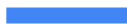




# Organizing and running engaging virtual events



Workshop hosted by the Center for Cooperative Media at Montclair State University

**Welcome!**





# Overview of the agenda

Welcome

Surroundings and equipment

Prep for you and your guests

Engagement

Power and privilege

Knowing the platform

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# Center for Cooperative Media



Grant-funded program based at School of Communication and Media at Montclair State University

Our mission is to grow and strengthen local journalism and support an informed society in New Jersey and beyond.

We provide news ecosystem support in New Jersey.

Nationally, we study and advocate for collaborative journalism.

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**"DISCLAIMER"**



**....RIGHT**

**What annoys you,  
or makes for a  
not-so-engaging  
experience?**



# **What you said:**

**When they are too long and unnecessary. When people don't mute. When the meetings don't start on time and people are awkwardly waiting. When people are too quick to mute. People looking at their phones. When the internet freezes and you don't know if anyone can hear you. When the host is disorganized. When the speakers ramble too much. When the audio quality sucks. When the meeting is generally dysfunctional. When certain people monopolize all the time. When the organizer is late and you have to wait for them to start while looking at a blank screen. When the speaker forgets to click present on the slideshow.**

An abstract graphic on a purple background. It features several 3D-style shapes: a large orange crescent moon, a smaller orange circle, a blue circle, and a green circle. A green curved line also sweeps across the bottom right. The text 'Surroundings + equipment' is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font, positioned in the lower-left area of the image.

**Surroundings +  
equipment**





# Surroundings + equipment

What's behind you matters, but not as much as your light and audio.

Making the best of your environment.

Where you are, what are you sitting on? Virtual backgrounds v. natural

Lighting

Audio

External equipment

Internet access

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# Tips from Amber



**Feedback  
breakouts!**





**Advance prep**

# Advance prep for you + your guests



- Practicing for speaking, hosting.
  - Scriptwriting.
  - Clear agenda.
  - Setting expectations ahead of time for overall experience and interaction.
  - Practicing in advance with speakers.
  - Key roles you should ensure you fill for every session you plan.
-



**What kind of  
prep helps you?**



**Engagement**



# Engagement

**What are you trying to achieve?**

What makes for an “engaging” session? First consider:

- What outcome are you hoping to achieve?
  - What kind of engagement are you hoping for?
  - Did you communicate this to your participants ahead of time?
-



# Engagement

**There are different levels.**



What levels of engagement are available?

- Active
    - Commenting
    - Asking questions
    - Posting
  - Passive
    - Watch/listen
    - Reading more
    - Like/favorite
  - Hybrid
-



# Engagement

**Other aspects and examples.**

Your host style

Breakouts

Music (to fill silence/set a vibe)

Other things outside the meeting

Relationship-building

Fun

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**Fun!**




Injecting joy into your virtual event is important.

How can you do that?

- Make fun of yourself
- Allow for creativity and expression (when appropriate)



An abstract graphic on a purple background. It features several 3D-style shapes: a large orange crescent moon, a smaller orange circle, a blue circle, and a green circle. A green crescent moon is partially visible at the bottom right. The shapes have a slight shadow, giving them a three-dimensional appearance.

**What are your  
engagement tips or  
questions?**

**Power +  
privilege**





# **Power + privilege in a virtual setting**

Fostering a welcoming, equitable and inclusive environment must be intentional.

Read AORTA's facilitation guidelines (link in chat).

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# Power + privilege in a virtual setting



Things to be conscious of:

- Technology issues (access to stable internet)
  - Digital + technical literacy
  - At-home distractions (caretaking responsibilities)
  - Non-neurotypical challenges/perspectives
  - Who is hosting and facilitating
-

**Knowing your  
platform**







# Knowing your platform

Three important areas.

1. Attendee management
2. Sharing your screen
3. Breakout rooms



# Platform questions





# **RESOURCES + LINKS:**

**[collaborativejournalism.org/virtualevents](https://collaborativejournalism.org/virtualevents)**

# Contact us!

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**Good luck!**