

# Go Virtual

A quick guide to planning and delivering an online event

## 10 key steps to consider when planning a virtual event

### 1. Key purpose and aims of the event

- The key aims of the event should be carefully thought through. Before you start planning, work out what your key priorities are – i.e. increasing awareness of a specific issue / topic, increasing community participation, knowledge co-production, knowledge exchange, networking etc
- The purpose of the event will inform all of the next steps

### 2. Identify participants

- Work out who you are engaging with at the event
- Decide how your participants are going to participate in the event. Will they be a passive audience? Or encouraged to contribute?
- How many participants will you be engaging with?
- Where do you anticipate they will be accessing the event from?

### 3. Identify the best format which supports the purpose

- For example, do you need question & answer functionality? The ability to conduct polls?
- Would you like to share documents, visual and or/ audio material?
- Does the platform allow you to 'share your screen' and/ or display a schedule?
- Do you want to record the event? This will need to be GDPR compliant and you will need attendees permission to record the event.

### 4. Choosing a platform

[King's IT](#) recommends and supports using Teams for simplicity, security and accessibility to all.



#### Microsoft Teams

Pros	Cons
Easy and intuitive to use	Requires some practice to take advantage of its full functionality
Already used in the university	At the time of writing this guide, it only shows the faces of the six last people who have spoken
Has excellent features for note taking, file sharing and chat functionality	Not all external users will be able to easily use the platform. Check country compatibility/ organisational access
Inexpensive for community partners to use, if they require their own accounts beyond a "guest" one	

## 5. Identifying responsibilities

In terms of hosting a virtual event, ensure that you have at least three individuals taking on one each of the following roles. These three roles work in line together to ensure that the event runs smoothly.

- *Organizer*: This role curates the event. For example, setting permissions on the platform, sending invites out and selecting event group members.(ie: producer, speakers and attendees)
- *Producer*: This role oversees tech for the event on the day. For example, starting and stopping live events, sharing videos and desktops, overseeing breakout rooms and choosing layouts displayed
- *Presenter / host*: This role is about guiding people through an event. For example, welcoming everyone, explaining the event structure, presenting audio, video, or a screen to the live event, moderating Q&As etc.

## 6. Marketing the event

- Consider what social media platforms to use to market the event – e.g. Instagram /Twitter/ Facebook
- Identify how the Faculty's communications team ([ahcomms@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:ahcomms@kcl.ac.uk)) could support you – e.g. advertising events on bulletins, newsletters or even through external media
- Think about Eventbrite functionality – what content and images could you use when setting up the event registration page? (Please ensure all images have the correct permissions)

## 7. Physical environment

- Where will you be hosting your event from?
- Are there any restrictions with running your event from your selected location? If running this from your own home, what is the Wi-Fi connectivity like?
- Is there sufficient lighting in the presenter's venue?
- What are the AV requirements? Do you have all the equipment you need or will you need support / advice from the King's AV team (email: [MT-AV-Strand@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:MT-AV-Strand@kcl.ac.uk))

## 8. Time and date

- Does the time and date accommodate best attendance?
- Will time zone differences cause issues?
- Does the event complement / clash with any others?

## 9. Accessibility

- What are the online barriers to address? Think about access just as you would for a face-to-face event.(ie. hearing impaired, vision impaired and people with language barriers)
- Make sure your material is accessible and engaging for a wide range of audiences
- Refer to [Access Kings](#) and [Live Captions](#) on teams for more information

Useful links:

- [Autistica](#) - Hosting accessible online events, meetings and webinars
- [AbilityNet Live Webinar](#): How to Run Accessible Online Meetings for disabled people working and studying from home

## 10. Ethics and safeguarding

- Consider what measures are in place to keep your event online, secure and safe for everyone. Refer to [Kings Safeguarding policy](#) for more information.

### Top tips on facilitating a virtual event:

- Have a clear agenda sent out before the event including contact details allowing people to connect beforehand. (ensure permission is granted upon registration of event)
- Provide as much information about the event beforehand including how to sign up / join the meeting and a basic guide to how to use the platform as not everyone may have done so before. Eventbrite is a great tool for this
- Remember that sticking to times and schedules is extremely important
- Have a clear run sheet which allows people to plan breaks
- Plan for regular breaks in the virtual environment. Be mindful of different degrees of intensity for Virtual Events and people's capacity for concentration
- Allow attendees time during the event to provide feedback and fill out online surveys / evaluations
- Highlight features at the start of the meeting
  - MS Teams has auto captions feature – good for people in loud environments or those with hearing impairment
  - Enter larger meetings on mute, and unmute when invited to speak
  - Post comments and questions using chat function
- Try to use as many visuals as possible during the event to keep attendees engaged
- Rehearse running the event, double checking that all the software and hardware is working
- Think of ways that you can increase participation during the event and make it interactive. Some example of tools to use are [Padlet](#) and [Poll Everywhere](#)
- Have an online Q&A session and where possible encourage text questions to be sent during the event using the chat function
- Check with presenters that they are confident in using the chosen platform
- Collect all materials from your presenters in advance, such as PowerPoint presentations, documents and visual displays. This is crucial because if something goes wrong the producer or host can assist with getting the event back on track
- If using a translator, then make sure papers go to the translator in advance if possible.
- Ask participants to mute themselves when not speaking and introduce themselves before speaking
- Ask participants to only use video when speaking if bandwidth is a problem
- Remember to keep your event entertaining; open up with an ice breaker session, incorporate music and / or video clips, have some engaging images between speakers. As much as you can make it fun for everyone attending!

### Setting up your Live Event

The following links provide step-by-step instructions to setting up your event on [Microsoft Teams](#). This link is primarily for information regarding the process.

Kings IT offer a fully managed service for [Teams Live Events](#) supported by IT Audio Visual team with [online guidance](#) and [booking form available](#).

For all virtual event bookings please complete the [booking form](#). This is to ensure that the IT is aware of the volume of events planned so they can be supported technically.

For any other queries about Teams Live Events in general please contact the IT Service Desk on 0207 848 8888 or email [88888@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:88888@kcl.ac.uk) - or take a look at the information available on [Digital Skills Hub](#).