# Virtual Presenters' Accessibility Guide

Tips for making your online events more accessible

McGill

# Planning your event

When planning an inclusive event, be proactive about accessibility and ask participants what they need.

**Things to think of before:**

- Include question(s) about participants' accessibility needs on the registration form

- Have an accessibility statement that includes an organizer's contact information
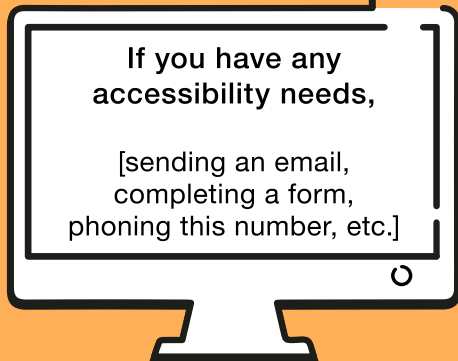
**If you have any accessibility needs,**

[sending an email, completing a form, phoning this number, etc.]

# Choosing your platform

**Questions to ask when choosing your virtual event platform:**

- Can you record your event?
- Can multiple screens be viewed at once? (e.g. for sign language interpreters)
- Can you navigate the platform without a mouse (e.g. with a keyboard)?
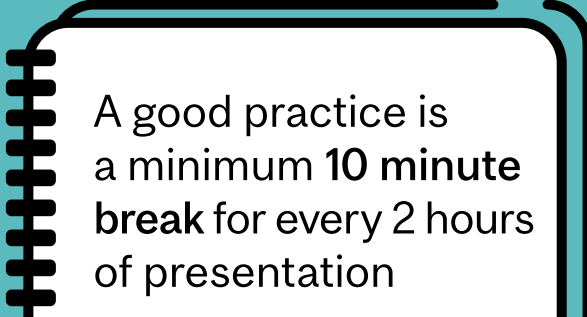- Are there any known issues for screen readers with this software?
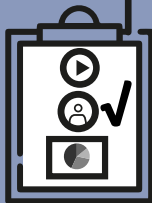
# Building in breaks

**Participants can:**

- Optimize their attention span
- Attend to their health needs
  (e.g. go to the bathroom, drink water)
- Take care of other emerging needs
  (e.g. childcare, urgent emails)

A good practice is a minimum **10 minute break** for every 2 hours of presentation

# Providing break options

**By building in breaks, participants can:**

- Play music
- Journal
- Meditate
- Chat with others
- Move their bodies

Providing the time (e.g. At 1:07 pm) that you want participants to regroup and tune back in can be helpful for self-regulating

# Introduce the presenters

All presenters should introduce themselves with a brief visual description before starting to present:

*My name is Rachel and I use she/her pronouns.*

*I am a white woman wearing colourful glasses, a teal top, with my blonde hair tied up in a messy bun.*

# Captioning

**Not all captioning is created equal!**

Consider the nature of the event and your audience when choosing what type of captioning to provide. Include captioning fees in your event budget:

- Live captioning (e.g. CART services)
- Automated captioning

# Describing Visuals

Make sure you are verbally describing the content during your presentation. This provides a live audio "alt text" for participants.

**Examples of visuals to describe:**

- Cartoons
- Memes
- Graphs
- Charts

ALT

# Working with interpreters

Working with sign language interpreters is essential to ensuring the full participation of Deaf folks in your events. Sign languages, as do spoken languages, vary greatly. Before hiring a sign language interpreter, you will want to know:

a)  the language spoken by the presenter(s) at the event

b)  the sign language understood by participants.

**A few tips:**

- Book early

- Have a budget

- Work out technicalities (research how to switch between  interpreter screens during the session, so that the active interpreter is viewable to participants)

# Checking Accessibility

**Before sharing recordings or other event materials:**

- Use Microsoft's built-in Accessibility Checker
- Correct any typos in your video captions
- Identify a contact person where participants can request an alternate format, as needed

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