

# RED Sessions via Zoom

La Trobe's Research Education and Development (RED) team workshops and other sessions are offered via Zoom. Zoom is an effective and easy-to-use videoconferencing tool.

Given that many of us are working from home and there are no face-to-face events, this mode of communication, development, and community is crucial to maintaining your research momentum and collegial social connections.

This short guide outlines the most effective way to use Zoom to participate in RED sessions.

## BEFORE THE SESSION

### BASIC ZOOM REQUIREMENTS

- You do not need a Zoom account to attend a session using Zoom.
- You will be sent a link to the Zoom session. Clicking on the link will prompt Zoom to start. *If you don't already have it installed on your computer, it will download and install on your device the first time. This process is quick and only takes a minute or two.*
- For workshops, it is recommended that you use a **desktop computer** or **laptop** to participate in our Zoom sessions. We use the chat screen (text-based instant messaging) a lot and being able to use a keyboard is essential. You will also need:
  - o An internet connection - broadband wired or wireless (3G or 4G/LTE)
  - o Speakers and a microphone - these are built-in to your computer, or you can use a USB plug-in or wireless Bluetooth
  - o A webcam or HD webcam - these are built-in to your computer, or you can use a USB plug-in

→ See [getting started with Zoom](#) for more information.

### PREPARING FOR THE SESSION

- Ensure you can participate in the session with a **working webcam, speakers, and microphone**.
- **Think about where you are going to be for the session.** It needs to be a quiet area that will have minimal distractions across the time you're in the session. For example, do NOT join a workshop while you're driving, washing your dog, on a tram, or walking around. A quiet, safe space allows you to focus on the workshop AND means your colleagues are not disrupted by audio/visuals from your end.
- If **pre-session tasks** were given, ensure you have completed these before the session starts. Many discussions and activities will assume you have done this work.
- **Have whatever you need within easy reach** (e.g. notebooks, drinks, other devices).

## DURING THE SESSION

As with any meeting or face-to-face session, there are protocols that help with making everyone feel included, comfortable, and at their best for engaging in the space. These are our expectations and general behaviour guidelines:

- You should **log into the Zoom session 5 minutes early**.
- **Make sure your microphone is muted when you first enter a session.** This helps everyone settle in without major noise disruption or distraction. Remember that mics will pick up things like your typing, humming, conversations of others in your office/home, and even your breathing! The mute button is on the bottom left hand side of the screen when you open your zoom meeting.
- **When invited, participate in discussion and use your webcam and mic if at all possible.** As mentioned earlier, online is the key way we'll be working and connecting with each other and it really helps to see and hear your colleagues. Teaching and learning via video is not passive, like listening to a podcast. We will still be sharing thoughts much like we would if we were in a

classroom.

*If internet speed is an issue, you can use video intermittently – e.g. to say hello – and otherwise just use the mic or chat screen.*

- **Use the chatscreen to ask questions or engage with your colleagues.** How the facilitator will be using the chatscreen will usually be made clear at the beginning of the session. Note that the facilitator may not always be able to monitor the chat and run the session at the same time, particularly with larger groups. If you notice a question has arisen that the facilitator hasn't seen, you might help by bringing it into the discussion.
- The facilitator may use **breakout rooms** during the session. When this happens, you will be shifted into a 'smaller' group within the Zoom session, and there will be a time and activity set for the breakout. For example, 'Take 5 mins now to discuss which journals you'd like to publish in and how you chose them.' After the time is up, you will return to the general group.
- **Be respectful**, as with any other meeting or class. Take turns, don't talk over the top of your colleagues, and be patient about people's differing levels of tech knowledge and familiarity.

More specific advice about many aspects of Zoom can be found at the [Zoom help centre](#).

## TIPS TO LOOK LIKE A PRO

You'll be doing a lot of communication using Zoom or other videoconferencing platforms through this time. There are a few things that can help with creating a consistent, relatable presence. Some of our suggestions:

- **Make sure your preferred name is in your profile.** It can default to only showing your email address. Having your name there makes it easy for the facilitator and your colleagues to know what you'd like to be called >> [Customising your profile](#)
- **Check that people can see you clearly on the screen.** General tips: Sit back a bit, be central, and have enough light on you. Zoom allows you to preview what your video is showing so make use of that feature! >> [Test my video](#)
- **Think about what others are seeing behind you.** You don't have to have a perfectly neat home or office in the background, but just be aware of what others are seeing when you are using Zoom. If you have things behind you that you'd rather people didn't see (e.g. laundry, dirty dishes, Twilight poster), or are concerned about privacy, you can use a [Virtual Background](#). >> Here are a few [beautiful, evocative backgrounds](#) that you can use (curated by RED; sourced from unsplash.com). And here are [over 200 virtual backgrounds for Zoom](#). You're only limited by your imagination and general good taste.
- Final magic tip: You can have Zoom 'smooth' your appearance on video for a more polished image! >> [Touch up my appearance](#)

## REMEMBER

We're all learning together through this time. We'll make mistakes and have less than stellar moments. That's OK. Let's make sure our wonderful community continues to be as generous, supportive, and welcoming as always!

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### Other resources:

- For essential updates from the GRS and RED, refer to the [Graduate Research School COVID-19 FAQs](#).
- If you'd like a longer, chattier guide to using Zoom, try Jennifer Polk's [Zoom Basics](#).
- For great step-by-step instructions on all technical aspects of the platform, visit the [Zoom Help Centre](#).

Further questions about RED's use of Zoom can be directed to [red.grs@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:red.grs@latrobe.edu.au).