

# Using Zoom for Community Assemblies

In recent years [Zoom](#) has become the most common software in usage for meetings and assemblies. Here is some guidance for holding Community Assemblies via Zoom:

## Settings Management

To create a Zoom link and publicise it everywhere, check Extinction Rebellion guidance for [Zoom set up and promotion](#).

In your Zoom account '**Settings**' on the left, under '**My Meetings**', click on the meeting you are facilitating. Make sure the following settings apply:

- **Waiting Room**, if set up so that participants are not automatically admitted.
  - Once you have opened the session, pop up messages at the top of your screen will tell you that participants are in the Waiting Room. Just click on 'Admit'.
  - Once you have started the session, you can allow late arrivals to jump straight in, rather than going to the Waiting Room. To allow immediate entry for late-comers, click on 'Participants', then select the 3 dots, bottom right, then select 'Enable Waiting Room'. This will (counter-intuitively) disable the waiting room, allowing people to join without you having to Admit them. NOTE: this option will only work if you have created a Zoom registration link and selected both Passcode and Waiting Room when you created the Zoom meeting.
- **Meeting Entry without waiting**. Start meetings with participant video off, as they may be eating, or not be ready to join fully for whatever reason; this respects participant privacy. Participants can change this during the meeting.
- **Mute participants upon entry**. Automatically mute all participants when they join the meeting. The host may control whether participants can unmute themselves.
- **Chat**. Allow meeting participants to send a message visible to all participants
- **Auto saving chats**. If you wish to capture the chat, maybe as a way to get people to leave their emails for follow up, etc, you can automatically save all in-meeting chats, so that hosts do not need to manually save the text of the chat after the meeting starts.
- **Co-host**. Allow the host to add co-hosts. Co-hosts have the same in-meeting controls as the host. A technical facilitator managing breakout rooms will need to make the other facilitator(s) co-host.
- **Non-verbal feedback**.

- Participants in a meeting can provide nonverbal feedback and express opinions by clicking on icons in the Zoom 'Participants Panel' or typing 'Stack' in the Chat. The Tech Facilitator can explain that process.
- Facilitators should also explain the rationale for and use of hand signals.
- **Breakout room.**
  - Allow host to split meeting participants into separate, smaller rooms
  - The Tech Facilitator can manage timings here
  - Click on the 'Breakout Rooms' icon on the bottom bar of your Zoom
  - Choose how many people can go into each room [3 or 4 is a good number; maximum 8 people] For randomised room entrants, select 'automatically' to let Zoom select participants at random to go into different rooms.
  - Select a time; e.g. 5 mins.
- **Share screen.**
  - In the host controls, click the arrow next to '**Share Screen**' and click '**Advanced Sharing Options**'. Under '**Who can share**'; choose '**Only Host.**' If needed, this can be changed back to allowing others to screen share. Select your booked **Meeting.**
- Access details are the same as booking the meeting. REMEMBER to check if you're already logged into another Zoom account. If so, you need to log out of that one to log into the Zoom account where the Community Assembly is booked. Go to the avatar top right, sign out and then sign into the correct account.
- **Closed captions options.**
  - Anyone that's D/deaf or partially deaf will need these running from the start of the meeting. At the bottom of your screen, select closed 'CC/Live Transcript'. You or others can always 'Hide Subtitles' if you don't want to see them,
  - OR ask once everyone's arrived, if anyone wants them running. If no one says yes, they can be turned off. You need to be a Host to turn CC/Live Transcript on/off.
- Computers or Laptops are best for online Zoom meetings, but participation can happen on smartphones too.
- **Tech Facilitators** need to be on Computers or Laptops, as you can't always create Breakout Rooms on phones. You should be aware of the different options participants are viewing from, as the layout may differ depending on what device they are using.

Ask people in advance via promotions who have used Zoom before to sign in 5 minutes before the start time, and those who have not used Zoom before to sign in 10 minutes early; this allows time to work out how to use the buttons on their screen.

Penn State has an [excellent guide on using Zoom for circulation to facilitators and / or participants in advance](#), in order to familiarise teams with options available.

## Zoom Facilitator Roles

For an online Community Assembly, facilitators can take on different roles, e.g.:

- **Group Facilitators** who ensure inclusion of participants

- Assembly **Note-takers**
  - **Technical Facilitator(s)** to manage the breakout rooms, muting people, monitoring chat questions. While it isn't essential, this role helps the group facilitator focus on discussion and deliberation. They may also manage tools, such as Slido, or other digital support platforms.
-