

Best Practices for Hosting Virtual Events

Created and updated by the

[ACRL Instruction Section Virtual Engagement Committee](#)

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Introduction

This document is intended to assist the members of ACRL Instruction Section committees by outlining best practices and strategies to consider when planning and hosting virtual events. For the purposes of this document, “virtual event” refers to both synchronous and asynchronous events with varying levels of audience involvement. The types of virtual events discussed include panel discussions, webinars or virtual presentations, small group discussions (e.g., Lunch and Learns), and Twitter chats. The number of participants for these events may vary depending on the preferences and goals of those planning the event. The best practices described below apply to events of varying scales. This document provides guidance for all phases of events, including: pre-event planning and promotion; running the event on the scheduled day; and follow-up after the event is over. It has detailed instructions for doing all of these tasks and describes the responsibilities of the committee members organizing the event. There are also guidelines for how to select content and presenters to represent a broad spectrum of viewpoints and how to see if the event is accessible to anyone who wishes to participate.

Panel Discussion

A panel discussion features a small number of panelists discussing their perspectives on a particular theme. The moderator facilitates the discussion among the panelists and those viewing the panel (participants). Participants benefit from viewing a panel discussion in which the panelists bring a unique perspective to the chosen theme. For example, the panelists may work with different user groups or represent different types of institutions and can share how their scenarios influence their approaches to the theme of the discussion. One advantage of a panel discussion is that participants have the opportunity to hear a range of perspectives and receive an overview of a larger theme or topic. However, because there are multiple presenters, each panelist may not have the opportunity to go into a great deal of depth with their contribution.

Best Practices for the Moderator(s)/Host and Panelists

Host/Planning Committee:

- Create a public call for proposals, if possible. Allow adequate time (at least 3 weeks) for responses. This call should be distributed as broadly as possible, to ensure equitable consideration of interested people/groups.
- The planning committee should try to create a panel and moderator group that represent a variety of perspectives, including both their personal and professional experiences (e.g., a variety of institution types, different amounts or types of experience, and representation from people with marginalized identities).
- If there are more people interested in participating than can be accommodated, the planning committee should consider creating a rubric, de-identifying the names and institutions, and assessing potential participants utilizing the rubric. One potential problem with this method is that the highest scoring people may be homogeneous in terms of personal and professional experiences.
- The event host should begin the event with a brief introduction, including stating the event title, sharing introductions (as appropriate), and acknowledging event contributors and sponsors.
- The event host should also provide a brief overview of the technology settings that have been enabled for the event (e.g., if all audience members have automatically been muted and will remain muted during the event, how to submit a question to the chat, if the event is being recorded, etc.) and who/how to contact if they are having trouble.

Moderator:

- The moderator may choose to start with a short overview of the topic and/or some relevant background, to begin the conversation. This presentation portion should not exceed approximately 10 minutes in order to allow time for the panel discussion.

- A virtual panel should operate more like a conversation among panelists rather than as discrete mini-presentations. In order to facilitate conversation among panelists, the moderator may work with the panelists in advance of the event to generate a list of questions that they will answer during the event. The moderator can then ask a question of the panelists, allowing each panelist (or only some panelists) time to respond before moving on to the next question. If the moderator and panelists have discussed the questions and their answers ahead of time, they can make connections with each other in their answers, facilitating a conversation among the panelists.
- The moderator should make clear to the audience how they will be able to participate. Clarify the process for audience members to submit questions, at which point questions will be fielded and answered, and how participants can follow up with the panelists if they aren't able to get an answer to their questions during the event. If progressive stacking will be used (prioritizing questions from people with marginalized identities), let the audience know how to indicate their non-dominant group identity (e.g., putting an * before the question).
- Consider creating a Twitter hashtag for the event. If a hashtag is used, clarify when/if it will be monitored and if responses will be given during/after the event.
- Provide captioning to make the event more inclusive. Many systems of auto-captioning (e.g., PowerPoint) rely on captioning a single speaker, and consequently don't work with panel events. Some programs require the settings to be changed to allow for captions to be displayed (and sometimes they are displayed during the event but not recorded). Consider and test captioning options prior to the event. Keep in mind that auto-captioning often doesn't recognize technical words, proper nouns, accents, speech impediments, etc. Providing live captioning is best practice, but is typically not supported by ACRL.

Panelists:

- In order to make sure all panelists have time to share their perspectives, it can be useful to determine speaking order in advance. This can be particularly useful in a virtual panel, as there may be greater risk of panelists speaking over each other and having difficulty determining who will speak. Panelists should share their individual perspectives while respecting, responding to, and giving space for all other perspectives on the panel.
- Panelists should provide a range of perspectives on the topic in question, and each panelist should have the opportunity to share their unique perspective.
- The panelists may consider sharing slides with an easily-digestible amount of information on them (e.g., slides stating the question the panelists are currently answering, slides containing bullet points with key parts of the panelists' answers). These slides provide visual cues for the audience and also allows those viewing the recording to “read” an outline of the discussion.

Logistics and Planning

Before Panel:

Early in the planning:

- Select panel theme, moderator and panelists. This can be done in various ways including:
 - Announce the theme and call for participants to apply, selecting a moderator and panelists.
 - Call for people who are interested in moderating to apply with their theme, announce the theme and call for panelists to apply.
 - Call for people who are interested in moderating to apply with their theme, and co-create an equitable panel with the selected moderator.

- Coordinate with panelists and moderators to select an event time and date and a time and date for a practice session prior to the actual event.
- Schedule the event via the ACRL Virtual Meeting room booking page to reserve the Zoom (or other platform) appointment. To schedule the virtual room, take the following steps:
 - Review the ACRL Virtual Meeting Guidelines and policies prior to booking a room: <https://acrl.libguides.com/virtualmeetings>
 - Determine whether your meeting needs are best suited for a Zoom Meeting (available for up to 300 attendees) or Zoom Webinar (available to support up to 999 attendees).
 - Visit the ACRL Virtual Meeting room booking page (<https://acrl.libcal.com/booking/virtual-meetings>) and scroll to the bottom of the page to view calendar availability.
 - Click on an available time (the ACRL Virtual Meeting room is available to schedule events at 11am, 1pm, and 3pm CST). Available time blocks will show in green on the scheduler.
 - Share out the email confirmation of the event with all moderators and panelists. The email confirmation will have a Zoom registration link that all participants should use (including moderators and panelists) to register for the event.
- Add the event to the [IS Crowdsourced Calendar](#) and include the Zoom registration link for the event.
- Draft announcements for ALA Connect, IS website, Facebook, and Twitter and include the zoom registration link for the event. Get approval from your committee's ACRL IS Executive liaison.

About 6 weeks out:

- Once the announcement is approved, distribute through listservs and social media and post in ALA Connect as an upcoming meeting. Contact web administrators to post an announcement on the IS website.
- The moderator(s) and panelists will need to register for the event individually. They will use their individual links to join the Zoom room (in which they will be elevated to Host by the assisting ACRL staff member).
- Identify the committee member who will be the lead on the technical aspects of the session. This person will host the practice session with the panelists.
- Schedule the practice session with the panelists by following the same instructions described above in the “Early in the planning” section above for booking the ACRL Virtual Meeting room. Note: you will need to book the same type of room (i.e. Zoom Meeting or Zoom Webinar) that you have scheduled for the actual event for the practice session.

Within 3 weeks of the session:

- Conduct a practice session with the moderator(s) and panelists prior to the event.
 - Book a practice session in the ACRL Virtual Meeting room as described above in the “Early in the planning” section.
 - Different moderator/panelist groups may have different preferences regarding how much practice they need prior to the event. At minimum, it is a good idea to make sure everyone agrees on the questions and create a list regarding the first 1-2 people who will speak on each question. This allows spontaneous interaction, while still ensuring every panelist gets to speak and reducing the likelihood of excessive silence or panelists speaking over each other in the online environment. Some moderator/panelist groups may elect to do more in-depth practice sessions, such as a full run-through or a timeline addressing who is expected to speak at which point in the event. This version can create a more polished presentation, but reduces spontaneity and

- interaction. There is no one absolute way to run practice sessions, but it is important to make sure everyone is on the same page and agrees to a plan that allows different perspectives to be heard while ensuring smooth online discussion.
- The practice session should also address all technical aspects of the presentation including:
 - Testing slide decks
 - Testing the microphone and camera of everyone who will be speaking
 - Discussing any roles, including monitoring chat or time-keeping
 - Discussing plans for technical difficulties (including sharing phone numbers, if relevant)
 - Testing captioning or accessibility options
 - Confirming speaking order
 - Send reminders to listservs, ALA Connect, and social media 1-2 weeks before the event. Check in with Elois Sharpe (esharpe@ala.org) (or [the ACRL program coordinator](#)) to see how many people are registered.
 - Email Elois Sharpe (esharpe@ala.org) (or [the ACRL program coordinator](#)) at ALA about a week before the event to:
 - make sure the chairperson is designated as a host in Zoom for the event so they can introduce the event.
 - ask about gaining access to the Zoom room 20-30 minute in advance for the host, moderator(s), and panelists to test things out.
 - arrange for the recording to be sent to those registered after the session
 - Select a committee member to work in the background as support for the lead tech person to field tech problems, manage chat, eject bad actors, etc.
 - Create an opportunity for attendees to provide feedback through a Google Form or other information collecting service. Create a bit.ly or other unique identifier so that it's easy for attendees to get to.

During Panel:

- Committee members should prepare some questions for the panelists, in case there are none from the audience (unlikely, but better to be prepared).
- Committee members can send individual messages in Zoom to panelists/moderators if they are running over time. The committee should designate a timekeeper for this purpose.
- Share the link to the evaluation form in the chat at the end of the session. Consider adding the link to the email with the recording so asynchronous viewers can provide feedback as well.

After Panel:

- Follow up with Elois Sharpe (esharpe@ala.org) (or [the ACRL program coordinator](#)) to:
 - Send out a following up email with the link to the recording to all attendees
 - In the follow-up email, include:
 - A summary of the event
 - The link to the evaluation form
 - The link to the recording
 - Ask about the number of people registered and number of attendees for the event for internal documentation.
- After the event, the committee should review the feedback from the event and use it to inform future events. Additionally, they may consider sending along any feedback from the event to the moderator and panelists.
- Contact the web editors on the Communications Committee to have the event [archived](#).
- Contribute a write-up of the event in the next IS newsletter. This can be sent early to the [IS publications editor](#).
- Although best practices would be to upload a VTT file with corrected captions to the video recording, there is currently not a process for that with ACRL. Upon inquiry,

ACRL staff mentioned that the number of online ACRL events precludes the possibility of routinely uploading edited transcripts following events. ACRL members are directed to make use of the Zoom live transcript feature, Google slides live caption feature, and/or YouTube automatic transcription feature. The IS Virtual Engagement Committee recognizes that these automatic transcription tools result in errors, and urge ACRL members to advocate that greater funding and resources be given to accessibility measures, including supporting routine processes for editing automated transcripts for videos posted online by ACRL. For more information on captioning, see the “Accessibility Considerations” section.

Webinar or Virtual Presentation

A webinar or virtual presentation features a facilitator and a presenter who is well informed and experienced in the selected topic. While the presenter may choose to use a wide range of presentation techniques, such as polling, or the use of breakout rooms for discussion, most often the webinar or virtual presentation features some degree of lecture on a given topic. The presenter may share out slides and additional resources, and there should be at least 10 minutes of time allotted for audience questions at the end of the event.

Best Practices for the Facilitator and Presenter(s)

Facilitator:

- The event facilitator should begin the event with a brief introduction, including the event title, introductions (as appropriate), and event presenter(s) and sponsors.
- The event facilitator should also provide a brief overview of the technology settings that have been enabled for the event (e.g., if all audience members have automatically been muted and will remain muted during the event, how to submit a

question to the chat, if the event is being recorded, etc.) and who/how to contact if they are having trouble.

- The facilitator should make clear to the audience how they will be able to participate. Clarify the process for audience members to submit questions, at which point questions will be fielded and answered, and how participants can follow up with the presenter(s) if they aren't able to get an answer to their questions during the event. If progressive stacking will be used (prioritizing questions from people with marginalized identities), let the audience know how to indicate their non-dominant group identity (e.g., putting an * before the question).
- Consider creating a Twitter hashtag for the event. If a hashtag is used, clarify when/if it will be monitored and if responses will be given during/after the event.
- Coordinate with the presenter about the plan for monitoring the chat and taking questions. Facilitators can oversee the chat or assign someone else to help.
- Discuss if the presenter would like to share out their slides and any resources they have on the topic, who should share, and how they should be shared, such as including links in the chat, and/or a follow up email, etc.
- Although best practices would be to upload a VTT file with corrected captions to the video recording, there is currently not a process for that with ACRL. Upon inquiry, ACRL staff mentioned that the number of online ACRL events precludes the possibility of routinely uploading edited transcripts following events. ACRL members are directed to make use of the Zoom live transcript feature, Google slides live caption feature, and/or YouTube automatic transcription feature. The IS Virtual Engagement Committee recognizes that these automatic transcription tools result in errors, and urge ACRL members to advocate that greater funding and resources be given to accessibility measures, including supporting routine processes for editing automated transcripts for videos posted online by ACRL. For more information on captioning, see the "Accessibility Considerations" section.

Presenter(s):

- Presenters should come prepared to give a polished presentation within the time allotted. The presentation should be well rehearsed and professionally delivered within the allotted time frame.
- Presenters should prepare to wrap up the presentation portion with at least 10 minutes remaining at the end for audience questions.
- Presenters should consider preparing a slide deck to provide visual bullet points, graphics, and images in support of their presentation. These slides provide visual cues for the audience and also allows those viewing the recording to more easily process the spoken presentation.
- Presenters should consider sharing links to their slides and any relevant resources in the chat, or provide those links in advance to the facilitator to share in the chat

Logistics and Planning

Before Webinar or Virtual Presentation:

Early in the planning:

- Identify the topic of the webinar or presentation. This can be done in a variety of ways, including:
 - Announcing the topic and call for participants to apply, selecting a facilitator and presenter(s)
 - Call for people who are interested in presenting to apply with their topic
- Coordinate with the facilitator and presenter(s) to select an event time and date and a time and date for a practice session prior to the actual event.
- Schedule the event via the ACRL Virtual Meeting room booking page to reserve the Zoom (or other platform) appointment. To schedule the virtual room, take the following steps:

- Review the ACRL Virtual Meeting Guidelines and policies prior to booking a room: <https://acrl.libguides.com/virtualmeetings>
- Determine whether your meeting needs are best suited for a Zoom Meeting (available for up to 300 attendees) or Zoom Webinar (available to support up to 999 attendees).
- Visit the ACRL Virtual Meeting room booking page (<https://acrl.libcal.com/booking/virtual-meetings>) and scroll to the bottom of the page to view calendar availability.
- Click on an available time (the ACRL Virtual Meeting room is available to schedule events at 11am, 1pm, and 3pm CST). Available time blocks will show in green on the scheduler.
- Share out the email confirmation of the event with the facilitator and presenter(s). The email confirmation will have a Zoom registration link that all participants should use, including facilitator and presenter(s), to register for the event.
- Add the event to the [IS Crowdsourced Calendar](#) and include the Zoom registration link for the event.
- Draft announcements for ALA Connect, IS website, Facebook, and Twitter and include the Zoom registration link for the event. Get approval from your committee's ACRL IS Executive liaison.

About 6 weeks out:

- Once the announcement is approved, distribute through listservs and social media and post in ALA Connect as an upcoming meeting. Contact web administrators to post an announcement on the IS website.
- The facilitator and presenter will need to register for the event individually. They will use their individual links to join the Zoom room on the date of the event (in which they will be elevated to Host by the assisting ACRL staff member).

- Identify the committee member who will be the lead on the technical aspects of the session. This person will host the practice session with the facilitator and presenter.
- Schedule the practice session with the facilitator and presenter(s) by following the same instructions described above in the “Early in the planning” section above for booking the ACRL Virtual Meeting room. Note: you will need to book the same type of room (i.e. Zoom Meeting or Zoom Webinar) for the practice session that you have scheduled for the actual event.

Within 3 weeks of the session:

- Conduct a practice session with the facilitator and presenter(s) prior to the event.
 - Different presenters may have different preferences regarding how much practice they need prior to the event. At the minimum, allow for a technical check and a sound check to make sure the facilitator and presenter(s) can be heard clearly. Some presenters may elect to do more in-depth practice sessions, such as a full run-through. There is no one absolute way to run practice sessions, but it is important to make sure that the technical equipment is working and everyone feels comfortable. The practice session should also address all technical aspects of the presentation including:
 - Testing slide decks
 - Testing the microphone and camera of everyone who will be speaking
 - Discussing any roles, including monitoring chat or time-keeping
 - Discussing plans for technical difficulties (including sharing phone numbers, if relevant)
 - Testing captioning or accessibility options
 - Confirming speaking order
- Send reminders to ALA Connect, listservs, and social media 1-2 weeks before the event. Check in with Elois Sharpe (esharpe@ala.org) (or [the ACRL program coordinator](#)) to see how many people are registered.

- Email Elois Sharpe (esharpe@ala.org) (or [the ACRL program coordinator](#)) at ALA about a week before the event to
 - make sure the committee facilitator/chairperson is designated as a host in Zoom for the event so they can introduce the event.
 - ask about gaining access to the Zoom room 20-30 minute in advance for the host, facilitator and presenter(s) to test things out.
 - Arrange for the recording to be sent to those registered after the session
- Select a committee member to work in the background as support for the lead tech person to field tech problems, manage chat, eject bad actors, etc.

During Webinar or Virtual Presentation:

- Committee members should prepare some questions for the presenter(s) in case there are none from the audience (unlikely, but good to be prepared).
- Committee members can send individual messages in Zoom to facilitator/presenters if they are running over time. The committee should designate a timekeeper for this purpose.
- Share the link to the evaluation form in the chat.

After Webinar or Virtual Presentation:

- Follow up with Elois Sharpe (esharpe@ala.org) (or [the ACRL program coordinator](#)) to:
 - Send out a link to the recording to all attendees
 - In the follow-up email, include:
 - A summary of the event
 - The link to the evaluation form
 - The link to the recording
 - Ask Elois Sharpe (esharpe@ala.org) (or [the ACRL program coordinator](#)) about the number of people registered and number of attendees for the event for internal documentation.

- After the event, the committee should review the feedback from the event and use it to inform future events. Additionally, they may consider sending along any positive feedback from the event to the facilitator and presenter(s).
- Contact the web editors on the Communications Committee to have the event [archived](#).
- Although best practices would be to upload a VTT file with corrected captions to the video recording, there is currently not a process for that with ACRL. Upon inquiry, ACRL staff mentioned that the number of online ACRL events precludes the possibility of routinely uploading edited transcripts following events. ACRL members are directed to make use of the Zoom live transcript feature, Google slides live caption feature, and/or YouTube automatic transcription feature. The IS Virtual Engagement Committee recognizes that these automatic transcription tools result in errors, and urge ACRL members to advocate that greater funding and resources be given to accessibility measures, including supporting routine processes for editing automated transcripts for videos posted online by ACRL. For more information on captioning, see the “Accessibility Considerations” section.
- Contribute a write-up of the event in the next IS newsletter. The write-up can be sent early to the [IS publications editor](#).

Small Group Discussion (e.g., Lunch and Learn)

A small group discussion is a virtual discussion with a limited number of participants (e.g. no more than 20) focused on a specific discussion theme, article, or other topic of conversation. If the event has a larger number of participants, breakout rooms in Zoom may be used to make the discussion groups a manageable size. This format is particularly useful to share strategies or ideas in a small group setting. One important consideration is whether you need a facilitator or whether you want to have the participants lead the discussion.

Best Practices for the Facilitator(s)

Consider the following questions when preparing for a small group discussion:

- Do you need a facilitator?
- Do you need multiple facilitators?
- Does the facilitator need to have expertise?
- What is the role of the facilitator? Is it their role to:
 - Pose questions?
 - To guide discussion?
 - To correct or reroute?
 - To provide technical support?

Logistics and Planning

- Consider what group size will be the most useful for the particular topic you are discussing. Often, 10-20 participants will give enough space for everyone to participate while still having a variety of perspectives.
- Decide whether you will be doing one group discussion or breaking participants out into rooms. Breakout rooms will require a platform that supports this function and a facilitator who is able to create and assign participants on-the-fly.
- If you are having a single group, be sure to limit registration. It is difficult to predict how many people who register will actually attend, but allowing one-third more than your ideal number to register may be a good starting point (more if your cap is flexible, less if it is inflexible).
- Advertise on major listservs (including social media and ALA Connect). Be clear about whether/if the discussion will be facilitated and by whom.
- Whether or not the discussion is actively facilitated, be sure to set expectations regarding appropriate discussion behavior. This could be as simple as distributing a sheet that gives guidelines, or beginning with a discussion where the group sets its own guidelines. This is particularly important for conversations with a high risk of

harm, such as conversations that touch on marginalized identities or controversial issues.

Twitter Chat

A Twitter chat is a discussion of a specific topic or theme on Twitter that is led/facilitated by a moderator and usually occurs within a specific timeframe. The chat has a unique hashtag that participants can follow and can use to distinguish their responses/contributions. Twitter chats typically last a few hours, but could occur over a day or more. This format is particularly useful for engaging across larger groups around specific themes. One important consideration is that participation may be limited by: (1) the necessity of having a Twitter account, and (2) the lack of privacy/anonymity of this format. Ways to address both of these limitations are outlined below.

Best Practices for the Moderator(s)

- Participate in the chat, but also keep track of where the conversation is going overall. Steer it back into focus as needed. It may be helpful to pre-write your answers to questions so you can tweet them quickly and spend your time liking, retweeting, and responding to other tweets.
- Have a co-host/back-up moderator/helper who can forward notable responses or help highlight questions/issues as they arise.
- When writing discussion questions/prompts, try to make them open-ended (as opposed to yes/no).
- If you engage with outside sources (either beforehand or during the chat), consider different access levels (e.g. perhaps do not assign a reading before the chat that is behind a paywall).

Logistics and Planning

- Select a moderator well in advance, and make sure they know what to expect and are included in the early planning stages.
- Establish a date/time for your chat. Think about time zones and day of the week. If you schedule it when folks are off work, you will include those who are not able to engage on social media during their workday. If you schedule it when folks are at work, you will include those who are not able to engage in work-adjacent activities outside of work. Consider how to be as inclusive as possible, within whatever limitations exist. A broader timeframe can help include folks with either type of availability.
- Establish a code of conduct for the chat (or some guidelines for how to engage). Consider what this should include (e.g., no personal attacks, no invalidating the lived experiences of others), and how you will enforce it. Be prepared to do so.
- Write up a set of discussion questions/topics. Consider if you want participants to send in anything beforehand (questions, comments, etc.). If so, figure out and set up how you will collect these (via Twitter, a Google Form, or some other mechanism).
- Figure out what the hashtag will be if it isn't already predetermined. Do a search and make sure it isn't already taken by something. Your preferred hashtag might already be in use, but if the tweets are quite old and about something different and fairly innocuous you could possibly still use it.
- Consider setting up a way for those without Twitter accounts or those who desire anonymity to engage with your chat. For example, critlib uses an [anonymous relay](#) which enables participation from folks who do not have a Twitter account, desire anonymity, and/or have a protected/locked Twitter account.
- Archiving: think about considerations regarding archiving the event. Will you want to archive the tweets afterwards? If so, how will you do this (via screenshots, or via a program/tool that embeds the tweets, thus respecting the original poster's privacy/agency should they choose to delete the tweet)? Will you archive all tweets

with the hashtag during the event time-frame, or a curated subsection? Make your plans for archiving very clear in any promotions and/or web presence you create. This transparency will allow participants to consider if/how they want to participate.

- Consider creating a webpage or other fixed resource with Twitter chat basics (especially if you want folks who aren't on Twitter or aren't on Twitter often to join your chat). This is a good place to include information such as how to submit anonymous engagement with the chat (if you have instituted such a method of participation).
- Promote your event! Include the title/topic, date, time, hashtag, code of conduct/guidelines, and content (e.g., discussion questions and/or solicitation for participant questions/comments, link to page with Twitter chat basics). Consider many avenues of promotion (Twitter, other social media, listservs, ALA Connect, etc.).
- Consider a plan for assessment. Do you want to assess the event? How so? Do you want to create a survey or other tool that you can link to at the end of the chat? If so, create this ahead of time.

After the Twitter event:

- If you made plans to archive your event (including being transparent with participants in regards to archiving before the event took place), follow through now! Consider how and where to promote the archived event to those who were unable to attend live.

This section adapts some info from the following sources:

[Primer for Online Discussion Formats \[Patrick Wohlmuth, for ACRL IS DGSC\]](#)

[Twitter Chats \[critlib\]](#)

Accessibility Considerations

Accessibility considerations are essential to ensure all users have access to virtual events. The W3C Web Accessibility Initiative provides detailed guidance on [how to make your presentations accessible to all](#).

Best Practices for Organizers and Presenter(s)

Organizers:

- Advertise what kinds of accessibility tools are already included as part of the live presentation and what will be included as part of the recording or sharing. (e.g., “Auto captioning will be provided by Google Meet during the live event.”)
- When confirming speakers, ask if they have accessibility requirements (e.g. “how can we make participating in this event accessible for you?”) Be prepared to either accommodate those requirements or recognize that the speaker may not be able to participate because of your inability to provide accommodations.
- On the registration form, ask participants if they have accessibility requirements (e.g. “how can we make this presentation accessible for you?”). Be prepared to either accommodate those requirements or personally contact people to let them know that they will not be accommodated.
- Give speakers accessibility requirements and guidance on [how to make presentations accessible](#).
- Confirm if any audience accommodations have been requested and whether or not they will be accommodated.
- Make arrangements for real-time (“live”) captioning if possible
 - [Captioning Service Vendors](#)
 - [PowerPoint](#) and [Google Slides](#) have automatic captioning technologies, but they do not caption multiple presenters in the ACRL webinar platform. Keep in mind AI captioning tools often don’t recognize technical words, proper nouns,

accents, speech impediments, etc. They may not be accurate enough for someone with a hearing-related disability to have access to the event.

- Although best practices would be to upload a VTT file with corrected captions to the video recording, there is currently not a process for that with ACRL. Upon inquiry, ACRL staff mentioned that the number of online ACRL events precludes the possibility of routinely uploading edited transcripts following events. ACRL members are directed to make use of the Zoom live transcript feature, Google slides live caption feature, and/or YouTube automatic transcription feature. The IS Virtual Engagement Committee recognizes that these automatic transcription tools result in errors, and urge ACRL members to advocate that greater funding and resources be given to accessibility measures, including supporting routine processes for editing automated transcripts for videos posted online by ACRL.
- ACRL members are directed to make use of automated captioning features, including:
 - Zoom live transcript feature
 - Powerpoint or Google slides live caption feature, and/or
 - YouTube auto generated closed captions feature
- When circumstances allow for editing YouTube captions, follow the process outlined here: <https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2734796?hl=en>

Presenters:

- Design accessible slides and handouts.
- Provide material ahead of time, if requested.
- Introduce yourself when you speak. An introduction could also include a visual description of yourself and your pronouns.
- Describe slide visuals (e.g. charts, images).
- Speak clearly and use simple language (e.g. avoid acronyms and idioms).
- Do not speak over other speakers.

Questions and Suggestions

For questions or suggestions regarding this document, please contact the current Chair of the [ACRL-IS Virtual Engagement Committee](#).

Appendix A: Example Panels

Example panels

- [ACRL IS Virtual Engagement Committee: Current Issues Panel Discussion - Privacy Literacy](#)
- [ACRL Presents: An Insider's Guide to Preparing for Promotion: the Good, the Bad and the Ugly](#)

Appendix B: Communication Templates

Templates for Calls for Proposals

Announcement for listservs (email) or website

Subject Line or Title:

CALL: **Year and sponsoring organization event**

Body:

Include a hook, introduce the sponsoring organization, and describe what kind of event will occur and what kind of proposal you are looking for. Example below:

Is there an instruction issue you wish more folks were talking about?

The Instruction Section (IS) Current Issues Virtual Discussion Forum is an opportunity for library workers to explore and discuss pressing topics related to library instruction and information literacy. The IS Virtual Engagement Committee welcomes **topic proposals from individuals who are interested in facilitating the discussion**. We strongly encourage proposals that promote participant reflection and discussion.

Include information about how proposals will be evaluated. Example below:

Proposals will be reviewed based on the following criteria:

- clarity of focus
- how well the topic lends itself to meaningful discussion
- observed significance of the proposed issue for library workers and learners

Include information about next steps and what role the sponsor will play in facilitating the event. Example below:

The Virtual Engagement Committee will support the selected facilitator by issuing a second call for panelists in addition to hosting and publicizing the forum.

Application Deadline: *date and time*

Instructions for how to submit the proposal (link to form and/or email address)

Applicants will be notified by *date*.

If similar events have been held by the sponsor before, provide links to examples.

Questions?

Name(s) and email address(es) of contact person from the sponsoring organization.

Facebook Announcement

The **SPONSOR** is now accepting proposals for the **EVENT! EXPLANATION OF EVENT**. The deadline is **DATE**. For more information see the call for proposals: **LINK**.

Twitter Announcement

Now accepting proposals about **TOPIC** for the **EVENT!** Deadline is **DATE**. For more information: **LINK #RelevantHashtag**

Twitter Announcement - Last Call Version

Last call for proposals about **TOPIC** for the **EVENT!** Deadline is **DATE**. For more information: **LINK #RelevantHashtag**

Templates for Advertisements:

Listserv announcement

Title: Join us for a **SPONSOR EVENT** on **TOPIC**

Text:

EVENT TITLE

A **TYPE OF EVENT** with **PARTICIPANTS' NAMES AND AFFILIATIONS** on **DATE AND TIME** (specify time zones)

ABSTRACT/DESCRIPTION OF EVENT

This webinar is free and open to all. A recording will be made available after the session.

Register now, as space is limited:

REGISTRATION LINK

Find out more at:

LINK TO WEBSITE/DIGEST

Social Media announcements:

For Facebook

BRIEF TEASER ABOUT EVENT CONTENT Join the **SPONSOR'S EVENT, "EVENT TITLE"** on **DATE** at **TIME** To register, visit: **REGISTRATION LINK**

For Twitter

Version 1:

TEASER QUESTION/STATEMENT Join the **EVENT DATE TIME!** Register now for this **@SPONSOR_HANDLE EVENT: LINK**

Version 2:

Register for the **@SPONSOR_HANDLE EVENT!** Happening on **DATE** at **time** PST | **time** EST. Convened by **PARTICIPANTS (INCLUDE TWITTER HANDLES)** Register now: **REGISTRATION LINK**