

Practices for Inclusive Hybrid Meetings

Resource Guide

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Recommended Practices for Inclusive Hybrid Meetings

To ensure inclusiveness, hybrid meetings should be held using a virtual platform (e.g., Zoom). For hybrid meetings, a meeting facilitator can log into the virtual platform to help facilitate community building. More recommendations are below.

For Technology Use in Hybrid Environments

- If possible, check your personal technology and the room’s technology before the meeting to ensure a smooth hybrid meeting. This includes enabling live transcription/closed captions on the virtual meeting platform (e.g. Zoom) so that all participants can more easily follow conversations over virtual platforms.
- Recording virtual meetings can be helpful, particularly for hearing or visually impaired and other disabled persons. When recording, be sure to establish consent ahead of the meeting and specify in the calendar invite that the meeting will be recorded. After the meeting it is important to edit the Zoom captioning before sharing the recording. For more information about editing a recorded transcript, view this video: [Zoom Captioning & Transcription Tutorial](#).
- Enable Live Transcription (Closed Captioning) for all meetings, regardless of whether there is a known attendee with a disability. This can be done by the host selecting the CC button, which says “Live Transcript.” Select the enable button to turn on the feature. The setting should be turned on before the meeting begins. It is important to remind the attendees that a live transcript can be accessed by selecting the CC button and

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choosing, “Show subtitles.” This toggles the captions on and off. Live transcription will not work in Zoom breakout rooms. A workaround is to use the main room as a breakout room for individuals who need the feature or to provide CART services. For an additional resource, please see the tutorial on “[Turning on Zoom Transcription.](#)”

- For tips on turning on captions see “[Turn on auto-captions.](#)”
- For more information on activating live transcription see “[How to Enable Live Transcription on Zoom.](#)”
- Create a hyper learning environment set-up (e.g., [OWL camera system](#)) in the room that follows in-room speakers/facilitators.
 - If there are two screens or projections available and there is a speaker/facilitator in the room then have the speaker on one screen and the presentation on another screen.
 - For in-room participants, when possible, it’s helpful to optimize the use of screens and projectors to include displaying both content and video feeds of speakers/facilitators across multiple screens.
- For one-on-one and group meetings as well as large presentations, it’s inclusive/important to consider the audio experiences of all participants. When needed or if possible, use microphones (either wireless or at a podium) so virtual participants can hear all speakers properly and engage. This may include passing microphones to in-person participants who come up to the podium to ask questions to a remote panel or having the speaker repeat the questions into a microphone.
 - It is equally important to have good lighting and the camera face on the speaker as people may need to read lips for supplemental understanding of audio. Make sure the camera is not off to the side making it difficult for people to see the speaker’s face.
- Send agendas and any relevant documents out before the meeting and in the chat during the meeting, [using accessible formatting.](#)
- Maintain other inclusive practices adopted in virtual spaces (e.g., utilize tech tools like Padlet or PollEverywhere and Microsoft Accessibility Checker; have one person speak at a time, ensure documents are accessible for in-person and virtual participants etc).
 - Be prepared by planning for alternative methods to any collaboration tools in case someone encounters an accessibility barrier.
 - For large Zoom meetings, it is helpful to have each speaker start by saying their name too.

For Building Community in Hybrid Environments

- It may be helpful to focus on the virtual audience first and the in person audience second. That way you ensure that you do not exclude the virtual audience.

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- If offering a meal during the in-person portion of the meeting¹, please send a gift card to members joining in virtually at least 24 hours before the meeting. This could be for department lunch meetings or other spaces. Please consult your finance administrator for relevant policies. Additionally, be aware of potential lead time required to coordinate meals for each team member.
- Before a meeting begins, designate a facilitator to monitor the virtual meeting space (e.g., Zoom) for raised hands, chat engagement, and to proactively call on virtual participants.
- Create a plan for including all virtual participants in any breakout sessions. One plan is to nominate an on-site attendee to represent a number of virtual participants – that way when breakout groups happen, each individual is included (i.e., if 3 people are online, then have 1 in-person participant join the breakout room).
- When possible, encourage all participants to join virtually.
- Actively utilize the virtual chat to share agendas, documents and other resources provided in-person throughout the meeting.
- Include a Zoom link in the Outlook calendar meeting invite; if possible, append the agenda and/or handouts in the notes section.
 - Keep in mind that when sharing links it is easier for people to access a descriptive hyperlink than a long URL
- Here's a list of recommendations for engaging with virtual and in-person participants:
 - Establish shared agreements, such as one person speaks at a time, keep video on if the internet connection and circumstances allow, and use chat for affirmation. [The School of Medicine's HRG shared agreements](#) is one example.
 - Remind participants to mute themselves when not speaking.
 - Foster inclusion by setting up a meeting as a camera off-space or encourage participants to turn their cameras off at different points, such as when co-working and reading documents.
 - Using a headset or dedicated microphone rather than the built-in microphone on a laptop, which is usually lower quality.
 - Finding a quiet space for the meeting to reduce background noise, if possible.
- To engage virtual participants in key decision-making conversations and reduce excluding their perspectives, offer the option for virtual participants to share first *and* last before moving onto a new topic or conversation. Allow participants to share in the chat or

¹ explore with each participant what is appropriate for them; for example, using a DoorDash gift card: <https://work.doordash.com/en-us/products/employee-gift-cards>

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verbally.

- Offer interactive engagement at the beginning of your meeting and throughout your meeting. You can do so by prompting participants to use the chat or creating breakout groups for small group discussions. We encourage the facilitator to lead large group conversations after returning from small group discussions.
 - One example is when leading small group check-ins, create breakout rooms where everyone shares their response to a check-in question or prompt in a set order (e.g. alphabetical order by first name), a common practice done in restorative justice community circles. Check out some examples of [check-in and community building questions](#).
- Have a point person (moderator) to help the facilitator bring people back from activities.
- For group photos, encourage in-person participants to stand in front of or around the screen where remote participants are being displayed. We also recommend that someone in the virtual meeting take multiple screenshots in case remote participants are blocked by the screen.

Resources

- [The Office of Digital Accessibility](#) at Stanford has resources on accessible virtual meetings.
- The [Diversity and Access Office](#) has created a [Digital Inclusion Checklist](#) to further promote disability inclusion and accessibility.
- The Office of Information Technology at UW-Madison has resources and recommendations on [how to host inclusive hybrid meetings](#).
- Additional resources on how to host and run hybrid meetings are below:
 - Harvard Business Review article on "[What it Takes to Run a Great Hybrid Meeting](#)".
 - Engagement Multiplier article on "[6 Best Practices for Your Next Hybrid Meeting](#)".
 - Gartner 2021 report on "[Effective Meetings for a Hybrid Workforce](#)".
- The Office of Digital Accessibility has guides to create accessible formatting for [MS Word documents](#) and [Google documents](#), as well as many additional document types.

What is SMAT?

Stanford Medicine Accessible Technology ([SMAT](#)) is a group dedicated to diversity, equity, and inclusion looking to create partnerships across Stanford Medicine, Stanford University, and beyond to facilitate the discovery, use, and provision of technology that enhances lived experiences by ensuring accessibility. We seek to foster inclusivity and create genuine spaces



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of belonging where anyone, regardless of physical or cognitive differences, can have access to the support they need to thrive.

Our goal is to leverage technology to promote a more inclusive and accessible workplace. Given the evolving nature of the workplace, this document offers recommended practices and resources on how to lead and engage in inclusive hybrid meetings.

The purpose of this document is to offer recommended practices for inclusive hybrid meetings and teaching experiences, given the changing landscape of the workplace and to support disabled community members at Stanford Medicine.

Contact Us

For more information or to contribute ideas to this guide, contact the Stanford Medicine Accessible Technology (SMAT) [Group Members](#).