# Tips for Using Zoom

1. **Arrive 20 minutes early**. You need to be there before everyone to ensure people can enter the space (you hold the "key" as "host" if you set up the call). Welcome participants as they arrive and help them settle into the Zoom platform.

2. **Take the first 5 minutes to explain the basic features**. It is critical to ensure that everyone knows the basics so you can meet with few questions and disturbances after starting. Don't assume everyone knows anything about Zoom, unless you use it regularly with the same group.
   a. How to mute
   b. How to turn on the camera
   c. How to comment

3. **Explain general online etiquette**. It feels different from in-person dialogue and working, and we need to get used to the feeling and space. A few helpful suggestions are:
   a. Wait until someone is finished talking before adding your thoughts
   b. Agree on how everyone will participate in the dialogue, especially if the group is large i.e. raise your physical or virtual hand, unmute yourself and wait for the Chair to invite you in, etc.

4. **Ask everyone to turn their webcam on and explain why**. This is more important than ever before. We need to help people feel connected, seen, and heard. Having our webcams on will help everyone engage more easily and stay on task. This will also help facilitators "read" the room and know how to manage the space and time well.

5. **Ask everyone to mute if they are not talking**. Noise is amplified in the Zoom space and a barking dog, passing ambulance, or playing children can be loud and disruptive.

6. **Invite people to ask questions in the chat box**. This is can be a helpful tool for a secondary dialogue or quick problem solving. However, it is critical that someone other than the Chair/facilitator manage this space. These two people should be seen as a team and alert each other to important sharing and concerns from the group.

7. **Ask everyone to turn their webcams off if (and only if) there is trouble with bandwidth**. With the use of Zoom and other online platforms increasing daily, there is growing pressure on our airwaves. People will start to notice unstable video conferencing. Turning the webcam off for those experiencing challenges will help their connection and ability to engage.

8. **Do a dry run with the group or individuals unfamiliar with Zoom**. This will help ensure an effective and efficient meeting when the time comes, plus reduce anxiety experienced by working in a new way or using new technology.