

A few Tips to attend the National Virtual Annual Meeting

You can join our online meeting from anywhere - all you need is your device and an Internet connection.

No computer, no problem – you can call in. We may not be able to see each other; nevertheless we can still hear each other. There will be telephone numbers with Canadian Area Codes on the email invitation to the Zoom Meeting. Long Distance fees will be charged for calls outside your area code based on the rates of your telephone service provider.

If you are going to be late or need to leave early - notify the host ahead of time. Otherwise, arrive to a meeting a few minutes ahead of schedule. Technology can and will fail. Never assume it is going to work as it did yesterday or earlier in the day. If you need to leave the meeting before the end of the meeting, leave a message in the CHAT "*I have to leave, take care*" and then just leave meeting.

Keep your family in the loop - life means that most of us are never truly alone. Our spouses, our kids, and our pets are only a room away at all times and all demand a certain amount of your attention. Make sure your family knows that you are busy.

Build in snack and meal breaks - plan out your snacks. Even figure out your coffee breaks! While an in-person event would have built-in breaks with coffee set up in the hallways and snacks appearing as if by magic, this virtual NAM is your responsibility. If you can, please hold off on eating full meals during your meeting. Imagine how unappealing it would be to watch someone up close slurping a plate of spaghetti on a big screen. If you can, chow down when your meeting is over or before we start.

Stand and stretch - do not feel confined to your chair. Build in breaks in between sessions to take a short walk or stand and stretch, do not be afraid to stand.

Mute your microphone when joining a meeting and please stay muted when you are not speaking.

Camera Positioning and Lighting - Light from in front, not behind. Face your brightest source of light (usually a window). Open up your shades and let the natural light pour in, but don't let all that light hit your back.

Look into the camera when talking – position yourself so the camera is seeing you from the chest or waist up, instead of just seeing your face. This is more natural for the viewer (after all, in an in-person meeting you are usually seeing more of a person than just their face).

If you are looking at yourself on the screen while you're talking, it will seem as if your attention is elsewhere. Direct eye contact into the camera while speaking, gives attendees the impression that you are looking at them rather than off to the side, which creates an environment where everyone feels engaged and present in the conversation. Be sure to position your web camera and monitor at eye level so you can look into the camera and simulate that eye-to-eye connection with other attendees.

Due to the nature of video conferencing versus real life meetings, Zoom calls really work best when people talk one at a time - it is the only way that everyone can listen clearly to what is being said. You can use Zoom's "RAISE HAND" function to add to the conversation or write your idea in CHAT, so your thought is not lost.

Show some support for your colleagues through nonverbal cues that you are paying attention to them. Nod or shake your head, smile, give a thumbs up, etc. Even if they cannot hear you, they will be able to read your body language and appreciate your responsiveness.

Attend with others - meetings are better when you attend them with friends. Make plans to catch up by phoning other IODE members to discuss keynote sessions after the meeting or message them throughout about points you found interesting. This interaction can keep you engaged with the content.

Exit the meeting at the appropriate time; the host will leave last.