Guidance for chairs on how to hold a virtual session at the RDA VP22

The focus of this document is to provide detailed guidance for group chairs on how to hold a session at the 22nd Virtual Plenary.

Materials available for your session preparation

Please familiarise yourself with the following materials on how to hold your session:

- Handbook for Session Chairs (logistics of your session such as what online tools to use, when and how to join your session, what support you will have)
- Collaborative notes accessible at the top of your VP22 session submission webpage and accessed via the VP22 programme. These are shared documents for making notes during the session.
- Important planning communication for session chairs sent from the VP22 organisers.
- VP22 details and updates can be viewed here.

Equipment

The RDA's 22nd Virtual Plenary sessions will be accessible via the dedicated event platform, 'Whova' [hu:va]. All sessions will be streamed on via Zoom.

Everyone who will present during your session will require the following equipment and tools:

- A desktop PC or laptop with a microphone and video camera.
- A fast and reliable Wi-Fi or wired broadband connection.
- A headset or earphones.
- Zoom App. To download the app, visit Zoom.com.
- Whova App. To access Whova you must be registered to the VP22. More details here.
- A presentation slide template is available for you to use and download.

Setting up your space

As most people will be presenting from their own home / office, to create a professional set-up, please follow the instructions below:

- Ensure your background is blurred or place yourself in front of a blank wall. You can also make use of one of the backgrounds available to install. View steps on how to install it.

- Ensure your face is well lit and avoid having a window behind you as this will create a dark silhouette for your audience.
- Ensure your microphone is not covered as this will impact the quality of your sound.
- Ensure you are in a quiet room and any other members of your household/office are aware that you are speaking at a session.
- How you position yourself in relation to the camera will affect how you appear to the audience. Ideally, you should be seated at your usual work space and positioned at a distance so that the audience can see your head and shoulders.

Prior to your session:

The RDA Secretariat recruited and assigned a session supporter to each VP22 session whose role will be to assist you with logistical and technical steps of your session.

All session speakers / chairs are required to join their session via Whova* **25 minutes prior to their session start time**. A session supporter will open the Zoom room **30 minutes** earlier and will be waiting for you online to conduct technical tests.

*Joining a session:

All VP22 programme sessions are accessible via Whova. Please refer to [this demo on how to join a session.](#)

Tips for chairs holding a virtual session:

- Ensure you join the virtual meeting room 25 minutes prior to your session to test online technology. The session supporter will help you.
- Provide more interactive sessions and try not to rely heavily on presentations.
  - Use [interactive tools](#) (quizzes, questions, polls, reactions) at regular intervals to engage the audience. Ensure sufficient time for both presentation and discussion.
  - Session presenters marked as [speakers in Whova](#) can create polls and distribute to the audience during the session.This is one of the simplest ways for audience engagement.
- For meetings with multiple speakers, ensure each has equal speaking times and rotate often to maintain the attention of attendees.
- If sharing your screen ensure you have closed everything else on your computer other than what you plan to share. Remember to turn off any pop up notifications.
- When presenting, try to speak to the camera as much as possible – if you are looking at your screen your audience will see you looking down rather than at them.

Please note that session supporters are not responsible for handling Q&A. They are to help you with technical aspects only.

At the start of your session:

Begin your session with a housekeeping announcement including the following points:

- The session is being recorded. Let attendees know they can turn off their camera if they do not wish to appear in the recording.
- Include a welcome message in the Zoom chat to notify attendees that the session will be starting soon and share links to relevant presentation materials/collaborative notes.
- Run through the session agenda. Invite contributions by attendees (late joining attendees will not see links if the links were added prior to them joining).
- Let your audience know how your Q&A will be run (e.g., by posting written questions, using the Q&A function in Zoom (Whova chat is disabled) or in shared collaborative notes).
- Enable video, at least at the start of each presentation, so attendees can identify a face with the speaker and feel more at ease.

Closing your session

- To end your session, the chair should thank everyone for attending and then click the 'End Meeting' button on the Zoom meeting control bar. This will end the recording and will 'force' attendees out. Once pressed, it is not possible to restart your session.
- Send thank you email to attendees with links to materials captured in session, and remind them that the session recording will be made available in Whova in 24-36 hours.

Post-session actions

- Post-plenary report
  The Technical Advisory Board (TAB) will produce a written report summarising key messages from the VP22 groups sessions, pathways, and future activities in a downloadable format for the community. This will replace the post-plenary webinar that was held following the past three plenaries. More details can be found in your collaborative notes.
  *Complete a short overview of your session directly in your collaborative note no later than **7th June, close of business.***

Further information

If you would like to discuss any of the points above or require further support and guidance with planning your session, please contact vp22enquiries@rd-alliance.org.