

Digital Facilitation Guide



| | |
|---|-----------|
| Acknowledgements | 5 |
| Acronyms | 5 |
| 1. Introduction to the digital facilitation guide | 6 |
| 2. Setting the scene – facts and figures about online facilitation | 6 |
| 3. Step by step how to digitally facilitate | 10 |
| Deciding on digital vs. in-person trainings | 10 |
| The training cycle | 10 |
| 1. Needs assessment | 11 |
| 2. Develop learning objectives | 13 |
| 3. Design and develop the agenda | 14 |
| 4. Implement the design: things to consider during the training | 21 |
| 5. Evaluate performance: things to consider after you have delivered the training | 24 |
| 4. Tips for engaging, meaningful and fun trainings | 25 |
| 5. Creating accessible online spaces | 33 |
| Captioning | 33 |
| Sign language interpretation | 33 |
| Screen readers | 33 |
| 6. Tools | 35 |
| Zoom | 35 |
| Teams | 37 |
| Mural/Miro | 38 |
| Jamboard | 39 |
| AnswerGarden Tool | 40 |
| MentiMeter | 41 |
| Kahoot! | 41 |
| 8. Energizers & Icebreakers | 42 |
| Energizers | 42 |
| Icebreakers | 45 |
| 9. Want to know more? | 47 |
| 10. Annex | 48 |

AVAILABLE IN ENGLISH AT
www.youthdoit.org

© *CHOICE for Youth and Sexuality*

PUBLISHED
 April 2023

AUTHORED BY
 Carys Stirling & Daphne Visser

DESIGNED BY
 Britt Duppen

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This guide was developed based on the experience of numerous CHOICERs, volunteers and partners who have contributed to the development of our collective expertise on digital facilitation. As such, a special thanks goes to the team at CHOICE for Youth & Sexuality, in particular Pragya Singh and Samy Verhaaren; our wonderful friends at Dance4Life, Oonagh Eastmond and Rekha Trikhatri; our youth-led partners, namely Chisomo Banda, Nahla Hamdani and Yvette Nishimwe; as well as the many young people who took time to fill out our survey, for sharing their experiences and tips.

ACRONYMS

| | |
|------|---|
| SRHR | Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights |
| MYP | Meaningful Youth Participation |
| PMEL | Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning |



INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction to the digital facilitation guide

Welcome to the CHOICE Digital Facilitation Guide!

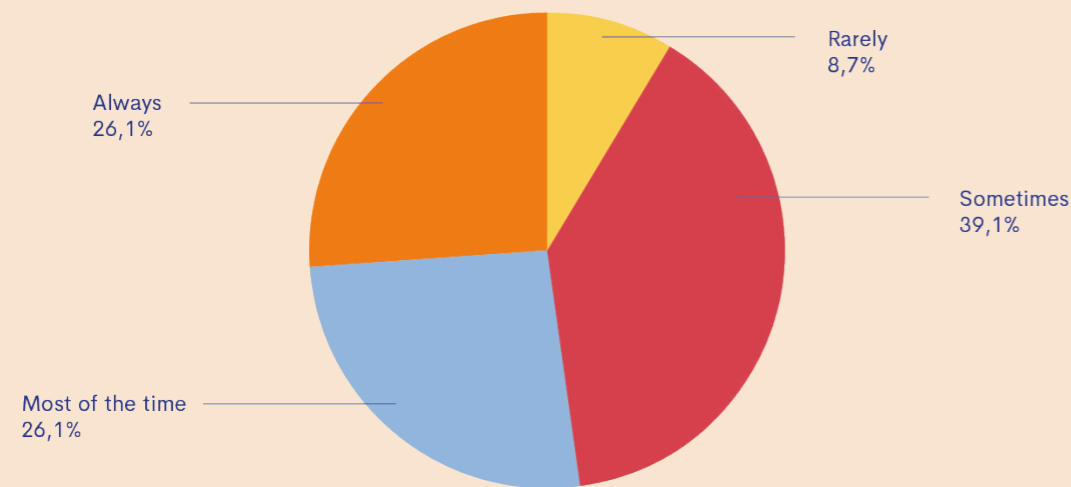
For many of us, the internet has become an important place to work, learn and communicate. If you work as a facilitator with people from other regions or even other countries, knowing how to facilitate well online is an essential skill. The COVID-19 pandemic made us all realise that digital facilitation poses new and different challenges when meeting and learning online, but that virtual meetings can also open up a world of opportunities. Even when travel is possible, many of our meetings and trainings remain virtual. Digital facilitation is here to stay, and can even open doors for more inclusive and creative ways of engaging with each other. There are certain similarities between digital facilitation and in person facilitation, such as the principles of the training cycle and the importance of good preparation. But there are particular factors you need to consider when facilitating virtually, such as the stability of the internet connection and the shortened attention span of your participants. To make you a true digital facilitation pro, CHOICE has developed this resource to guide you in your digital endeavours. In it we combine the experiences of our fellow facilitators, partners and like-minded organisations to assist you in creating useful and fun digital trainings.

2. Setting the scene – facts and figures about online facilitation

Even though many of us cannot work or survive long without the internet – think about buying products, your bank business and much more – consistent access to the internet is not spread equally. According to a survey we conducted with our fellow facilitators, partners and like-minded organisations who are based in Morocco, Malawi, Ghana, Burundi, Tunisia, Kenya, Bangladesh, Uganda, the Netherlands and Benin, only 53% of participants often has or always has reliable internet¹.

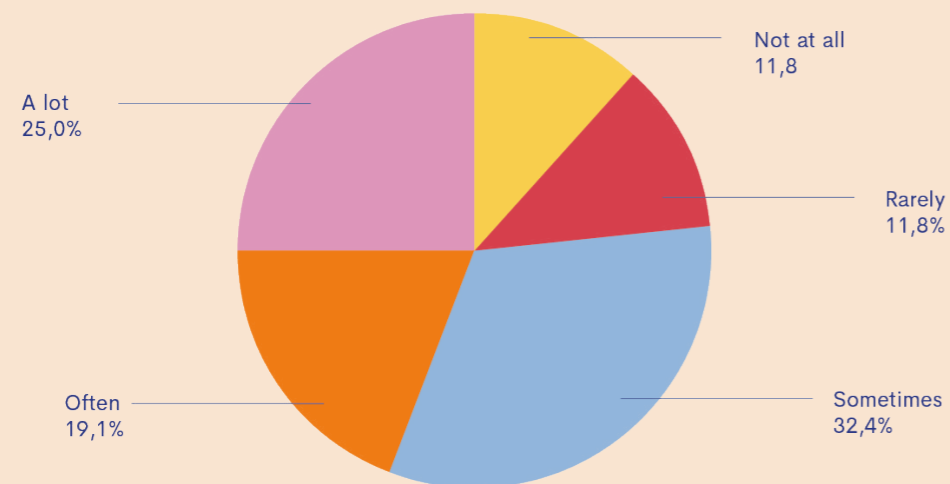
1. Survey filled out by partners from the 2020-2025 Right Here Right Now 2 and Power to You(th) partnerships, and other partner organisations of CHOICE. The survey was filled out by 73 respondents.

When I join online meetings or trainings, I have a reliable internet connection



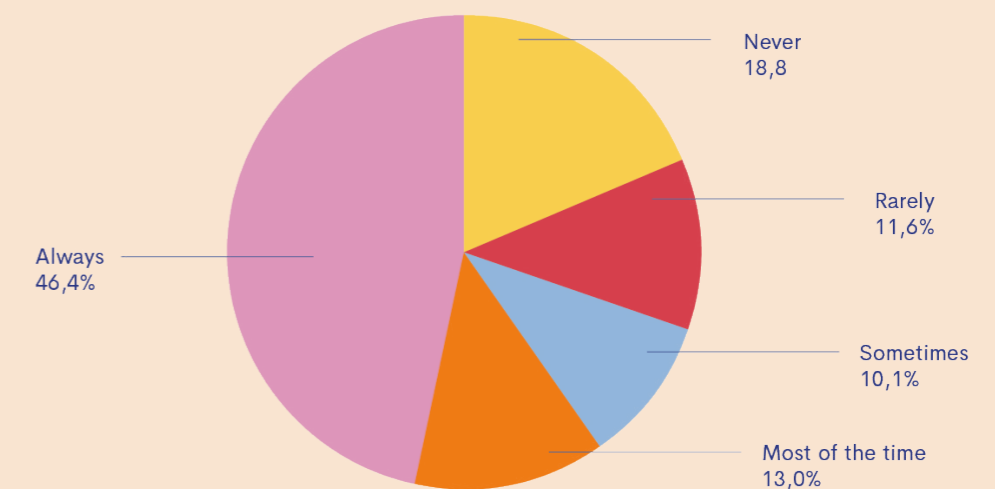
Indeed, one of the biggest barriers that participants and facilitators face is connection to the internet. More than 75% of respondents said that poor internet hinders their participation sometimes or often. Only 11% did not have any problems with their connection.

To what extent does poor internet undermine your active participation in online meetings or trainings?

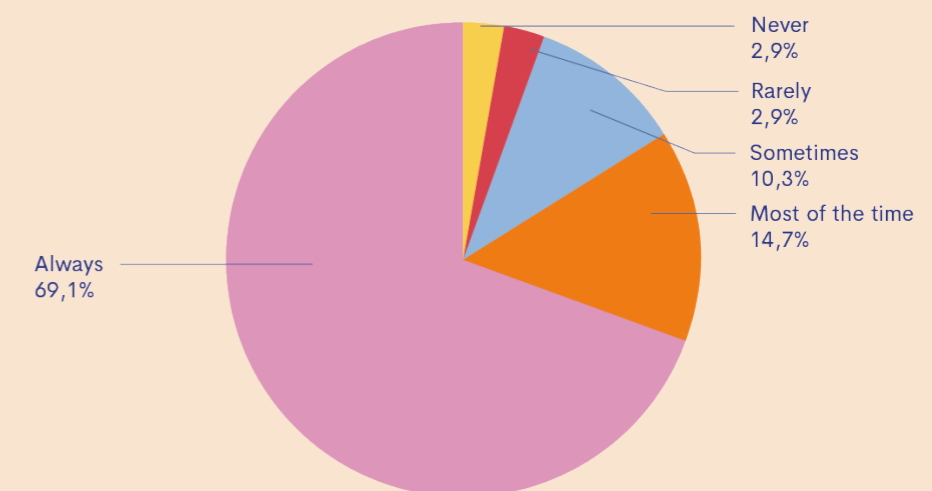


You might be logging in from your laptop, but many of your participants will be joining through their phones. More than 80% of respondents to our survey said they joined online meetings often or always on their mobile phone.

When I join online meetings or trainings, I have laptop or desktop computer

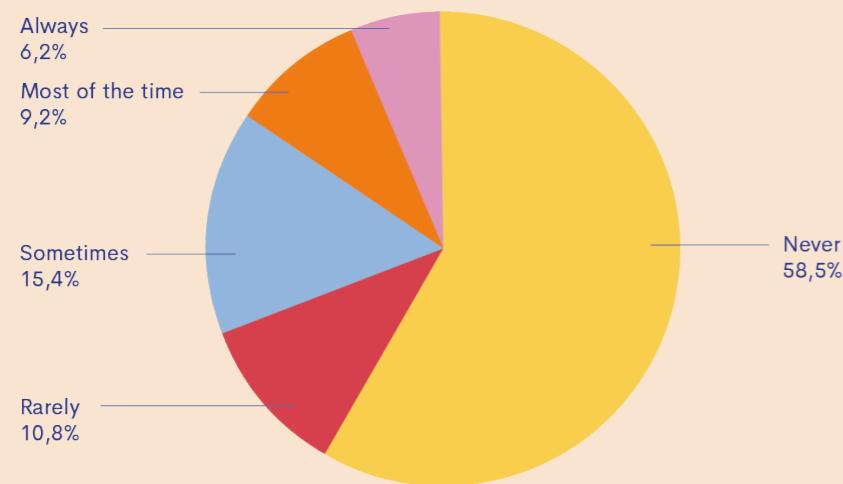


When I join online meetings or trainings, I use a mobile phone



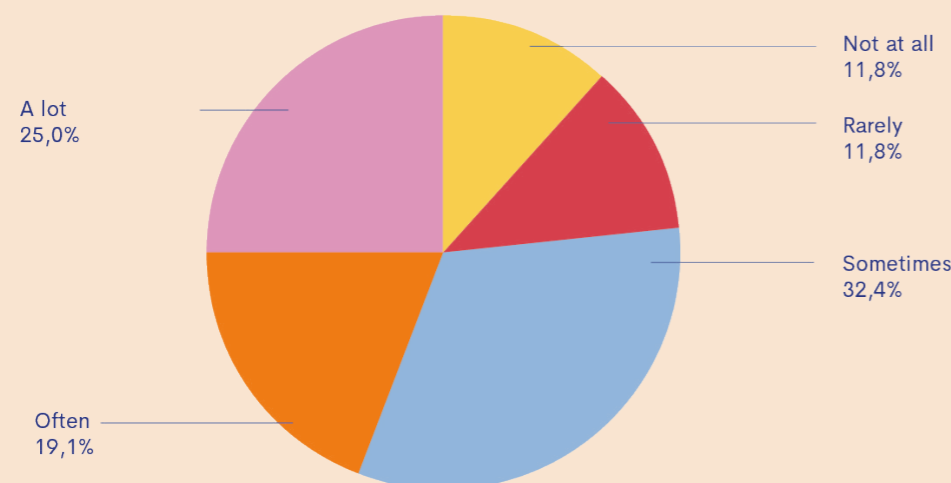
Therefore, it is important to check if the tools you want to use can also be used by people on their mobile phone or if they only work on a computer. Furthermore, in certain cases multiple people will join from a single device. It is important to keep this in mind when planning your session. Some facilitators have access to both a computer and a second screen. If this is the case for you, remember that this is far from the norm - 85% of our survey respondents do not have a second screen. This will make it more difficult for your training participants to switch between different tools, so keep this in mind when planning your session.

When I join online meetings or trainings, I have a second screen



Many people either join your training from their offices or from their homes and are able to create a quiet place – but not everyone. Forty six percent of our survey participants reported that they have access to a quiet space only sometimes or less.

When I join online meetings or trainings, I have a quiete place



You need to be prepared in case your participants are in a noisy setting or on public transport. Importantly, many of your participants, especially if you are working with SRHR or youth organisations, often travel for their work. When participants are travelling for their organisations, they will have to make do with what is provided. This can range from joining a meeting from a hotel room or tuning into meetings when they are in a car.

All of this might sound like quite a challenge – but that’s why we’re here! We’ve consolidated all of our knowledge and experience in facilitating digital trainings with a vast range of participants from across the world to give you the best tips and tricks. Read on to become an inclusive, participatory and confident digital facilitator!

3. Step by step how to digitally facilitate Deciding on digital vs. in-person trainings

Before you even begin to plan your training, you need to consider which format – digital versus in-person – is most appropriate.

One of the considerations for this decision is your audience – to whom will you give the training and where are they located? When your participants are located in a rural area or do not have reliable access to the internet, doing an in-person training might be better able to reach them. On the other hand, if you want to include participants of different regions or countries to come together in one training, and don’t have the time or budget to bring them together physically, a virtual training is the way to go.

Another important consideration is the goal of your training. In general, there are three general goals for a training: increasing knowledge, increasing skills, or transforming attitudes. Depending on the type of knowledge or skills you want to build, online trainings might be the way to go. When you are more concerned with changing or developing attitudes, this might be more difficult online because some exercises, such as experiential learning² are more difficult to facilitate online.

When considering hosting a training online or in person, a consideration can be participants’ safety. Online, confidentiality can be compromised due to people being able to take screenshots or record the conversation with another device. If you do decide to opt for an online training, then extra attention should be on confidentiality and consent of your participants – e.g. always ask participants whether they consent to being recorded, and carefully consider if the questions/discussion points you will talk about are appropriate for such a format.

Important: Online trainings are often seen as a quick and cheap solution, but planning and preparing a meaningful training is still key, as no training is better than a training which is not effective.



Tip! Discuss the type of format with the organisation or person who has requested the training. What do they think is best – online or offline – for the participants?

Sometimes, it is not possible to do the training in-person, while the exercises and/or topic does not allow for a digital training, you can think about setting up a hybrid structure³, possibly with a local co-facilitator⁴. A local co-facilitator can enhance ownership within the organization you’re giving a training to and also encourage meaningful participation and inclusive practices. Remember though that your in-person and online participants will have different needs, so make sure there is a dedicated facilitator for both online and offline participants so neither feel left out.

The training cycle

So now you’ve decided to do an online training – great!

This section follows the training cycle – a step-by-step process to help you design and deliver a fantastic online training. Whether it’s a five-day digital workshop series or a two-hour interactive webinar, following these steps will put you on strong footing to ace your virtual gathering. You can read even more about the training cycle by consulting the CHOICE Trainer’s Guide⁵, but below we have given specific tips for applying the training cycle in a digital setting.

2. Experiential learning means using an activity to allow participants to experience something. Reflecting on this experience, participants build knowledge, develop skills or clarify values. If you want more information on experiential learning, visit the CHOICE trainers guide! See <https://www.youthdoit.org/capacity-strengthening-tools/facilitation/> 3. See more about tips and tricks on hybrid trainings in “Things to think about” (Page 31) 4. You can find more information and tips on involving a local trainer in CHOICE’s trainings guide: <https://www.youthdoit.org/capacity-strengthening-tools/facilitation/> 5. See the CHOICE Trainer’s Guide here: <https://www.youthdoit.org/assets/Uploads/CHOICE-Trainers-Guide-2020.pdf>

1. Needs assessment

The key to a successful training is all in the preparation, and that begins with the needs assessment.

A needs assessment is a method for determining what kind of training is required to support the participants' learning. This will help you set objectives for the training and design the methods. You can do this in different ways. A good first step is to talk to the person who requested the training. Ask them why they want the training to take place and what they would like you to specifically train the participants in. Clarity is key. Note however, that the person who asked you to provide the training (a coordinator, a director of an organisation, a partner organisation, etc.), might have a different opinion on why the training is necessary than the participants themselves. They may also not be entirely up to date on the knowledge that participants already have, which is why it is important to also always do a needs assessment with the participants. You will then be able to find out more about their level of knowledge and skills, as well as their specific needs and interests. This data will also be relevant when you are trying to evaluate the effectiveness of the training and want to understand what the participants have gained from the training.

So what information do you need to gather via the needs assessment? Primarily, you need to ask questions which help you understand two things:

- a) **Participants' existing knowledge** – what do they know already about the topic (their baseline knowledge)? These questions are sometimes called a "pre-test". A "pre-test" is then compared with a "post-test" which determines the extent to which participants' knowledge has (or hasn't) increased following the training. The pre-test helps you to determine gaps in participants' knowledge, and therefore their learning goals (more on this in Section 2).
- b) **Participants' practical needs or accessibility considerations** – what practical things do you need to prepare and how can you address accessibility considerations and accommodate to enable everyone to participate meaningfully in your training sessions? (more on this below)

Helpful needs assessment questions to help you prep for a great training:

To help you out with determining participants' practical needs, particularly online, here are some questions which we have found are helpful to include:

- **To account for time difference and to plan training session on convenient times for participants:**
 - In which time-zone will you be attending this training?
 - What day of the week/time of day is most convenient for you to attend this training?
- **To understand internet connectivity and participant devices:**
 - To the best of your knowledge, will you have a reliable internet connection at the time of our training? If not, please share details of how we or your organisation can support you, e.g. by supporting you with an internet package/stipend⁶.
 - On which type of device will you be joining our digital training? (please note, laptops/desktop computers are recommended) – options: mobile phone, laptop, tablet, desktop computer
- **To determine if you require simultaneous translation:**
 - Which of the following languages are you comfortable communicating in? (speaking, understanding and writing) Please tick all that apply e.g. English, French, Bahasa
- **To establish tool and platform preference:**
 - We are anticipating using the tools Zoom, Jamboard and MentiMeter in our digital training. Have you used these tools before? Do you foresee any issue with using these tools? Do you have an alternative tool that you know works well for you?

- **To understand participants' accessibility needs:**

- Do you need any (reasonable) accommodation to meaningfully participate in this training? If so, please share details here of how we can support your participation

- **To understand participants' expectations:**

- Do you have any specific expectations and needs for this training/session?



Bonus tip! *Your needs assessment doesn't only have to contain serious questions! Do you plan to incorporate music into your session? Then the needs assessment is a great time to ask participants to share their favourite song / a song that makes them feel energised / powerful, so that you can compile a playlist that the participants will love to play during your training.*

Remember, all groups are different, asking questions like these will really help you to understand their specific needs and arrange the logistics of the training accordingly. This might seem time-consuming but it's all about overcoming challenges before the training starts, so that during the training you can focus on being a great facilitator who is present for participants. Take the time to invest in this!

How do I gather responses?

To collect responses easily, you will need to receive the participant list in good time, so make certain that you request this well in advance. Once you have received the participants list you can collect your responses via Google Forms⁸, Microsoft Forms⁹, Survey Monkey¹⁰ or another platform. Sometimes participants or the organization requesting the training prefer a Word document or Google document that can be printed and filled out offline. Make sure to discuss preferences with the organization. Remember that participants might prefer to use WhatsApp rather than email, so try to share the needs assessment through different channels to make it easy for participants to fill out. Remind people that by filling out the needs assessment they are contributing to creating a meaningful and inclusive training.



Bonus tip! *What if you haven't received a participant list from your partner organisation, or you haven't received many responses? It's not ideal, but you can get around this by allocating time at the beginning your training to check in on expectations and needs of the participants.*



⁶. If you want to learn more about pre-test questions to include in your needs assessment (as well as their post-test counterparts for after the training), please consult the CHOICE PMEL (Planning Monitoring Evaluation & Learning) Toolkit: https://www.youthdoit.org/assets/CHOICE_PMEL_Toolkit.pdf ⁷. As not everyone might have affordable access to the internet, internet stipends or packages can be a good way to enable people to join your training. It can also be used as an incentive for active participation, e.g. share 50% before and 50% after the training. ⁸. <http://forms.google.com> ⁹. <https://forms.office.com/> ¹⁰. www.surveymonkey.com

2. Develop learning objectives

For your participants: Now that you have established participants' level of knowledge on the topic as well as their specific interests, you can develop your learning goals. This will help to guide you and establish whether the needs of participants are being met. Your training objectives should focus on the knowledge and/or skills you want participants to have after completing the training. For example, the goal of a Meaningful Youth Participation (MYP) Training could be to equip participants with adequate knowledge and awareness of MYP and why it is beneficial and important for their work, while the goal of an Advocacy Strategy Development Training is to provide participants with the skills to create their own Advocacy Strategy.



Bonus tip! *You have a lot of useful information from the needs assessment, but nothing compares to working with either participant(s) or representatives from your partner organization to help really tailor and verify the learning objectives (and the agenda that follows). In the spirit of meaningful participation, involving participant(s) in developing objectives and the agenda for the training will significantly increase the likelihood that your training is needs based and adapted to your participants context and preferences. This will increase your participants' engagement and make the training meaningful. Plus, this is a great opportunity to learn from each other! You can invite participants to help you co-facilitate the training to promote engagement and co-ownership.*

For you and your co-facilitator(s): A digital training is not just a learning experience for the participants – it's also a valuable opportunity for you and your co-facilitator(s). Take a moment to sit down with your co-facilitators and write down your goals together. That way, you can design the training program and allocate tasks with these goals in mind. For example, you might want to gain confidence facilitating energisers, or experiment with a particular online tool, or become a more confident tech host.

Don't forget to save these so you can review them after the training is complete!



Bonus tip! *Why not use this co-facilitator goal setting moment as a chance to try out one of the digital tools you're thinking of working with during the training? For example, you might want to record your goals on Jamboard, Mural or MentiMeter. This can be a nice way of putting yourself in participants' shoes and testing out the tools before you use them in your training.*

3. Design and develop the agenda

Once you have set your learning objectives, it's time to build a fully-fledged agenda! This won't be a linear process – it's best to go back and forth several times with your co-facilitator(s) and contact person to discuss if the approach aligns with your goals and is realistic within the timeframe of the training.

Design the sessions

You might already have a training manual where you can pick and choose sessions to suit your training goals, or you might be looking to design your own sessions! Either way, it's important to bear in mind that facilitating online is different to facilitating in person, and some activities which you do face-to-face won't work or will work differently online. Remember, screen fatigue is something you'll have to contend with so try to make your session as interactive and engaging as possible. Your audience will probably lose interest if you're simply reading from a slide deck, so try to aim for a healthy mix between content heavy and interactive sessions. And don't skimp on energisers! Your group will be much more engaged and energized by the session if you take the time to break the ice and get to know each other in a fun way. Check out our energiser tips on page 42 for inspiration.

Draft the agenda

The biggest tip when designing an agenda for an online session is: less is more! It can be tempting to pack your agenda very full to try to cover everything you would in a longer, in-person session, but this will likely lead to rushed conversations and a lack of depth in your engagement.

Don't be tempted to cut corners on energisers or getting to know each other moments – investing in a proper exercise for e.g. 30 minutes at the beginning of the training to warm up participants and help you get to know each other will really pay off later on during your discussions. If you have a break in the middle of your session (which we would highly recommend for going to the toilet, grabbing some refreshments, moving your body or simply taking your eyes off the screen for a few moments), it is a good idea to resume with a quick energizer to get participants back in the zone. There are plenty of creative and fun energizer suggestions on the internet, but we have also included a handy list of tried and tested energisers for you on page 42.

If you're going to make space for discussion/plenary, make sure there's plenty of time so participants don't feel you need to cut them off. Also don't forget, you or your participants might face tech challenges along the way which take up valuable time, so having some "wiggle room" in the agenda (i.e. a spare five to ten minutes) always makes things less stressful. It's always better to have too much time than too little.



Bonus tip! *To make the most of the time you have, it's a good idea to make effective use of break-out rooms rather than hold the entire training plenary style. That way participants have more time to discuss (and might be more comfortable sharing their opinions in a smaller group) than they would in the main meeting room.*

It's wise to include specific information in your agenda regarding the time for each activity, a description of the exercise/session, the facilitator (and tech host) and any text you may wish to include in the chat. See an example in the table below (you can find a table to fill out for your own trainings in Section 10: Annex).

Hi there



Happy to be working together



Digital is here to stay!



How do I turn this filter off?



| Time Total: 2 hours Training: 1,5 hours | Activity | Facilitator | Text for chat (translate ahead of time into all relevant languages) |
|---|---|---|--|
| 30 minutes | PRE TRAINING CHECK-IN Use this time for you and your co-facilitator to log into the virtual meeting platform and check everything is working. This is also a good time to invite your translator to set up the function and check all is working smoothly. Check that any accessibility functions that you will be using are ready and working well | Daphne & Carys | (not applicable) |
| 15 minutes | WELCOME Take a moment to let participants join the virtual room, tune in to translation (if necessary). This is also a great moment to play some music. Use this moment to give any key instructions participants need for participating in the training e.g. changing their Zoom name. If you plan to record the session, do not forget to ask your participants for their consent. You can suggest to them to let you know privately if needed. | Carys (lead facilitator) Daphne writes the message in the chat & engage with the chat | Welcome everyone! Today we will be discussing meaningful youth participation. We will begin in a few minutes. Please change your Zoom name to include your preferred name, your pronouns and organization. We would love to see who is in the room today so where possible, please turn on your camera. |
| 10 minutes | ENERGIZER Get your participants in the right headspace by kicking off with a fun and interactive energiser. Consult our list on page 42 for ideas! | Daphne (lead facilitator) Carys writes explanation in the chat & engages with the chat | We are curious to hear more about you. When you were a child, what did you dream of becoming when you were an adult? |
| 10 minutes | ACTIVITY EXPLANATION Describe the objective of the activity and key steps involved. | Carys (lead facilitator) Daphne writes an explanation in the chat & engages with the chat. Sets up breakout rooms for 30 minutes and populates them. | We will be discussing the different core elements of meaningful youth participation. What do you think is a core element? The 5 core elements of meaningful youth participation are choice, decision-making power, voice, responsibility and information. |

| Time Total: 2 hours Training: 1,5 hours | Activity | Facilitator | Text for chat (translate ahead of time into all relevant languages) |
|---|---|---|--|
| 30 minutes | BREAKOUT ROOMS Divide participants into breakout rooms for more in-depth group discussion. Do not forget to think about language differences when organizing the groups - make sure that groups contain participants who can speak the same language. | Daphne joins different break out rooms to check in with participants. Carys stays in main room to support any tech issues. | We will now be going into breakout rooms. Within your breakout room work on the case provided to you by mail and WhatsApp. If you have any questions, Daphne will be moving around the rooms to answer them. |
| 15 minutes | PLENARY & REFLECTION Either discuss your reflections from the breakout rooms in plenary or use an interactive tool like Jamboard or MentiMeter to record the group's reflections. | Carys (lead facilitator) Daphne writes an explanation in the chat & engages with the chat | Please share with us what is your biggest take away from your discussions? |
| 10 minutes | CHECK-OUT Check out in a creative way e.g. by getting participants to sum up their experience in one word or use a meme or emoji to sum up their mood at the end of the training. | Daphne (lead facilitator) Carys writes an explanation in the chat & engages with the chat | In one word please summarize what you thought of this training. You can either type it in the chat or unmute to share. |
| 15 minutes | DEBRIEF - AFTER THE TRAINING Together with your co-facilitator, debrief how the session went. You can structure this by thinking of "What went well?" and "What could be improved?", sometimes also known as "Tips and Tops" (things that could be done better, and things that went really well!) | Daphne & Carys | (not applicable) |

“Digital facilitation is here to stay, so let’s make the most of it!”



Divide tasks

Now that you have your agenda, it's important to divide tasks to be 100% sure of what you and your co-facilitator(s) are responsible for. Decide per each activity who is leading, who is supporting, who is designing, planning and executing the activity, and (essential when working online!) who will be the tech host (i.e. the person who opens the call, shares their screen/sound, manages participants, creates breakout rooms etc.) There should be no room for confusion – particularly as you and your co-facilitator(s) will probably not be in the same room when you deliver the training itself. This is a great time to factor in the goals you set at the beginning. If you have different experience levels, try to make sure that you allocate supporting and leading roles in a way that both plays to your strengths but also pushes you – that's how you learn and become a better facilitator! It's also best to have one meeting where you run through the agenda and practice facilitating and tech hosting your sessions with your co-facilitator(s) before-hand. That way you have the chance to discuss any concerns before-hand, smooth out any (tech) roadblocks, and feel fully prepared and confident to ace your training.

Communicate with participants

Before you host the training it's essential to share key information with participants. Make sure you send an online invitation well in advance (e.g. via WhatsApp, email and/or an Outlook or Google Calendar invite) to make sure participants block the time, and include a rough agenda so participants know what to expect.



Bonus tip! Be clear about which time zone you are using when you mention a time, so that people in other countries/ time zones are clear on when the training is happening.

It is also a nice idea to include a small paragraph introducing each of the trainers as well as the training objectives. If participants need to prepare anything (e.g. do pre-reading) or bring anything specific (e.g. headphones, pen and paper), this is a good opportunity to let them know.

Essential logistics checklist

- List of all the materials and tools you need
- Translate slides and tools into relevant languages and if you are using a translator, share them with the translator
- Prepare text for chat and translate into all relevant languages
- Create meeting invitation including relevant link and information on any preparation work required of participants
- Ensure accessibility considerations have been factored in – e.g. do you need to enable closed captioning or translation on your Zoom call?

4. Implement the design: things to consider during the training

Log on early

Just like in real life, it's a good idea to "arrive" early to your training for last minute preparations and to feel calm before you begin. Log into your meeting platform 30 minutes early and make sure you have all the relevant tabs, slides and tools open and easy to access. If you're working with a live translator, invite them too to make sure that the translation function is working smoothly, to walk them through the agenda, and align on where to go during breakout groups, etc. This is a good moment to double check that any tools or documents (e.g. Jamboard, Google Docs, MentiMeter) are accessible – you don't want to discover during the training that the tools you want to share are on private mode! Also make sure to take care of your own needs – have a final toilet break, fill up your water, and grab some coffee, tea or snacks to keep you going.

“As a trainer, it is your responsibility to create an open, safe and respectful environment in which both adults and young people feel comfortable to exchange experiences and opinions, ask questions, and learn.”

Practical to dos

If you are using a platform like Zoom, not all participants will have their account named after their name. Some participants might have an organizational account, others will have the name of the device they are using. This can make it difficult to know who is on the call – but thankfully you can change participants' names (or they can change it themselves) so you know who is in the virtual room. It's a good idea to ask participants to do this at the very beginning (provide instructions in case they haven't done it before) and while you're doing this you can also request that they indicate their pronouns and organization (and even language when relevant), so everyone knows how best to refer to one and other. For example: Carys Stirling (she/her) CHOICE, English. Before the training you can also invite participants to join a WhatsApp group, which can help you to stay connected if something goes wrong with the meeting, as well as to remind participants that the training is taking place. You can also make a WhatsApp group (or similar) with your co-facilitators and translators in case of any quick behind the scenes communication you need to do during the training itself.

Group dynamics, group agreements and establishing a safe space

As a trainer, it is your responsibility to create an open, safe and respectful environment in which both adults and young people feel comfortable to exchange experiences and opinions, ask questions, and learn. Therefore, it is crucial that you make participants feel safe and valued. An important aspect of ensuring a safe space for the training is creating a group agreement at the very beginning of the training. You may know this as "ground rules", but by calling it a "group agreement" you avoid it being a set of rules simply imposed by the trainer. This makes it something everyone contributes to, and therefore can also be held accountable for. This can also be a nice moment to invite everyone to close any unnecessary tabs, switch off their email and do their best to be present throughout the duration of the training. As a trainer, it is important to remind participants of the group agreement when needed – be kind but firm! You also need to demonstrate that you value all the contributions of participants, by using phrases such as: "thank you for sharing your story"; "thank you for giving your opinion" etc.

12. To learn how to set up closed captions on Zoom, check the Zoom website: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/6643133682957-Enabling-and-configuring-translated-captions> 13. To learn how to set up translation on Zoom, check out the Zoom website: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/360034919791-Using-Language-Interpretation-in-your-meeting-or-webinar> 14. See an example of a group agreement at the resource of Club Runner here: <https://portal.clubrunner.ca/101616/documents/en-us/af0c128a-c060-43ea-8de5-f8d2291792ab/1#:~:text=Examples%20of%20group%20agreements%20are,listen%20and%20hear%20another%20person.>

Energisers and icebreakers

It is essential to maintain energy levels throughout the training (for examples of energisers, see page 42). If the training is taking place across multiple days, and most of the participants are meeting for the first time, it is good to invest in team dynamics and spend a significant amount of the first session on team building exercises and icebreakers. The investment will be worth it! On the other hand, if you only have one day of training, then a quick but creative round of introductions is sufficient, and perhaps some small energisers between the sessions. If you see that energy levels need a boost, or that participants are lacking motivation to engage, then an energiser can be useful too. Also remember to check-in with the participants to discuss any concerns about group dynamics mid-way through the training. For example: is everyone still abiding by the group agreement?

Closing the training

At the end of the training, make sure that all participants fill in an evaluation form. This is useful for future trainings, but also to improve and follow up on the present training. This is also the time to do a final check-out round and close the training with a final briefing and a warm goodbye! It can be fun to use this moment to ask everyone to switch on their cameras for a group photo, which you can then share in a follow up email and in any reporting (but ask permission first!).

Debrief with your co-facilitator

After you have said goodbye to your participants, it is time to do a debrief with your co-facilitator about your session. In the debrief you discuss what went well and what could be improved. You can use this information to grow as a trainer and it also helps you to prepare for the evaluation. Doing this right after the training helps, as you will still have it fresh in your mind and can note everything down. You can also give each other feedback by sharing a “tip” (something they could improve on in future) and a “top” (something they did really well).

Debrief with your co-facilitator

After you have said goodbye to your participants, it is time to do a debrief with your co-facilitator about your session. In the debrief you discuss what went well and what could be improved. You can use this information to grow as a trainer and it also helps you to prepare for the evaluation. Doing this right after the training helps, as you will still have it fresh in your mind and can note everything down. You can also give each other feedback by sharing a “tip” (something they could improve on in future) and a “top” (something they did really well).

“You can also give each other feedback by sharing a “tip” (something they could improve on in future) and a “top” (something they did really well).”

5. Evaluate performance: things to consider after you have delivered the training

Evaluation

An evaluation report helps your organisation’s program coordinators, donors and future colleagues. Make sure you capture what happened in the training by including the objectives, a description, and the outcome of your activities. You can also share some reflections on what worked and what could have gone better.

Organise a final reflection moment with your team and reflect on whether you and your co-facilitator(s) feel you met your learning goals.

Ensure all of your materials are backed up and easily accessible to your organisation (e.g. on Google Drive or Share-Point) for future use, and make sure to share any follow-up materials with the participants.



12. To learn how to set up closed captions on Zoom, check the Zoom website: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/6643133682957-Enabling-and-configuring-translated-captions> 13. To learn how to set up translation on Zoom, check out the Zoom website: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/360034919791-Using-Language-Interpretation-in-your-meeting-or-webinar> 14. See an example of a group agreement at the resource of Club Runner here: <https://portal.clubrunner.ca/101616/documents/en-us/af0c128a-c060-43ea-8de5-f8d2291792ab/1#:~:text=Examples%20of%20group%20agreements%20are,listen%20and%20hear%20another%20person.>

4. Tips for engaging, meaningful and fun trainings

It is a fact: digital facilitation is different from in-person facilitation. Engagement is different, you have to deal with troubleshooting issues with the tools you are using, people get tired more easily and it can be difficult to build rapport with and between participants who aren't in the same physical space.

In the following section, we combine the top tips that we and our partners have gathered during many digital trainings, which we hope will help you to make your online sessions engaging, meaningful and fun!

It takes (at least) two to tango

Whatever tool you decide to use for your meeting or training, one basic rule is that you will need at least two people to facilitate well – namely one facilitator and one tech host. The tech host will be responsible for the technical support of the meeting, such as opening up breakout rooms, troubleshooting issues with the digital platform you are using, responding to participants' queries and comments via the chat, and making certain the tools that you use work smoothly. The facilitator on the other hand facilitates the meeting, training and activities. This can be one person, but in larger groups or longer meetings it can be beneficial to have multiple facilitators.

Sometimes the organization you are working for provides you with a tech host, but in other cases you will need to divide this task among your facilitator team. In both scenarios it is important that you prepare well – discuss with your tech host what you want them to do at which point in time.

Do not forget to schedule time for this in your training and ideally write it down clearly in your internal agenda!

Create space for interactions

When facilitating trainings, interactions between participants and the facilitator are a big part of the learning of the participants. Participants will learn best by participating actively, such as by asking questions, reflecting, working together with others and having discussions. These interactions are more difficult to facilitate online, as people might feel a barrier to speak up, interactions are less flexible, and people have a shorter attention span. On the other hand, digital spaces allow engagement to take different forms, such as using emojis, making hand gestures through the camera or using the chat. It is helpful to take advantage of these ways, while also thinking through where you would like to plan in space for interactions.

One way to create a space for interactions is by alternating activities with the whole group of participants with activities in smaller groups. When designing your training be sure to plan enough smaller break-out room activities in which participants can discuss. Do make sure these break-out rooms or smaller groups are safe. You can read more on creating safe spaces in the CHOICE Trainers Guide. Activities that ask for the opinion of your participants, such as quizzes or polls, are also a great way to make space for interactions!

Make time to connect

Think about an in-person training or meeting you went to. You might have traveled to the venue with other participants, shared a coffee and some small talk during the breaks, and eaten your lunch together. All of these moments are great opportunities to connect with your fellow participants and trainer(s). By contrast, it is more

difficult for people to connect in online spaces, and this can impact the effectiveness of the training. When designing your training, be intentional about creating moments for participants to connect with each other and make it personal. A fun way is using break out rooms for discussing hobbies or life interests, using WhatsApp before a training or making a playlist with people's favorite songs.

Take enough time

Online interactions will take more time, as it takes a bit before people understand a question, feel comfortable sharing their thoughts, and have found the unmute button to answer or give their opinion. If you ask a question, be sure to build in some time for people to answer. It is also useful to repeat it multiple times and put it in the chat as well – people might not have heard it the first time due to connections timing out.

In designing your training, try to be realistic and avoid squeezing too many activities into a short time-slot. Although attention spans are shorter online, it's better to have a two-hour meeting that finishes early than a one-hour meeting that finishes late!

Becoming tool pros

It is good practice to explore in advance the tools that you will be working with and make certain that you know how the laptop and mobile version of each tool works. There will always be participants who are less familiar with the tool that you are using. If you have the time, schedule in a moment during your training where you provide some instructions on the tool and participants can practice with the tool. If this is not the case, you can send around a small guide or tutorial videos on how participants can use the tool. You can also plan in a moment for participants to join your training earlier. You can then check if all functions are working and you can share details on the use of the tool.

Combine online and offline methods

In general, people find it difficult to stay concentrated while looking at a screen. Screen fatigue is a real challenge of digital facilitation. To counter this, you can combine online and offline methods. An example of this are energizers that are built around movement, dancing, drawing or getting the participant to search for a particular object in their nearby environment. During reflection moments, you can also ask people to write on a piece of paper instead of using their computers.

Information sharing

After you have designed your training, send all of your materials to the participants. This includes the schedule, the slides and materials that you will need from participants. As a rule of thumb, you can think about what information is needed for participants to be able to participate meaningfully. If you are sending materials ahead, people who are using a screen reader can read the slides in advance in case sharing their screens is impossible; people with connection issues can refer back to the slides when the connection drops and people can keep up with your facilitation. If participants consent, you can record the meeting and send it around afterwards. In this way, those who were unable to participate fully can refer back to it.

Safety & consent

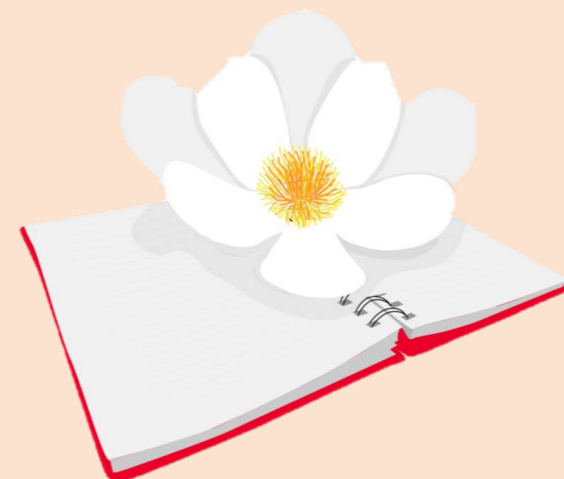
Online platforms give you and your participants the opportunity to have conversations, create friendships and engage in global networks. However, data of various kinds are automatically recorded in an often relatively permanent form. As a facilitator it is important to be mindful of this. This means that you should always ask for consent, especially when you decide to record interactions in any way (video, pictures, chat, etc.) and be clear on who will be able to access this data. It is also a good practice to research the safety of the platform that you will be using for your meeting and follow the necessary safety precautions.

Timing

As virtual meetings or trainings are often not a full day affair – which we would also not advise, scheduling is important. Due to the remote nature of virtual meetings, you might have participants from different time zones joining. Before scheduling a meeting time, take another look at your needs assessment and see from which different time zones participants are joining. Once you have found a time that works, be sure to send an invitation well in advance, so that participants are able to allocate enough time for the meeting.



Bonus Tip! *It can help to let participants fill out a Doodle poll to see which meeting times might work best for them. This can be especially useful if you have multiple trainings/meetings.*



What to do if you have...

Connection issues

As digital facilitation happens online, one of the biggest issues participants and facilitators experience are connection issues. The best solution to these issues is a good needs assessment in which you ask participants what tools they prefer, what their connection needs are, what equipment they will be using and if they have any other accessibility needs. Based on this assessment you can then see what is the best way forward to counter these issues, e.g. providing internet packages or reimbursing participants to stay in a hotel.



Bonus Tip! *some participants might not ask you if you can reimburse their internet packages. It can then help to provide internet packages in advance, instead of asking participants to reimburse their internet costs afterwards.*

In many cases, complex tools such as Mural or Jamboard will be difficult for participants to use. It is then best to stick to one tool and try to use the tools already available on the platform. You can also use your needs assessment to choose the tools for your training.



Bonus Tip! *Encourage participants in advance to login with their laptop instead of their phones, where possible.*

Problems with tools

Participants might have unexpected issues with a certain tool. Before starting the training, you can let participants know to whom they can reach out to if they are experiencing a tech issue. Depending on the assigned roles, it might make most sense if this person is your tech host. If this is the case you can Google the issue or look for help from your technology proficient colleagues or peers. Very often if a device is not working a quick reset of the computer or mobile phone will fix the issue.

Screen fatigue

People find it difficult to stay concentrated while looking at a screen. Screen fatigue is a real challenge of digital facilitation. If possible, try to keep trainings under 1.5 hours with short breaks of 5 to 10 minutes at reasonable intervals. Try your best to organise the training in a way that means you don't skip these breaks! It's good to let participants know when they can expect a break at the beginning of your session, so they can pace themselves. On top of breaks, it's a good idea to plan in moments of dance and music, e.g. asking participants to teach each other different moves from their country or community, to help participants to be re-energized again. If your training needs more time you can try to solve this by spreading the training over multiple days. Keep in mind that you really do not want to spend more than 3 hours online.

Another way to counter screen fatigue is to combine online and offline methods e.g. getting participants to go out for a small walk during the training, or inviting them to use a pen and paper to capture their ideas. As everyone has a different limit regarding screen time, invite your participants to engage in radical self-care. This means that you invite your participants to take responsibility for getting up and moving, taking toilet breaks or getting something to drink.

Lack of engagement

One of the challenges with virtual facilitation is the risk of low engagement from participants. Back-to-back digital meetings are tiring, so it is very easy and tempting for participants to keep one eye on their email, social media chat with colleagues or families while on mute. We've all done it! Furthermore, as you have seen above, many participants struggle with their connection, which makes it even more difficult for them to keep track of the session. If participants also do not have their cameras on, it is difficult for a facilitator to tell if participants are still engaged. Show understanding to participants who are more passive and let them know that it would mean a lot for you if they joined in. Also, do not take lack of engagement personally!

One way of promoting focus and engagement is inviting participants in your introduction to close all their other programs besides the online platform you are using so they can be truly present during your training. You can start the session with a question and invite respondents to answer by unmuting or using the chat. To keep people engaged, make certain that the materials you use are colorful and fun. Try to not use presentations that are too long (max 15 minutes), as people lose their concentration more easily.

You can keep engagement high by keeping in mind that the video and the chat function are both useful tools. You can use the chat in creative ways, such as using emojis or questions in the chat, and invite participants to engage in the chat. You can also use the chat to provide a written explanation of your activity. Many people may not speak the language you are using as their first language, so communicating in writing as well as speaking can help them to engage.

Another way you can get people to be more responsive is by starting with sharing your own experience and then inviting others to share. You can also ask questions by names, e.g. "Natalie, could you be so kind as to share your story with us, I am really interested in it". It is good to keep in mind that participants differ in their level of comfort with answering questions. If you ask the more active participants to share first, others might follow.

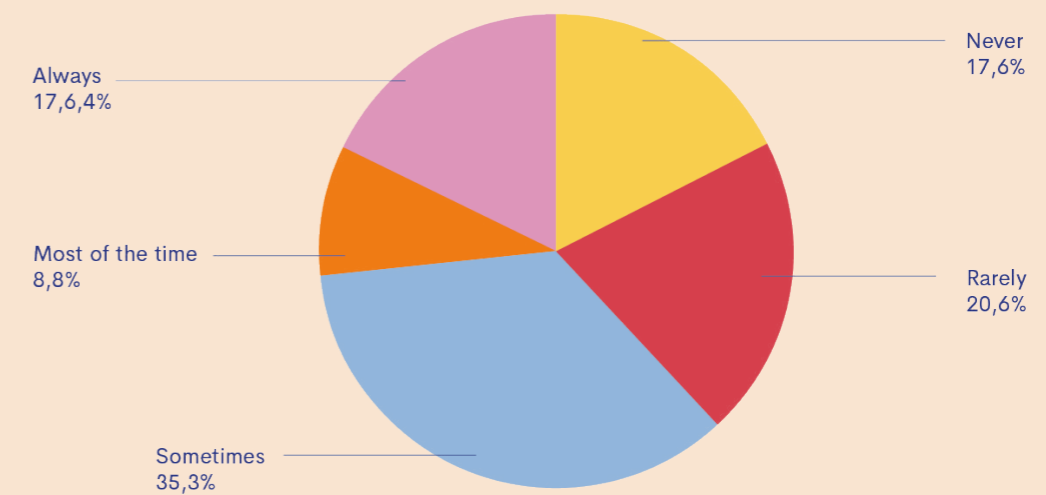


Bonus Tip! *If your agenda isn't going according to plan and your meeting is running overtime, breaks and energisers are usually the first things you skip, as they feel like an optional extra, rather than a necessity. But we urge you to think differently! Breaks and energisers are a must! Avoid skipping them by being realistic about the timing of your training and, if necessary, cut down the number of activities to make sure that you can go into proper depth without rushing.*

Cameras off

Some facilitators who have already hosted trainings before are surprised and challenged by the lack of people turning on their camera. There are different reasons for this, such as internet connectivity, not having a built-in camera on the computer, using a mobile phone to log in or just needing a "camera-off" day. According to our survey, only 26% of participants turn on their camera often or always.

When I join online meetings or trainings, I have my camera switched on



If participants do not have their camera on or do not have a microphone, let them know that they are still an important participant in your session. Ask them to use the chat to send you their thoughts and answers. Not knowing the face of the person behind the screen can be difficult. What helps is to think about the situation of your participants. If you people have their cameras off, this might just be to connectivity issues. It does not say anything about your skills as a facilitator!

You can choose to ask participants to put on their camera during introduction rounds if their connection allows. You can mention that if connection is not strong, participants can turn their cameras off again during the rest of the training.

Another tip is to ask your participants to share a photo of themselves in advance (make sure you tell them it will be shared in the group) and make a Mural/Jamboard/PowerPoint slide with each person's name, their photo, and some information about them, so that the group can visualize each other together, even though you are apart!

Multiple languages

The beauty of virtual meetings is that it can enable us to meet with people from many different countries all at once. A likely result of this is that you will have a variety of language preferences in your training. When you are working with people whose language you do not speak or with participants speaking different languages, there are a few things to think about. It is important that there are different language translations. For example, you speak English while some of your participants speak French. You will need to provide translation both in French and English, so participants can understand you and feel free to ask you questions. In Zoom you can allow a translator to interpret simultaneously¹⁸, while Teams provides an electronic translation service called Microsoft translator.¹⁹

When you decide to use a translator, schedule time to prepare with them before the meeting or training. You should discuss abbreviations that will come up in the training and provide them with knowledge necessary for correct translation. It is important that your translator has good internet and translates in an enthusiastic tone to keep participants engaged.

If you are using slides you should try to translate this to French and send it to your participants in advance²⁰. You can use Deep-L to translate your PowerPoint²¹, but it's good to check with a native speaker whether everything makes sense. It's a nice idea to learn how to say hello, goodbye and thank you in the language of your participants.

Hybrid setup

More and more people are returning to their offices. It is therefore likely that you come across a hybrid meeting or training. Hybrid meetings have their own possibilities and challenges. In your preparation for the training, check with the organization which facilities are available. Hybrid facilitation works best when there are conferencing facilities. Also think about the set-up of the room and the number of computers you need (this will depend on the activities you want to do and where people will be placed).

Furthermore, try to have one person as an online facilitator for the online participants, one facilitator for the people participating offline, and a tech host. Make certain you have a clear division of tasks between the online and offline facilitators.

When you are developing your training, think where you would like to link the online participants with the in-person participants. For each activity in the training, think how you want to divide the groups. Particularly when you want the groups to interact together, make certain that this is possible with your facilities and set-up

The same activity online might be different from the one in-person in terms of explanation and the way participants can engage. Think each part of the activity through from the point of view of an online participant and of an in-person participant. Another key thing to think about is that compared to the in-person participants, the online participants will get fatigued more quickly, will need more breaks and also need moments away from their screens.

“When you are developing your training, think where you would like to link the online participants with the in-person participants.”



¹⁸. For support on enabling this feature go to: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/360034919791-Using-Language-Interpretation-in-your-meeting-or-webinar>
¹⁹. To find out more go to: <https://translator.microsoft.com/login?redirect=%2Fstart> ²⁰. See our tips regarding this under Tips for engaging, meaningful and fun trainings
²¹. Deep-L is an online translation service that can translate different languages. You can go to <http://deepl.com>

5. Creating accessible online spaces

Without certain enabling factors, physical buildings can create barriers for people with disabilities or particular accessibility requirements. The digital world is no different! What can be done to make online meetings more accessible? A training is only meaningful if every participant is actually able to participate, so make sure you ask your participants if they have any particular accessibility requirements in your needs assessment (for instance, a visual or audio impairment), and factor these needs in when designing your training.

Captioning

To support someone with an audio impairment, you can enable captions in your meetings. The captions or subtitles will be automatically generated to enable individuals with hearing difficulties to be at par with others on the call.^{22 23} They will be able to read and contribute to meaningful discussions by using the chat box or unmuting their mics (it will depend on personal preference how a person will contribute).



Tip: if the participants requesting sign language interpretation are from different countries, consider international sign language.

Sign language interpretation

Instead of automatic captioning, you might prefer to use a sign language interpreter²⁴. When engaging in trainings with a sign language interpreter make sure that the sign language interpreter and your audience speak the same sign language. There are more than 300 different sign languages!



Tip: if the participants requesting sign language interpretation are from different countries, consider international sign language.

When working with an interpreter, plan in 60 or 30 minutes before your meeting to go over details with them, make certain that your interpreter has a direct link with your tech host, and share documentation with them in advance. In the meeting, make sure that the interpreter can be made visible to your participant. Zoom is a convenient platform to use in this aspect and it is good to discuss with your participant the steps that they can take to make their interpreter more visible for them²⁵.

Screen readers

Another way to make online meetings more accessible is to activate or enable screen readers²⁶ for documents that are shared during the meetings. This can be helpful for people who are visually impaired. They are then able to navigate their way through and ensure that whatever is being said on the call is being read and understood by them. Based on the needs assessment, you can discuss with your partner organization whether they or you can provide such screen readers.



Bonus tip! Zoom is a great meeting tool for people with visual impairments, as it functions well with a screen reader.

It's important to know that a screen reader cannot "read" images. If you, the facilitator, share your screen to display e.g. a PowerPoint slide, the screen reader will receive this as an image, and will therefore not be able to read the text to the user. It's best if you can send your PowerPoint directly to the person using the screen reader, so that the screen reader can read directly from this file. If you do include photographs or images in your materials, make sure to include a caption that explains the image²⁷.



Bonus tip! When in doubt, don't be afraid to ask what works best for your participant(s). The list of ideas above is not exhaustive: it may be that they have other ideas about how you can make the meeting/training accessible for them.



18. For support on enabling this feature go to: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/360034919791-Using-Language-Interpretation-in-your-meeting-or-webinar>
19. To find out more go to: <https://translator.microsoft.com/login?redirect=%2Fstart>
20. See our tips regarding this under Tips for engaging, meaningful and fun trainings
21. Deep-L is an online translation service that can translate different languages. You can go to <http://deepl.com>

22. You can find more information on how to enable them for zoom here: <https://www.pcmag.com/news/zooms-live-captioning-feature-is-now-available-to-all-users>
23. You can find out more information on how to enable them in teams here: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/use-live-captions-in-a-teams-meeting-4be2d304-f675-4b57-8347-cbd000a21260>
24. A sign language interpreter is someone who will translate spoken words to sign language
25. Language.com has created a step-by-step guide on how to do so, you can find it here: <https://language.com/how-to-magnify-screens-for-sign-language-interpreters-during-zoom-video-conferencing/>
26. This is a tool that reads out the screen and can be used by a person with a visual impairment.

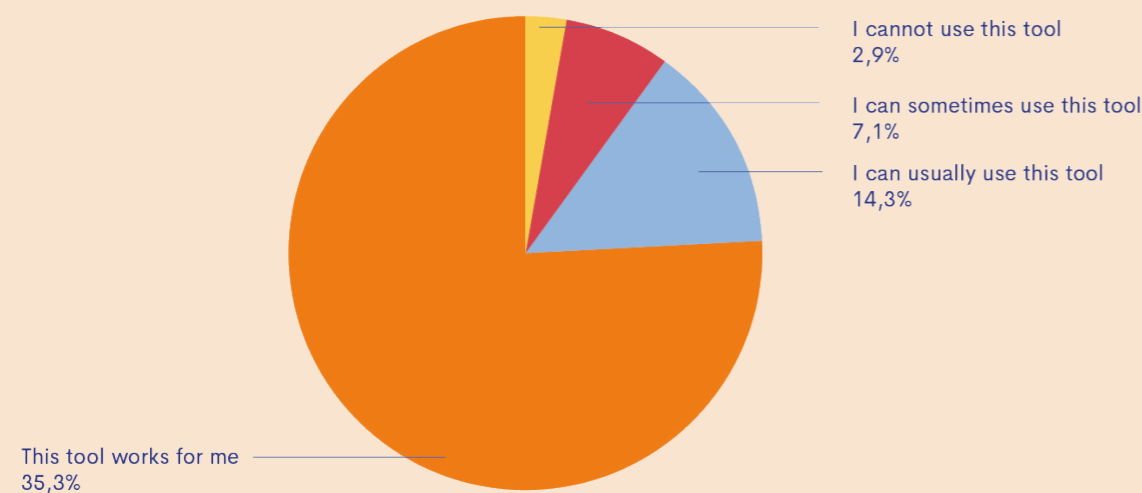
6. Tools

Working online can be a lot of fun because of the exciting range of digital tools that exist for interactive meetings. Before you make a decision on which tool to use, do remember to do a needs assessment in which you ask people which tool works best for them. And always make sure you've established what the purpose of an activity is before you decide to use a tool - don't just use a tool for the sake of it! And finally, always explore in advance how the features of each program works, you don't want to be figuring this out mid training.

Zoom

Zoom is an online video conference software on which you can host online meetings that is generally found to be quite user-friendly. In our survey with participants and facilitators from around the world, 90%(!) indicated that this tool works well for them.

With your current set up, to what extent does Zoom enable your meaningful participation in online meetings and trainings?



To be able to host a meeting you need a Zoom account²⁸. Accounts can be free, but then your meeting will end after 40 minutes, so it is a good idea to invest in a subscription. Once you have created an account, it is easy to schedule meetings²⁹. You can then invite your participants to the meeting by sharing the meeting invite with them³⁰. Zoom's software and interface is constantly being updated, so the best way to learn about Zoom features is directly on the Zoom Support website.³¹ Below you can read some of our tips:

27. You can do so by including alternative text. You can find out more on this in this article: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/add-alternative-text-to-a-shape-picture-chart-smartart-graphic-or-other-object-44989b2a-903c-4d9a-b742-6a75b451c669>

Recording: If you are hosting something like a webinar, you might want to record the call. You can do so automatically when you schedule the meeting in advance. However, consent-wise, it's much better to ask participants' consent before starting the recording. Then you can start recording the meeting by pressing 'Record' at the bottom of the screen.

Managing participants: To be able to see all of your participants, you can select the gallery feature on the upper right corner of your screen. You can see how many participants and their names by clicking on 'Manage Participants'. In 'manage participants' you can also mute all participants by clicking 'mute all' or unmute all participants by clicking 'unmute all'.

Safety: At the beginning of the pandemic, Zoom had some safety concerns. It is therefore good practice to have the following features in your meeting³²: always require a password for meetings; use the waiting room feature and let your tech host verify the attendees; only allow your host to share their screen; disable "Join before host" to prevent people causing trouble before you arrive. You can even disable "Allow removed participants to rejoin" so expelled attendees cannot join again, though be careful with this feature - if you mistakenly remove a participant, they will not be able to rejoin!

Chat: Many people are able to engage meaningfully in a training by using the chat function of Zoom, around 78% according to our survey. During the meeting, when someone wants to send message and taps on chat window and click the new chat button. If you want to chat privately with a participant, you drop down the menu in the send to, and tap the name of participant you want to chat with directly. If you wish to chat with others, you add additional names and enter the message then press enter to send it.

Poll: Another function is the poll function, with lets you ask your participants a single choice or multiple-choice polling questions during your meeting and gather participants' answers³³.

Sharing audio/visuals: Zoom also has some great functions such as sharing screen³⁴ and sound³⁵, you can use these features to share slides or music.

Breakout rooms: Another great function of Zoom is breakout rooms. This function lets you create spaces for people to interact in smaller groups. You can do so in the middle of your session³⁶. You can also do so at the start of your meeting by signing in to the Zoom web portal, clicking meetings and 'Schedule a meeting'. In this page you select breakout room and click create room. You can then add rooms by clicking on the plus button beside rooms. As a host you can join any of the groups you have created. However, it is best practice that at least you or your tech host remains in the main session to help participants who experience internet challenges to re-enter their breakout room.

28. You can find more information here: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362413-Scheduling-meetings> 29. Find out more information here: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362183-Inviting-others-to-join-a-meeting> 30. You can find out more on this here: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/213756303-Polling-for-Meetings> 31. You can read more here: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362153-Sharing-your-screen-or-desktop-on-Zoom> 32. In your Zoom account, you can create meetings by scheduling a meeting. There you can find these described features. 33. You can read more here: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362643-Sharing-computer-sound-in-a-screen-share> 34. Find out more here: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206476313-Managing-Breakout-Rooms> 35. You can read more on sharing your sound here: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206476313-Managing-Breakout-Rooms> 36. Learn more on how to create and manage break out rooms here: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206476313-Managing-Breakout-Rooms>

Preventing tech hiccups: Oh no! You or your co-facilitator is experiencing internet difficulties. The meeting can terminate abruptly if the organisers internet cuts out. To counter this, always use Zoom to select at least one "co-host" (generally your co-facilitator(s)). In this way the other person can continue with the session.

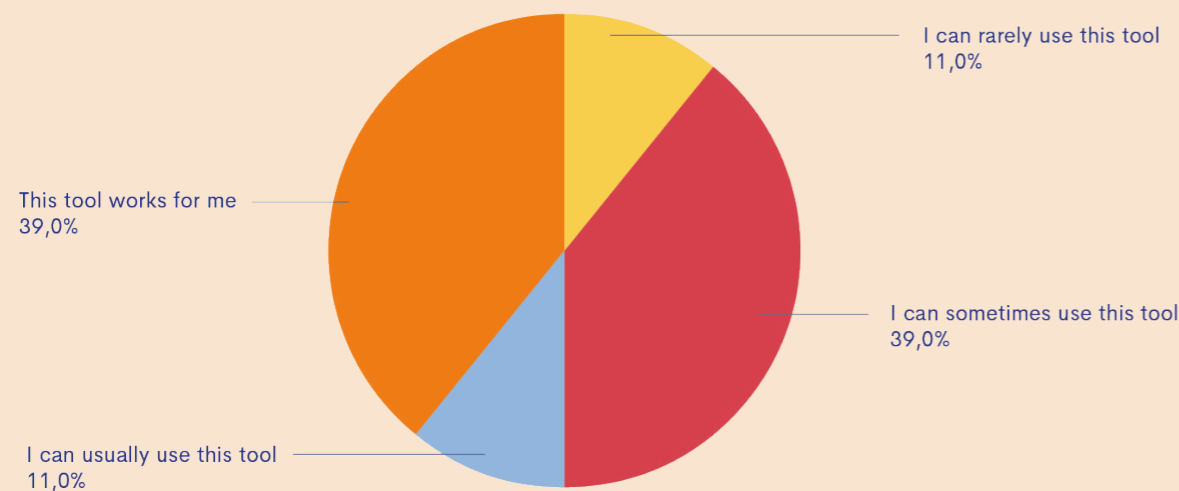


Bonus tip! Make sure participants are reminded to join using the latest version of Zoom, as sometimes there can be issues when participants/hosts are using different versions.

Teams

Teams is an online collaboration space to work which is hosted by Microsoft. It is therefore often used as a platform to create communication between colleagues and team members. You can however also use it to host your training! Microsoft has connected Teams to its other tools, such as Word and Outlook. The free version will allow you to host group meetings for 60 minutes. Teams is less accessible for people than Zoom with 34% of participants reporting that the tool does not work well for them. It's a much more elaborate program than Zoom, which can make it difficult to use with poor internet, so be sure to check with participants about their preference.

With your current set up, does Microsoft teams enable your meaningful participation in online meetings and trainings?



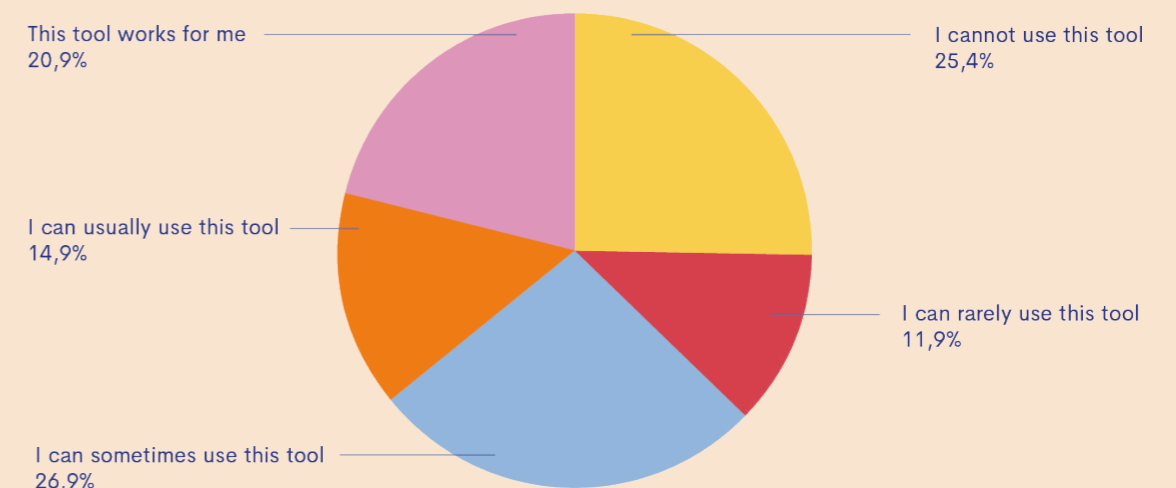
You can schedule a meeting either through the Teams program or through Microsoft Outlook³⁷ (if you are using that). You can invite participants to the teams meeting by sharing the link of the meeting or by adding them as participants in the meeting when scheduling the meeting. Just as with Zoom, Teams allows you to share your screen³⁸. In this way you can show your participants examples, files and work together. During your meeting you or another participant can easily take notes by clicking on the "Meeting Note" option. You can also share files through the chat function that people can immediately access³⁹. Teams allows you to create Breakout Rooms if you are the meeting organizer or presenter⁴⁰.

Mural/Miro

Mural⁴¹ and Miro⁴² are digital 'whiteboards' on which people can work together – imagine a digital space where you can create your own post-its, draw lines, add text, etc. Mural and Miro can be great spaces to let participants get creative, work together on a project or do a brainstorming meeting. Both Miro⁴³ and Mural⁴⁴ give you the opportunity to use their services for free, but bear in mind that without a paid subscription, there are limitations on how many boards you can create and how many participants can join. You can create your own Mural or Miro by starting a whiteboard and using one of the many templates or by creating your own design. Once you have created your whiteboard you can share it with your participants by sharing the link in the chat or by email. It takes some time to get used to both programs, so before facilitating a session be sure to practise a bit beforehand.

Both Miro and Mural are best used on a laptop, rather than a phone, so remember that not everyone is able to use Mural and Miro in such a way that they can participate meaningfully. Only 34% of the participants who filled out our survey said they were able to use the tool well.

With your current set up, please indicate the extent to which Mural/Miro enables your meaningful participation online...



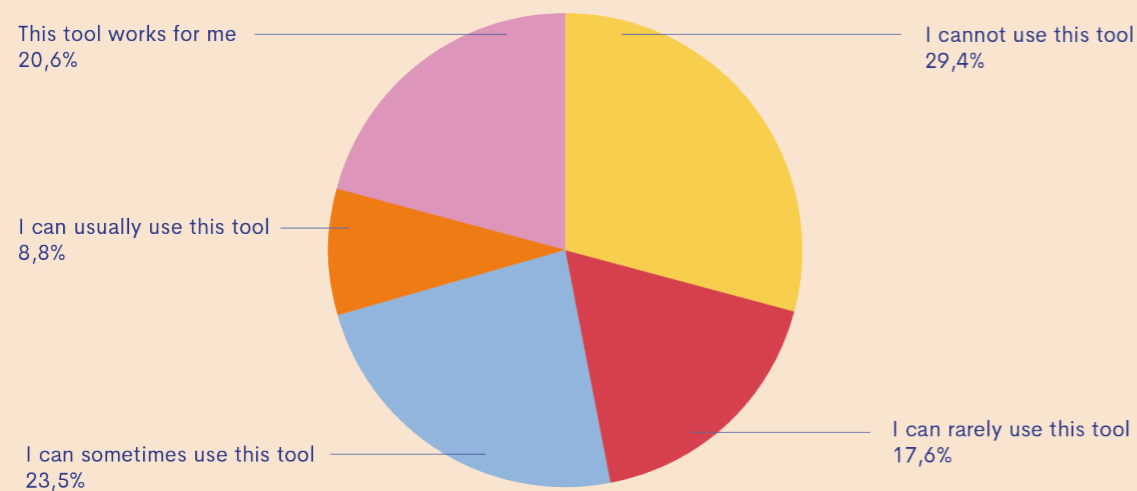
37. Learn more about scheduling meetings here: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/schedule-a-meeting-in-teams-943507a9-8583-4c58-b5d2-8ec8265e04e5> 38. Find out more on sharing your screen here: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/show-your-screen-during-a-meeting-90c84e5a-b6fe-4ed4-9687-5923d230d3a7> 39. Find out more here: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/chat-and-share-files-in-teams-d7978db0-33b5-4ad3-93ac-ef0bd3c2a6> 40. Find out more on how to create and manage breakout rooms here: https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/use-breakout-rooms-in-teams-meetings-7de-1f48a-da07-466c-a5ab-4ebace28e461#bkmk_create-breakout-rooms 41. You can access Mural here: <https://mural.co/> 42. You can visit Miro at <https://miro.com/> 43. To sign up to Miro visit <https://miro.com/signup/> 44. To sign up to Mural go to <https://app.mural.co/signup>

This might be due to unfamiliarity with the tool, internet issues or the fact that it's difficult to use via browser. It is therefore advised that if you use the tool with participants, you take some time before the meeting to explain how to use the tool well and to give participants the option to add their answers in the chat so you can write it on the Mural or Miro. Also, it can help to advise participants to download the Miro/Mural app before hand, as it doesn't work well on a phone if you are using it from a browser.

Jamboard

Jamboard is another digital whiteboard, which is a bit simpler than Miro or Mural and can therefore be more user-friendly. Jamboard also resembles the flipchart and post-its that many trainers are familiar with. Jamboard is a Google tool so to create a Jamboard you need a Google account, but your participants don't need to have one. After creating your account you can log into Jamboard. You can create a new Jamboard by clicking on the plus sign. Jamboard has the basic features that you would expect on a flipchart, such as a pen, post-its and text. You can even insert images on the Jamboard. You can for example have a brainstorm session by asking your participants a brainstorm question on the Jamboard and letting them respond by creating their own post-its.

With your current set up, to what extent does Jamboard enable your meaningful participation in online meetings and trainings?



Jamboard, like Mural and Miro, can pose some difficulties for participants if they are unfamiliar with it or have limited internet, so make sure you consult them on whether this tool works for them. Take some time before the meeting to explain how to use the tool well and to give participants the option to add their answers in the chat so you or someone in their group can write it on the Jamboard.

AnswerGarden Tool

AnswerGarden is a minimalistic and free feedback tool. You can use it as an educational tool or a creative brainstorming tool. AnswerGarden is for anyone interested in using an easy and powerful way to get brief feedback from a group. Use it to break the ice with the audience in a fun and interactive fashion.

After creating an AnswerGarden⁴⁷, you can simply share the link with your audience. As AnswerGarden is used daily at conferences worldwide, it is not uncommon that a live audience of 500+ people use a single AnswerGarden at the same time.

AnswerGarden has four different modes. In Classroom Mode (default), respondents can submit an unlimited number of answers, but may only submit each answer once. In Brainstorm Mode, respondents can submit an unlimited number of answers, including unlimited copies of the same answer. In Locked Mode, the AnswerGarden is closed and no new answers can be submitted. Use this if you are not ready yet for a massive number of answers and simply open it (set it to another mode) whenever you are! In Moderator Mode: a mode that redirects each answer to the AntiGarden (the shady side of your AnswerGarden). Via the admin panel, you can approve only those answers you find appropriate. You do need a password for this option, which you should add when you create your AnswerGarden. If you create a new AnswerGarden and you're not sure which setting to choose, leave it at the default, Classroom Mode and enter a password just in case. Note that you can always change the mode afterwards as often as you want.

If you want to remove unwanted answers, once you are logged as Admin, you can click each answer to select it and reveal a red delete-button (with a white cross) next to the answer. Simply click the delete-button and the answer will be removed from the AnswerGarden and moved to your AntiGarden (Your AntiGarden contains all answers that you removed from your AnswerGarden. Its purpose is twofold. Firstly, it lets you see all the answers that have been removed from your AnswerGarden and that are therefore automatically blocked when someone tries to submit them again. Secondly, the AntiGarden allows you to restore previously removed answers and return them to your AnswerGarden).

Note: If you intend to do a quiz with many different questions; require long, in-depth answers; or you want to formulate long questions it might be better to use Kahoot or MentiMeter.

MentiMeter

MentiMeter is an interactive presentation software that can be used to build presentations, interactive polls, quizzes and word clouds. It is used to create more interaction within trainings or meetings, and can be great for eliciting responses from participants anonymously. MentiMeter uses an online editor⁴⁸ where you can create the MentiMeter⁴⁹ by adding slides – a bit similar to creating a PowerPoint presentation. You will need to create an account to use MentiMeter. Here there is also a free version, but you will be a bit restricted, as you can only use 2 question slides or 5 quiz slides, so see about investing in a subscription if your organisation will use this regularly.

In the editor you simply click “New Presentation” to start the creation process. For each slide, you can select the type you want, such as a quiz competition or multiple-choice slide. After you have created your “Menti” you can use it in your trainings. Your “Menti” will only become active – and participants will be able to see it – if you click on present. Participants will need to go to [menti.com](https://www.menti.com)⁵⁰ on their own devices and fill in the code displayed at the top of your mentimeter to interact with your presentation. It is important that you share the screen with your MentiMeter on it so that you can show the results of all of the participants.

In our survey, MentiMeter scored the same as Mural/Miro with only 34% of participants saying they can use the tool well. This might be due to many participants not knowing the tool or due to internet issues. Therefore, just like Mural, Miro and Jamboard, you should take some time before the meeting to explain how to use the tool well and to give participants the option to add their answers in the chat.

Kahoot!

Kahoot! is a game-based learning platform that many people use to create fun quizzes. You will also need an account for this platform and you can sign in to their service on their website. Kahoot!⁵¹ also offers a free account, where you can have a maximum of 10 participants and use multiple-choice questions. Again, a subscription enables more functionality. Once you are logged in, you are directed to the Kahoot! editor. By clicking on the “Create” button you start to create your Kahoot!. In this way Kahoot! works a bit like MentiMeter. You can use Kahoot! to test participants’ knowledge, as an icebreaker or energizer during your training. For each question you can select the time limit, the points and how many answers people can select. You can play around a bit with this to keep your participants on their toes! Once you are finished with creating your Kahoot! You can share it with your participants by the link Kahoot! provides.

After creating your Kahoot! you can choose to “Assign” the Kahoot! Then your participants can complete the Kahoot! at their own pace before or after the training. You can also play the Kahoot! during your training. When playing it with your participants during the training, you will need to share your screen so the participants can read the questions. Like with MentiMeter, your participants log in by going to www.kahoot.it and filling in the Game Pin code. Once they have logged into your Kahoot! and given themselves a nickname, your Kahoot! can start.

45. You can find more information on how to create a google account here: <https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/googleaccount/creating-a-google-account/1/>

46. You can do so by going to <https://jamboard.google.com/> 47. You can create an AnswerGarden here: <https://answergarden.ch/create/> 48. At [mentimeter.com](https://www.mentimeter.com) 49. You can do so here: <https://www.mentimeter.com/signup?referral=homepage> 50. <https://www.menti.com/kahoot.com/business-u/> 51. You can access their website here: <https://www.kahoot.com/>

8. Energizers & Icebreakers

Throughout this guide, we have emphasized the importance of energisers and ice breakers for keeping your participants engaged. Here we have compiled a list of tried and tested ideas that we hope inspire you to inject some energy into your online trainings!

Energizers



Dreaming and drawing

* This activity can take place without cameras being on*

Time: 20 minutes

Supplies:

- Ask your participants to bring paper and pens or pencils

Description of activity

Ask participants to close their eyes and to think about their dream. It could be a dream for their organisation, personal career, or personal life. Ask them to imagine what their dream looks like and who or what is there. Then ask participants to draw their dream. Invite them to use all types of materials and colours and let them know they can draw as realistic or abstract as they want. Give your participants some time to draw. Then ask participants to share their drawing with you by showing it in front of the camera or by describing it to you.



GIF Challenge

* This activity can take place without cameras or audio being on *

Time: 15 minutes

Supplies:

- Online whiteboard or shared Google document

Description of activity

For this online game, set-up an online whiteboard or shared Google Doc and post a phrase or statement that participants then have to search for a suitable GIF in response. It might be something as simple as, “That Monday morning feeling,” or “Good management looks like this.” You can have a couple of questions just for fun, then include some that invite each team member to creatively respond to organizational challenges or prepare them for the next exercises.

After each round, everyone is invited to comment or vote on their favorites, and you can have additional rounds to crown a winner if you wish. When you are playing this game without audio on, you can ask participants to vote in the chat. One great way to use this energizer is by sprinkling several rounds of questions throughout the meeting to keep energy levels up and create some moments of fun and creativity as a counterpoint to other exercises.



Meditation

* This activity can take place without cameras or audio being on *

Time: between 5 and 10 minutes

Supplies: N/A

Description of activity

In this busy world it can be really nice to take a moment to relax and ground down. You can do a guided meditation with your participants by yourself or choose to play a pre-recorded meditation track through YouTube or Spotify⁵². A very nice guided meditation that you can use is from the headspace playlist at Spotify. If you choose to do your own meditation, ask your participants to close their eyes and breathe in through their nose and out through their mouth for a couple of breaths. After that you can ask the participants to let their breath return to its natural rhythm and to check in with their bodies. How are they feeling? Then ask them to focus on their breath. Do they feel the movement of the breath in their bodies? You can then ask them to stay with this sensation. Tell them that it is not a problem if they get distracted, but that when they notice they have been distracted to bring their attention back to their breath. Depending on how long you want to do the meditation you can then ask them again to return their focus back on how their body is feeling, before letting them open their eyes.



Movie emoticons game

* This activity can take place without cameras or audio being on*

Time: 10-15 minutes

Supplies:

- List of movies and their descriptions in emoticons
- Zoom or Teams

Description

Tell participants that you are going to play a competition to see who can guess the most movies. There is however one catch, they have to guess the movies based on a description provided by emoticons. The one who types the answer in the chat first will get a point and so on. To switch it up, you can create teams and have a contest to see which team can score the most points.



Scavenger Hunt/Something Blue

Time: 10 – 15 minutes

Supplies:

You don't need to prep anything - the goal is to find whatever objects are in reach of the participants as they are

The participants will be required to have their videos on to be able to showcase their selected time.

Description

The moderator starts by asking the audience to grab "something blue" (or the colour of your choice). The players then check their surroundings, find a blue object, and show it on camera. If you wish, you can invite them to explain what the object is and what it is used for. You can make it a race, so the last person to find the object becomes the next person to call out the request.

You can use any colour or material, e.g., "Bring something metallic!", but also more personal e.g. "Show me something that was a gift" or "Show me something that reminds you of people you care about". Forced to think quickly, the participants will refresh their minds after a long session and will be able to learn something about other audience members. Depending on the type of questions, you can also open up more personal conversations, if that feels right for your training.



Taking pictures outside game

Time: 20 – 30 minutes

Supplies:

- Participants would need a phone with access to the internet

Description

Tell participants that you will be going outside for the next activity. To spice the activity up a little bit you can let participants imagine that they are detectives, researchers or adventurers/explorers. Then give your participants a list of objects you want them to take a picture of. You can choose to use very clear descriptions, such as take a picture of a tree, more vague descriptions such as take a picture of something that surprised you or more personal descriptions, such as take a picture of an object that has a special meaning for you. Tell participants that the one who is able to take the most pictures on the list wins. Be sure to tell your participants when they should be back, as otherwise your activity might last very long.



Tip: Your place might have different objects than a participant's, if you are unsure of their environment you can stick to more vague descriptions that participants can interpret themselves.

Icebreakers



Break out room speed dating

Time: 15 minutes

Description

Let participants know that for this ice breaker you want them to get to know each other a bit more in smaller groups. To have meaningful conversations, keep the group in each breakout room small, around 2 to 3 participants. You can give your participants a question that they can talk about in the breakout room, but let them know that this is mainly for inspiration. After letting participants talk for 5 minutes, close and reshuffle the breakout rooms. Do this as many times as you see fit.

Question ideas

These can take place in the chat, verbally, in plenary or breakout rooms, with or without cameras on

- *What was your childhood dream?*

- *Tell us a story about your name. What does it mean, and why were you given it?*

- *Look at the shoes you are wearing. Where have you travelled in these shoes? Tell the group about the shoes and share something about the journeys you have been on in this pair.*



Describe your superpower

* This activity can take place without cameras or audio being on*

Time: 5-10 minutes

Supplies: N/A

Description

Ask your participants to take a moment and think about their super power. What is the quality that they, their friends or their family thinks is their super power? Ask participants afterwards to share their super power. Ask one or two participants to give an example of their super power or to explain why they feel it is their personal strength.



How are you feeling on the cat/animal scale?

* This activity can take place without cameras or audio being on*

Time: 5 minutes

Supplies: Image showing different numbered pictures of animals, e.g. a cat, with different (funny) expressions to indicate different moods

Description

Share your screen, showing the image of the animal scale. Ask people to indicate with a number which animal they feel like today and why. This is bound to bring out some laughter!



Two Truths and One Lie

* This activity can take place without cameras on; however, audio must be on*

Time: 15 – 20 minutes

Supplies: none

Description

In breakout rooms, one by one, each person says three statements about themselves. Two of these statements must be facts, or “truths,” and one must be a lie. The other members then try to guess which statement is the lie. The activity will assist in breaking the ice and for the participants to know more about each other.



What is the most difficult word in your local language?

* This activity can take place without cameras and audio on *

Time: 5-10 minutes

Supplies: None

Description

This game works really well when your participants are from different parts of the world. Ask participants to type the most difficult word within their local language. You can then read a few out or ask participants to share their meaning.

Want to know more?

For similar tools and resources for young people and youth-led organisations, please check out our website www.choiceforyouth.org

CHOICE for Youth and Sexuality is a youth-led organization based in the Netherlands. We actively promote and support the sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of young people worldwide. We believe that being able to make your own choices about your life, sexuality and body is a universal human right! We also strive for the meaningful participation of young people in SRHR programming and policy making. CHOICE is run by an enthusiastic and ambitious team of young people, all aged between 16 and 29.

10. Annex

Here you can find an example agenda with space for you to name the facilitator, include activity descriptions, timings and text for the chat.

| Time Total: ... hours Training: ... hours | Activity | Facilitator | Text for chat (translate ahead of time into all relevant languages) |
|---|----------------------------|-------------|---|
| ... minutes | e.g. PRE TRAINING CHECK-IN | | |
| ... minutes | e.g. WELCOME | | |
| ... minutes | e.g. ENERGIZER | | |
| ... minutes | e.g. ACTIVITY EXPLANATION | | |
| ... minutes | e.g. BREAKOUT ROOMS | | |
| ... minutes | e.g. PLENARY & REFLECTION | | |
| ... minutes | e.g. CHECK-OUT | | |

