Virtual Meetings EDI Tip Sheet for Chairs
Created by the Organizational Effectiveness Committee, 2021

Pre-Meeting Prep for Meeting Leader
Committee Chairs, prepare to have successful virtual meetings by doing a bit of prepwork beforehand. When you send your initial Hello emails, share the ALSC Community Agreements so everyone has a chance to familiarize themselves with expectations.

Additionally, consider asking the following questions in advance so you can be best prepared to meet your committee members' needs. It may be best to create a form with these questions so responses will go only to you- make all questions optional.

- What name do you want to be called by?
- What is the phonetic pronunciation of your name?
- What are your pronouns?
- What do you need or want within a virtual meeting platform?
- What should I know about your working style to help you succeed?
- Do you have any suggestions on how to make this an effective meeting?
- Do you have any other questions or comments?

Platform & Accessibility
Regardless of which platform is chosen, there are several tips to ensuring that meetings and presentations online or in person are most accessible. Consider choosing a platform that has a call-in function in case there are members with unstable Internet connection. Many of the things done to accommodate those with disabilities can also benefit those without disabilities. Here are just a few suggestions:

- Verbally describe any images or shared screen content.
- If presenting slides during a meeting, share a PDF of those slides beforehand.
- When on camera, avoid distracting backgrounds, keep face close to the camera, and use adequate lighting.
- Only have one person talk at a time. Use the hand-raising feature or have the chair call on members to speak.
- Everyone should mute themselves when not talking.

Meeting Management
As chair, you are responsible for leading the meeting. Use these tips to have as smooth a meeting as possible.

- Send basic instructions on how to use the chosen platform.

-Let members know you will set aside 15 minutes before the meeting to test technology. Allow participants to enter early to test their microphone and camera, screen sharing if applicable, and chat functions.
-Ask participants to add their pronouns to their name display.
-Begin the meeting by clarifying the roles of everyone present- chair, committee member, observer, etc.
-Explain how to ask a question/comment or when in the meeting these will be addressed
-Decide how or if you want the chat to be used during the meeting. Some find checking the chat during a meeting can be distracting.
-Make time in the meeting, or afterward, for input and feedback from participants on how the virtual meeting went. Was the platform easy to use? Is there anything you might need to have done next time to have an effective virtual meeting? Communicate this through the agenda or other formal method.
-Provide multiple ways for people to contribute feedback: chat, text, email, use of symbols in the meeting software, or other methods.
-Acknowledge and normalize "zoom fatigue." Allow the option to be off-camera.
-Allow time for breaks and, if possible, offer supportive check-ins and debriefs.

Links for more resources
-[Hosting a Virtual Meeting Using Trauma Informed Principles](#)
-[How to Make Your Virtual Meetings and Events Accessible to the Disability Community](#)
-[Are Your Virtual Meetings Accessible for People with Disabilities? Start with This Checklist](#)
-[Accessibility: Resources to Help Ensure Accessibility of Your Virtual Events for People with Disabilities](#)