



## 2020 ATHE Virtual Conference Presenter Toolkit

ATHE would like to thank all of you that have agreed to support the organization by pivoting from a face to face presentation to a virtual presentation. Below you will find an overview of best practices for transitioning your session, suggested format structures, preparation suggestions, and accessing the platform. In the last few months, we all have been experiencing huge learning curves, so if we have missed any pertinent information please free to contact [Devon@athe.org](mailto:Devon@athe.org).

**Note:** The information below is only for session coordinators and presenters that have confirmed their participation in the virtual session.

### Session Format

There are several formats that sessions can follow. You may want to reconsider your typical in-person presentation format to what might work best virtually.

- Single Presenter
- Panel/ Gallery of presenters
- Panel with moderator
- Roundtable Discussion
- Interview

### Recorded vs. Live Presentations

During your confirmation to present virtually you selected whether you wanted to provide a recorded session or if you wanted to present live. If you wish to change this, please email [Devon@athe.org](mailto:Devon@athe.org) so we can track which presentations we may be missing.

### Session Platform

The online virtual conference platform uses ZOOM to facilitate all sessions. All options in ZOOM, including polling, breakout rooms, and virtual whiteboard are available to you to use during your session if you selected a “live” presentation format.

### Process for pre-recorded Sessions

#### \* Before the scheduled session:

- Presenters pre-record their presentations through the video capture program of their choice (Zoom, smartphone software, Screencastify, etc) and work with session coordinator to create complete video of the full pre-recorded session.

- Our software platform CANNOT accept individual presentation files and edit them together. Each session will need to provide a complete session on video.
- Once complete, you will upload your video through the software platform. We will update this tool kit with the form link soon.
- Session organizers view the files to make sure there are no audio, visual, or other problems, and that they conform to the time limit.

## Process for live sessions

For synchronous sessions, ATHE suggests that remote presenters consider pre-recording their presentations and send the file to session coordinators to “play” the recording during the live session. This will protect against WiFi or other technical issues from multiple presenters during the virtual session, and helps ensure participants do not go over their time limit.

### At the scheduled session:

- If using pre-recorded material, session coordinator can stream the files from their computer during the scheduled meeting time. If producing a live discussion/roundtable, session coordinator will moderate the session during real-time.
- It is up to the session organizers to determine how to allocate time for Q&A, discussant comments, and/or further discussion.

## Audience Engagement

Whether you are recording your session or presenting live, it is important to engage your audience. A virtual attendee has many more distractions than the face to face attendee so think about ways to engage and re-engage the virtual audience. ***Remember the attendee experience comes down to content, engagement, and interactivity.***

- Virtual attendees decide within 3 minutes if they are going to stay in your session. Be ready and get their attention right from the start. Do not spend 10 minutes introducing everyone. Presenter names, titles and organizations will be listed on the virtual platform description. Have the presenters introduce themselves as they begin to speak.
- If you can, stand when you present rather than sit. This allows you to stay focused and use good presentation delivery skills such as supported breathing, vocal variety, and pausing. If co-presenting, make sure your presenters are all staying equal distance from their cameras, so everyone has the same presence visually in the ZOOM gallery.
- Acknowledge/welcome the virtual audience. Have them answer a quick question (ice-breaker style) in the chat feature at the start. i.e. Where are they from?
- Let the audience know at the start to enter their questions in the Q&A and when you plan to address questions. Have someone monitor the Q&A and stop halfway through to address one or two of the questions. An easy way to monitor the chat is ask attendees to write QUESTION or COMMENT before they continue to type. This way, moderators can skim through the chat easily to find the questions.
- Be brief. Use visuals to reinforce key points and abstract ideas.

- Do not read from your slides. If using PowerPoint, the fewer the words on a slide the better.
- Interact with your co-presenters.
- If presenting live, use a poll to ask a question at crucial times. Share the results with the audience. Sharing the information of the poll is important for attendees that come back later and watch the recorded session.
- Provide your contact information should anyone want to follow-up after the session.

## **Virtual Presenting Tips / ZOOM on Camera**

### Eye to Eye

Raise your camera to eye level. People will see more face and less chin. This creates an illusion that you are talking directly to the person watching and provides a more personal connection. By raising the camera, you will be less likely to look down which results in people looking up your nose! Adjusting the camera to eye height will greatly improve the experience for you and the audience.

### Background

Make sure your background does not distract the virtual attendee. The background does not need to be a studio professional, but it should not be your kitchen sink or your bed.

### Lighting

Use the best lighting you can access to make sure your face is lit. Natural light is great but don't depend on it in case a cloud comes through. Make sure your lighting is placed in front of you.

### Audio

Laptop speakers and microphones can create feedback making it difficult for the virtual attendee to hear. A headset or earbuds with a microphone will provide the best sound quality for everyone in the session. Make sure whether you are presenting live or recording your session you do so from a quiet space as background noise will be disturbing. If you are not speaking, mute your microphone. If presenting live, the session coordinator should mute all attendees until discussion is to happen.

### Visuals

If using PowerPoint, the fewer the words the better. Try to use pictures and or graphics to reinforce ideas. Color psychology can play a subtle role in how your virtual audience responds to your message. Using color psychology to your advantage can help make an impact.

### Internet

If you have access to a hardline internet connection from your selected place of presenting, we suggest you use it. If you do not have one, use a high-speed internet connection. Participants should check their internet bandwidth. You can check your bandwidth with <https://www.speedcheck.org/>. The recommend internet speed is at least:

Receiving 1080p HD video requires 2.5mbps (up/down)

Sending 1080p HD video requires 3.0 Mbps (up/down)

### Laptops

Plug your laptop in. Plugging your laptop in stops it from disabling certain power/battery functions and it is a backup in the event you forget to charge it!

### Attire

Be comfortable and be yourself but avoid busy patterns that will provide a distraction to the content. This virtual event and current climate allow for a more casual on-camera look.

### Timer

Set a timer for your section or a reminder so you do not go over. You can use your phone as a timer, but make sure the reminder does not have an alarm that goes off. If you are offering Q&A or discussion, make sure that you leave enough time for that.

### Rehearsals

Whether you are presenting live or recording your presentation we recommend that you have at least two rehearsals.

## **Resources on pre-recording presentations and streaming**

- One free recording option for remote presenters is [Screencast-O-Matic](#), which allows free screen recording for up to 15 minutes. Make sure all participants stay within the time limit for your session.
- Another option is to use [PowerPoint Narration](#), available through Microsoft PowerPoint.

## **Instructions for using YouTube as a free platform to share recorded presentations with your session participants:**

- If you do not have one, create a Youtube account. You can also synchronize Youtube with an existing Google account.
- To upload a video:
  - In the upper right hand corner of your computer screen, you will see a series of icons.
  - Click on the icon that looks like a video camera with a plus sign in the middle.
  - Select the option "Upload video."
  - Click "Select File," then browse to where you have saved the pre-recorded presentation file you are uploading.
  - On the next screen, title the video (e.g. last name of presenter and presentation title). Add a description (name of presenter, presentation title, session title, AAG 2020 Virtual Conference...)
  - Select a thumbnail, which viewers will see before playing the video.
  - Under Playlists: Select "New Playlist" at the bottom of the menu. Title the playlist with the name of your session. Set the your preferred privacy setting:
    - Public: Anyone can see your video.

- Private: Only those you invite can view the video; they must have a Youtube account. You can only invite a maximum of 50 viewers for private videos.
  - Unlisted: Your video will not appear in search results or on your channel.
    - Click “Create,” then “Done.”
    - Under Audience, select “No, it’s not made for kids”. If needed, set an age restriction.
    - If desired, select “More options” to add tags, select video language, add subtitles, category, and comment visibility.
  - You can create a playlist of all uploaded YouTube videos for your session, using [instructions here](#).
- For more information and reviews on additional free PC screen recording options, [see here](#).

## **ZOOM Resources**

- [ZOOM Tutorial Videos](#)
- [ZOOM Download Center](#) - includes browser extensions for Chrome and Firefox; mobile apps for Apple and Android platforms; and plugins for Outlook, IBM Notes, and Intel Unite.
  - [ZOOM download for Windows](#)
  - [How to install Zoom on a Mac](#)

*ATHE is grateful to the American Association of Geographers for providing access to its virtual toolkit and resources in drafting our own.*