

# TIPS FOR RUNNING ONLINE MEETINGS

Running virtual meetings and events well, can really make a difference to how groups engage their members.

## Have an agenda, facilitator, minute-taker and ‘moderator’

- Like traditional in-person meetings, it’s important to have an agenda, facilitator and minute-taker for your virtual meeting.
- You may need someone in the role of ‘moderator’ who can let people into the meeting, manage chat questions, share presentations, spotlight a guest speaker etc while the facilitator is running the meeting.
- Having two people to share the smooth running of the meeting can improve the experience for all.

## Help make people feel comfortable

- Many people feel uncomfortable on camera. It can also be harder to build rapport and connect.
- If you are facilitating the meeting or event, it’s important to manage introductions at the start and set the scene for how the meeting/event will run.
- Consider running some icebreaker activities. If you’re using Microsoft Teams, for example, you can run polls to make things more interactive.
- Give participants the option to ask questions over chat functions.
- Some people want to participate but don’t feel comfortable speaking, or have barriers to communication. Having the option to ask questions can help them stay involved.

## Schedule breaks during long meetings

- Meeting online is often more tiring than in-person. Make sure to factor in breaks for people to use the bathroom, take a stretch or make a coffee.

## The challenges of hybrid meetings (online and in person)

- Running meetings both virtually and in person at the same time (a hybrid meeting) can be very tricky.
- Unless you have video conferencing equipment with large projector screens and microphones, it can be very hard for people online to participate. Without this technology, it’s better to have meetings either entirely virtually or in person.
- If you have a very small group with only one or two people online and in-person, then using a laptop can work.

## Virtual etiquette and group rules

- If appropriate, have a discussion about group expectations of virtual catch ups.
- Does the group expect cameras will be on, or are they happy to let people decide if they do not want them on?