# Good Practice Guidelines for Hosting Accessible Online Meetings

The "Good Practice Guidelines for Hosting Accessible Online Meetings" document is a resource for anyone involved in organising or hosting online meetings.

This guide covers various aspects of meeting preparation and execution, emphasising the importance of accessibility at each stage. The guidelines also provide specific advice for online meetings, ensuring that all participants, regardless of their needs, can fully engage and contribute.

By following these guidelines, you demonstrate a commitment to creating an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and heard. This not only enhances the experience for all attendees but also fosters a culture of respect and equality. Whether you are a seasoned event planner or new to organising meetings, this document will help you host an online meeting that is more accessible, effective, and inclusive for all.

## Planning / Prior to the meeting

* If there is a registration process to attend the meeting, make sure to ask attendees if they have any accessibility requirements to participate in the meeting.
* Share the agenda with all invitees.
* Distribute presentation slides in advance, this will ensure that everyone has prior insight into the topics and information to be discussed.
* Book Auslan interpreters well in advance if you think they will be needed. These can always be cancelled if not required.
* Book live captioning service well in advance if you think they will be needed. These can always be cancelled if not required.

## Check the accessibility of your presentation

* Structure your content logically.
* Use descriptive titles on each slide.
* Ensure the reading order is correct.
* Add descriptive alt text for all images.
* Caption all videos and ensure transitions are accessible.
* Check colour contrast for readability.
* Refer to the ADCET website for information on [Creating accessible PowerPoints](https://www.adcet.edu.au/inclusive-teaching/accessible-content/accessible-documents/microsoft-powerpoint).
* Provide an accessible format, such as Microsoft Word, of any presentations to any blind or vision impaired attendees in advance of the meeting. Refer to the ADCET website for information on [Creating Accessible Documents](https://www.adcet.edu.au/inclusive-teaching/accessible-content/accessible-documents).

## 30 minutes before the meeting

* Welcome all presenters and ensure they have an up-to-date agenda or running order.
* Ask presenters to use a static or solid background color instead of a blurred background.
* Ensure speakers faces are visible and well-lit.
* Check audio levels of all presenters and ensure the quality of audio is clear. Encourage speakers to use a microphone or headset.
* Check presentation / screen sharing works as intended for all presenters.
* Check if any embedded audio will be used during the presentation, e.g. video or podcast, and check that the sound is clear and audible.
* Enable auto-captions are turned on if a live captioner will not be present, and ensure attendees can turn them on/off.
* Check if any presenters or staff have any questions prior to the meeting.
* Mute all attendees’ microphones unless they are speaking.
* If an Auslan interpreter is present, ensure they can be seen, are well lit and can be seen and pinned by all attendees.

## Start of meeting

* Inform attendees if the meeting is being recorded, and what is being recorded.
* Inform attendees of any Auslan or transcription services that are being used and how to access them.
* Explain to attendees how that can participate/ask questions (chat, voice, Q&A).
* Explain meeting structure and order of proceedings, including breaks.
* For smaller meetings conduct a roll call so everyone knows who is present.
* Read out any online questions and paraphrase/repeat any local questions.

## During the meetings

* Remind attendees not to use emoticons in any online chat.
* Offer multiple ways for attendees to participate (e.g., chat, voice, Q&A)
* Remind attendees to keep their microphone muted if not speaking.
* Ask attendees to use the ‘raise hand’ feature if they would like to speak.
* Announce the names of people whose posts are being read.
* Read out questions from chat or Q&A boxes.
* Encourage attendees to state their name when asking a question using their microphone.
* Repeat and rephrase any questions in case not everyone heard it clearly.
* Describe any visual content for participants who are blind or have low vision.
* Provide short breaks during longer meetings to prevent attendee and host fatigue.

## After the meeting

* Share meeting notes and recordings with all participants.
* Provide feedback forms to gather input on accessibility and inclusiveness.
* Review and address any accessibility issues reported.