

Tips and Best Practices for Presenters

The Basics

- Use people first language (e.g., person with a disability instead of disabled person).
- The Arc is not an acronym. It does not stand for anything. Never refer to us as just "Arc."
 - You can think of The Arc as a title or phrase.
- Download [Zoom Desktop Client](#) for the best experience.
 - Join using your computer and not from a mobile device.
- Use wired connections (ethernet) over wireless (WiFi or cellular) connections, if possible.
 - Disable HD video and close unnecessary applications (e.g., Excel, Word, Outlook, other browser tabs) to bolster your internet connection.
- Connect to audio using your computer or by dialing in from your phone.
 - Wear a headset for the best audio quality.
- Mute yourself when you are not speaking.
- Create an environment that is interesting behind you, but not distracting. Consider a virtual background if the environment is too distracting.
- Ensure your primary light source is coming from behind your webcam. If the light is coming from behind you, you will be covered by shadows.
- Stay in gallery view – this will allow you to see all of the presenters and the ASL interpreter(s) at the same time.
- Use the chat box to let the event organizers or all presenters know if you are having technical difficulties – do not send to all attendees.

- In Zoom Webinar, the participants are in listen- and view-only mode, and they cannot unmute themselves. You will not see their videos.
- In Zoom Meeting, it's much more interactive. Participants can mute and unmute their audio, and they can also choose to share their video.

Presentations

- Use the branded slide deck template provided to speakers.
- Share your completed slide deck with the event organizers as soon as possible.

Before the Event:

- Provide an overall structure to your presentation.
- In Microsoft PowerPoint, use the accessibility checker in the Review menu.
- Use accessible fonts. In general, for PowerPoints, the minimum recommended font size is 28.
- Add alt text for any images or other visuals in your presentation.
 - You should also provide an audio description during the presentation.
- Check out these resources for making your presentation more accessible:
 - Microsoft Office [Support](#)
 - Section 508 [Guidance](#)
- Use titles and/or slide numbers to help orient participants where you are in your presentation.
- Regardless of your content, think about the communities most likely to be impacted and how identities may overlap, leading to further oppression and marginalization ([intersectionality](#)).
- Consider lived experience and the perspectives of those with that lived experience. Ensure you have that lived experience well-represented on the presenter panel.

During the Event:

- Share your pronouns when you introduce yourself and change your Zoom name to include your pronouns.
- Encourage others to share pronouns, especially in a group discussion and when people are introducing themselves.
- Give the participants clear instructions and expectations about how you want them to interact with you.
- Always use gender neutral language and never make assumptions about someone's gender identity.
- Make eye contact. Look at your webcam instead of your screen. This will give the effect of eye contact and visual engagement.
- Use the gestures and mannerisms you would typically use in person.

Captioning

- Zoom uses closed captioning, meaning participants can turn them on or off.
 - The captions are also integrated, meaning that they appear in the same platform that the participant is using to interact with the main event.
- Present at a slow and steady pace. There can be a lag between what the presenter is saying and when the captions appear to the participants.
- Spell out tricky words and proper names or make sure that the captioner has that information ahead of time.
- You should also identify yourself before speaking, especially in a group setting.
- Keep the closed captions on, so you can adjust your pacing or spell out tricky words as needed in real-time.

American Sign Language (ASL)

- For virtual events, we use Video Remote Interpreting (VRI).
- ASL interpreters typically work in pairs.
 - During your presentation, you can expect that the interpreters will change every 15 to 20 minutes.
- Speak as naturally as possible. Interpreters need the nuance and the emotion of your words to interpret more accurately.
- Slow down or repeat yourself if necessary.
 - The ASL interpreter will usually let you know if you need to stop, pause, or repeat something.
- If your presentation includes technical jargon or other difficult words, you should provide a brief explanation to make sure that the interpreter is able to use the right sign.

If you have any questions about the event, getting prepared, or about access, equity, or inclusion, reach out to events@thearc.org.