event.
- Compo Lead (Competition Management):
Manages and checks the competition content, coordinates the competitions together with the Beamteam
→ two emergency covers have been found

Further functions are the Infodesk (Guest Management) and the Main Organizing (the legal representation of Echtzeit - Digitale Kultur). While the Infodesk is crucial to the event, individual organizers do not have special tasks that cannot be delegated to others. The sale of beverages is supervised by personnel of the Lorzensaal, who in turn have their own backup structure.

The Main Organizing of the event happens primarily before the doors open. A clear documentation will be provided to the organizing team before the event starts. Some organizers are also legal representatives of Echtzeit - Digitale Kultur, and can step in to negotiate and sign in the name of the organization.

Disclaimer

This action plan has been written in May 2020. Later changes will be recorded in this section. A few of the described measures may exceed the recommendations and regulations at the time of the event. We are still optimistic that these measures will in general improve our visitors' experience, and will sure add value considering the event taking place during the scheduled full-season nevertheless.

For any further inquiries or suggestions, please contact us via info@mountainbytes.ch