



Presenter Toolkit: Live Sessions

Thank you so much for being a part of NatStart2021 by sharing your expertise as a presenter! We are really looking forward to learning what you have to share. The following guidance will help you to lead a successful and accessible session, from [preparing your session](#), to [practicing](#), to [presenting live](#).

Most of us have spent a lot of time in virtual meetings over the last year. Yet, we've probably all attended virtual meetings that could have been better. Luckily, [The Goodman Center](#) completed a report on what works and what doesn't when it comes to virtual presentations, and turned that report into a webinar for NAAEE! We highly recommend watching the webinar before planning and recording your session, even if you are a rockstar presenter!

[Watch the webinar recording here.](#)

According to the Unmuted report from the Goodman Center, successful virtual sessions are:

1. Engaging
2. Clearly structured
3. Interactive

On the other hand, unsuccessful sessions are often the result of:

1. Technical problems
2. Lack of engagement
3. Too long or lack of structure

Preparing your Session

- Create slides or visuals that support, not replace, your narrative presentation.
- Establish a consistent look and feel to your slides and build in accessibility features.
 - Use the same or similar typography, imagery, and colors across all of your slides.
 - To support readability, we recommend using at least 28 pt font for headers and 20-24 pt font for body copy.
 - If using a background color, make sure you are choosing a background/text color combination that provides good contrast.
 - If using PowerPoint, use built-in standard layouts--*title slide, title and content slide, section header slide, two content slide, and comparison slide*--to create slides. This will help assistive technology follow the correct reading order.
 - For more on making your presentation accessible, see these resources from [Microsoft](#) and the [Bureau of Internet Accessibility](#)

- Tips for planning an engaging session:
 - Kick off your session with a question to instantly engage your audience.
 - Make use of the chat to learn about participants, have participants answer questions, and share links for more in-depth learning.
 - Take questions frequently throughout the session.
 - Set up [polling questions](#) that you can ask throughout the session.
 - If you choose to use breakout rooms for small group discussions, be sure to provide questions or provocations and set a time limit.
 - Learn more about leading engaging sessions in [The Goodman Center's "Unmuted" webinar](#).

- Structuring your presentation:
 - Create an opening slide with a photo of each presenter (or do this on separate slides) and begin your presentation with brief presenter introductions.
 - Provide your audience with an outcomes-based agenda and share what to expect during your presentation. Then, recap your points at the end for emphasis.
 - Pace your presentation so you aren't rushing through the last slides.
 - **Live sessions should not exceed 50 minutes.** The room will continue to be available if you would like to talk further with any attendees with additional questions or comments, but please be sure to conclude the presentation so that attendees have a break before their next session.

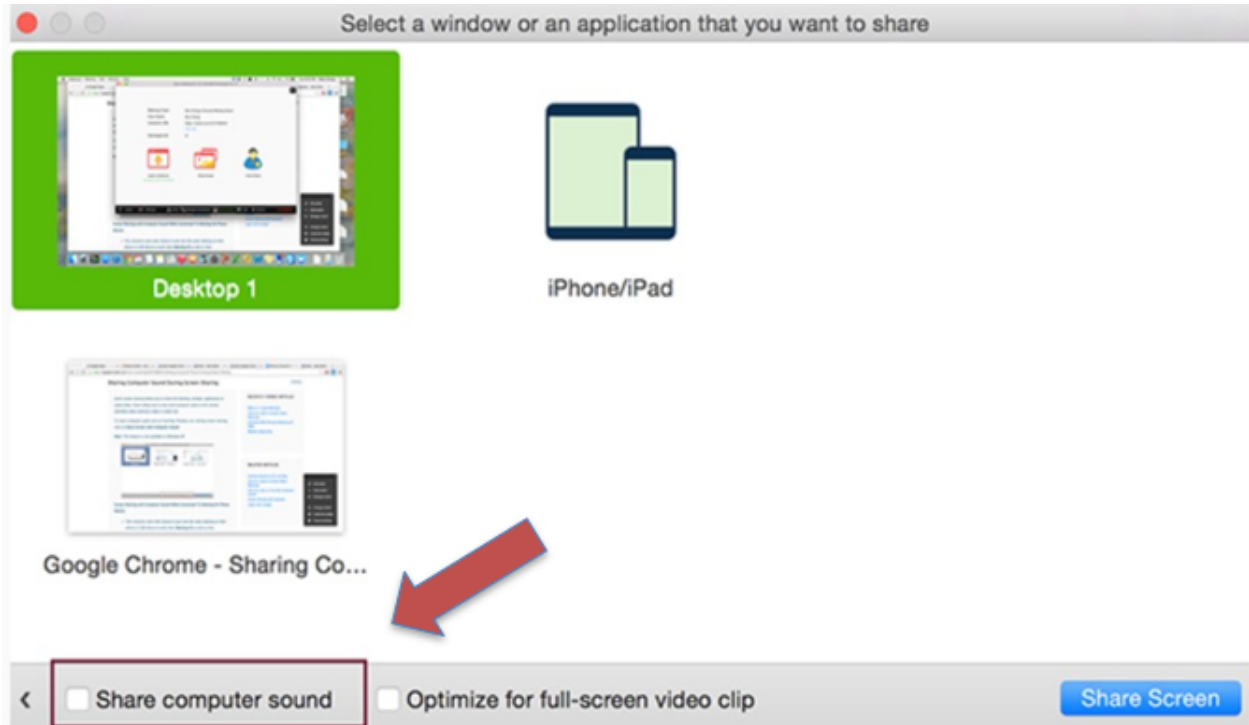
- Supplementary materials: As with in-person presentations, you may want to create and share handouts, slides, or other resources with your audience. Your session page will include the opportunity to provide downloads and links.
 - Supplementary materials may include handouts, slides, photos, links to resources, etc.
 - All supplementary materials should be original content, created by the presenter, or else the presenter should receive permission from the original author of the content before sharing and provide credit to the owner if it's not already clear. Details are covered more extensively in the speaker agreement.
 - Supplementary materials will be collected at a later date, with instructions from Natural Start staff about how to submit them.

Practicing your Session

All live sessions at the conference will take place on the Zoom platform, in the meeting format. You do not need to have a personal Zoom account in order to present, though we recommend that you register for a free account to become familiar with the platform and practice your session.

Natural Start will schedule and create a link to your live session. You can access your session from the link on your session page, once you have logged in to the conference platform. You will be asked to log in to your session 30 minutes before it begins for a tech check.

- Download a free Zoom account: If you do not already have access to a Zoom account, we encourage you to create a free account to practice and become familiar with the Zoom platform and its features.
 - Create a free account at <https://zoom.us/freesignup/>
 - In particular, we encourage you to use your account to test your internet connection, test audio, and to practice sharing your screen, especially if you have embedded videos in your presentation.
- Timing
 - Live sessions have 60 minutes allotted, but please do not exceed 50 minutes to allow a break between sessions.
 - Time your session so you know how long it takes and so your slides are well-paced. You don't want to be rushing to finish in time!
- Screen sharing
 - Learn how to share your screen by visiting <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362153-Sharing-your-screen>
 - Sharing videos: If you plan to play any videos during your presentation, you need to click the box next to "Share computer sound" when you share your screen. You do not need to click "Optimize for full-screen video clip," as we've found this can cause issues during the remainder of your presentation.
 - Have any resources or videos pulled up and ready to go in advance of your session.



- Run through your presentation *at least* once before presenting your session.
 - If there are multiple presenters, practice with your co-presenters to ensure accurate timing and smooth transitions between speakers and slides.

Presenting your Live Session

- Choosing a location
 - Confirm that you are joining from a location with a solid internet connection.
 - Choose a location with a clean background and minimal distraction. Avoid use of a virtual background. Bring your laptop or camera to eye level or slightly higher and position yourself in the center of the screen. Your light source should be in front of you, not behind you.
 - Make sure your device is fully charged or plugged in throughout your presentation.
- Tips on audio
 - Speak clearly and use language and terms your audience will understand.
 - A headset or earbuds with a microphone will provide the best sound quality.
 - Accessibility tips:
 - Speak clearly and enunciate using plain language
 - Explain acronyms the first time you use them
 - Describe graphics and other visuals in a clear manner
 - Avoid speaking too quickly as this makes it difficult for transcription
- Minimize background noise
 - Let others in your household or workplace know that you are presenting a live session.
 - If you are using a headset or earbuds, be aware of your microphone rubbing up against clothing.
- Muting audio: If you are not speaking, mute your microphone to eliminate background noise. Don't forget to unmute yourself just before it's your turn to talk. This happens more than you'd think!

Sessions with Multiple Presenters

- Sharing your screen: If you have multiple presenters, you may find it easiest to have one presenter share their screen and take control of advancing the slides.
 - All presenters should have a copy of the slide deck in case of emergencies.

Tech support: All live sessions will have “in-room” support from Natural Start/NAAEE Staff or trained volunteers. Room monitors will help with participant management (e.g. audio issues), monitoring the chat, and presenter support.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact emily@naaee.org

We want to thank the individuals and organizations that provided valuable suggestions and resources to help us put together this toolkit, including [Distribute 2020](#), [Project Learning Tree](#), [OpenWater](#), [The American Association of Geographers](#), and everyone at [NAAEE](#).