Member network online events – Frequently Asked Questions

This guide contains answers to common questions from member network committees wishing to plan and host online events for their members and the wider chemical sciences community. This guide is not designed to provide technical support for meetings, please consult the Zoom, GoToWebinar and GoToMeeting support pages in the first instance for technical issues.

Contents

Planning an online event

Do you have any advice for setting up an online seminar series?

The Main Group Chemistry Group launched a highly successful online seminar series in 2020 showcasing different early career and established scientists. Dr Michael Cowley from the University of Edinburgh, the series coordinator, put together a guide for committees who want to launch a similar online seminar or webinar series to engage with audiences remotely: http://my.rsc.org/blogs/81/1967

Do you have resources for hosting online events?

We have acquired dedicated GoToWebinar, GoToMeeting, and Zoom accounts for member networks to use for online meetings and seminars. Booking forms and additional resources are available on the virtual events section on the Useful Forms and Documents page.

What platform should I use?

We have acquired dedicated licences for GoToWebinar, GoToMeeting, and Zoom for member networks to use.

GoToMeeting is an online meeting software that allows up to 150 people meet in a virtual meeting room. Up to 25 people can share webcams at once and there is a chat function that allows you to send messages to everyone, the organiser, or to individual attendees.

GoToMeeting has been used by many member networks for committee meetings; it can also be used for small lectures, discussion sessions, or social events.

GoToWebinar is a tool for online seminars for up to 500 attendees (max. 5000 registrants). It is not possible for attendees to exchange chat messages with other attendees, but they can send questions to panellists. Audience members cannot share their webcams or screens and can only speak with permission from the organiser.

GoToWebinar has been used for online seminars, virtual conferences, and online poster sessions.

Zoom is an online meeting software for up to 300 attendees. All attendees can use their webcam and/or microphone and can exchange public or private chat messages with other attendees. The Zoom meeting licence includes the possibility of creating up to 50 breakout rooms for small group discussion or networking during your event.

Zoom has been used for committee meetings, online seminars, conferences, poster sessions, and social or networking events.

Please note that the RSC has **negotiated specific contracts with these providers to comply with current data protection law and protect our members**. Other platforms may be more appropriate for your event, but member networks **must not** purchase their own licences without prior consultation with the Networks and Legal Teams.

The following table contains additional information about the differences between the three platforms.

	GoToWebinar	GoToMeeting	Zoom
Join link	Registered attendees receive unique join links.	Anyone with the meeting link can join.	1. If you have set up a Zoom registration page, attendees join using their unique link 2. If you have not set up a Zoom registration page, anyone with the link can join
Registration	Attendees must register using the GoToWebinar registration page.	Attendees do not register, the organiser sends them a link to join meeting. If you wish to have a registration page, we recommend requesting one through our Events Team and sharing the joining details with registrants before the meeting.	You can either: 1. Set up a Zoom registration page and attendees are emailed the joining instructions 2. Not have a registration page so attendees do not register, but the organiser sends them a link to join the meeting
Registration fees	If you wish to charge a registration fee, we recommend setting up a registration page through our Events Team and manually inputting registrants into GoToWebinar so that each attendee receives joining details.	If you wish to charge a registration fee, we recommend setting up a registration page through our Events Team and sharing the joining details with registrants before the meeting.	If you wish to charge a registration fee, we recommend setting up a registration page through our Events Team and sharing the joining details with registrants before the meeting.
Reminder emails	GoToWebinar sends automatic reminder emails 24 hours and one hour before your event. You can request a third reminder be sent for your event.	GoToMeeting does not send automatic reminder emails. You can manually send a reminder to your attendees before your event.	Zoom does not send automatic reminder emails. You can manually send a reminder to your attendees before your event.
Security	Attendees must register beforehand and join using their unique join link.	Meetings can be password protected.	Meetings can be password protected and a waiting room can be added. A waiting room has the benefit of giving the host control over who can join the meeting, however attendees who drop out will need to be let in again.

	GoToWebinar	GoToMeeting	Zoom
Webcams	Organiser and panellists/speakers can share webcams. Attendees do not have webcams enabled – but the organiser can promote an attendee to the role of organiser so they can show their webcam	Organiser and all attendees can share their webcam. Organiser cannot turn off attendees webcam (but can ask attendee to turn them off).	Organiser and all attendees can share their webcam. Organiser cannot turn off attendees webcam (but can ask attendee to turn them off).
Sharing screen	Only organiser and panellist/speakers	Anyone	Anyone
Numbers	Up to 500 attendees	Up to 150 attendees	Up to 300 attendees
Breakout rooms	No	No	Yes – the host can enable breakout rooms
Microphone	All attendees are automatically muted. The organisers and presenters can talk. The organiser can unmute and mute attendees.	All attendees can turn on their microphones. The organiser has the ability to mute everyone.	All attendees can turn on their microphones. The organiser has the ability to mute everyone.
Booking link	https://smartsurvey.co.uk/s/WebinarBookingPart1/	https://smartsurvey.co.uk/s/MeetingBooking/	https://smartsurvey.co.uk/s/XN3CZP/

Training resources are available for each platform from the Networks Team or on the virtual events section of the Useful Forms and Documents page.

What platform would work for an online poster session?
You can use any of the three online platform accounts for online poster sessions.

In GoToMeeting you can share the posters during a presentation and the presenter can discuss it and answer questions. Using GoToWebinar, you can add the poster presenters as Presenters or Panellists so that they can share their screen or participate in the discussion and answer questions using the chat function. In Zoom the poster presenters can share their posters and answer questions. For larger poster sessions, Zoom also has the option of using the breakout rooms for small group discussions with the poster presenters.

In 2020 some networks uploaded short videos or descriptions of the posters to YouTube before the meeting so that attendees could watch and plan which posters (or breakout rooms) to "visit".

Another option for an online poster competition is to use social media in a format similar to the highly successful #RSCPoster Twitter Conference. The 2021 event had almost 900 posters from 62 countries sharing their science to a potential audience of over 41 million. This format allows members to share their work online where anyone can partake in the discussion, which might have a wider reach than live presentations. If you think this might be a possibility for you please let us know, we can provide more information and connect you with the #RSCPoster team.

Is there any way to enable networking?

Zoom has a breakout room feature to enable small group discussions. The chat function allows you to selectively send messages to everyone, the organiser, or to individual attendees.

GoToMeeting works for small group discussions but for larger groups there is the risk of attendees talking over one another. The chat function allows you to selectively send messages to everyone, the organiser, or to individual attendees.

GoToWebinar has several ways to engage attendees (i.e. polls, surveys, handouts or videos) but audience members cannot share their webcams or screens and can only speak with permission from the organiser. It is not possible for attendees to exchange chat messages with other attendees, but they can send questions to panellists.

Can we pay for a licence for a different service?

Although individual licences for these types of platforms are not costly, the changes in data protection law mean that the RSC has **negotiated specific contracts with the Zoom, GoToWebinar and GoToMeeting providers to protect our members**.

Another platform may be more appropriate for your events and can be used where necessary but the RSC Legal Team **must** be consulted on the terms and conditions **prior** to purchase.

Getting started

How do I book a meeting?

Once you have decided which platform you wish to use for your meeting, complete the online GoToMeeting or Zoom booking form. A member of the Networks Team will then be in touch to confirm your meeting details and provide you with a step-by-step login guide.

Please **do not log in or start a meeting outside your designated time slot**. You might interrupt or end someone else's meeting.

How do I book a webinar?

Once you have decided which platform you wish to use for your meeting, complete the online GoToWebinar or Zoom booking form. A member of the networks team will then be in touch to confirm your meeting details and provide you with a step-by-step login guide.

Please **do not log in or start a practice session outside your designated time slot**. You might interrupt or end someone else's event.

Can I log in and book my own event?

No. Only the Networks Team can create or delete content on the member network accounts.

We track usage and oversee the calendar to (1) maintain fair usage between all member networks, and (2) ensure there is sufficient time between events to allow organisers and panellists to log in early to prepare for their event or extend the event slightly to answer all questions. Adding events without our knowledge will cause confusion and could potentially derail other events.

To schedule a practice session please complete the relevant online booking form on the virtual events area of the Useful Forms & Documents page. To request multiple practice sessions or events please speak to the Networks Team.

Can I log in to test the system?

No. If you would like to test the system we would recommend that you **book a separate practice session** using the relevant online booking form on the [virtual events area of the Useful Forms & Documents page](#).

Please **do not log in or start a practice session without a designated time slot**. You might interrupt or end someone else's event.

Is it possible to run a brief rehearsal?

Yes. In fact, we would **recommend having a practice session** for you and the speakers to see the system and get used to how it works. You will need to book a practice slot using the relevant online booking form on the [virtual events area of the Useful Forms & Documents page](#).

Please **do not log in or start a practice session outside your designated time slot**. You might affect someone else's event.

Will we need to set up a registration page?

No. Registration is not necessary for GoToMeeting or Zoom as anyone with the join details can join the meeting, however we can set up a registration page for you on Zoom if desired. GoToWebinar supports registration for the event so you do not need to set up a registration page for your webinars.

Can we charge a registration fee?

None of the three platforms facilitate taking payments. If you wish to charge for your event, you can set up registration via our Events Database and our Events Team will process payments.

To set up registration via our Events Team, submit your event to the events database at [rsc.org/events/submitevent](#) and complete the support request form here: [rsc.li/member-networks-event-support](#).

For GoToMeeting and Zoom you can share the joining details directly with registered attendees after they have paid.

For GoToWebinar, typically a member clicks on the registration link to register directly for the webinar, they then receive a personalised "join link" and automated reminders from GoToWebinar. As the GoToWebinar system is separate from the RSC Events system, you will need to either (1) send the GoToWebinar registration link to registrants after payment and ask them to register in the system, or (2) input registrants' details into the GoToWebinar system after close of registration so that the system can send them a unique join link. The latter might be more secure as registrants will not have the free registration link to share.

Please note: Given the breadth of free online events available, you might need to justify the registration fee in your event promotion to persuade audience members to pay.

How do I promote my event?

Once your event has been booked, a member of the Networks Team will share your dialling in details or registration link so that you can promote your event to your members. You can promote your event through any of the usual communication mechanisms:

- **Events database** – All events **must** be uploaded to the events database to ensure that your members can see events relevant to them online on our website.
- **E-alert** – Return a completed [e-alert request form](#) to [the Networks Team](#) to schedule a branded e-alert to your members; you can find upcoming e-alert dates and deadlines in the [Networks Newsletter](#) and tips for making your e-alerts more effective in our [guide for writing e-alerts](#).

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- **Update** – If you upload your event to the Events Database at least a month before your event it will be included in the next issue of Update, circulated monthly to members with Chemistry World.
- **Social media** – Many Interest Groups have found that Twitter is particularly effective for attracting wider audiences. We ran a series of social media training webinars focusing on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter that you might find helpful to get started.

We will also promote member network events internally to relevant staff members in events, communications, and publishing.

Instead of booking a full day event, can I split my event into sessions spread over a week? Will I need to fill in the booking form for each event?

Yes, instead of setting up your event as a one-day webinar, you can split it into recurring webinars over the day or over several days. No, you will not need to complete multiple booking forms.

On GoToMeeting and Zoom we can set up a recurring meeting with the same joining details. If you have a registration page for your Zoom event members will only need to register once for all meetings.

On GoToWebinar we can set up recurring events so that your audience can register once for all sessions (a webinar sequence), or so that your audience members can sign up for each session separately using a drop-down menu (a webinar series). The differences are outlined below:

Webinar sequence	Webinar series
One registration link	One registration link
Attendee registers once for all sessions	Attendee selects relevant sessions via a drop-down menu and registers for each session separately
Attendee receives reminder email before each session	Attendee receives reminder email before session(s) they've registered for
Attendee uses the same join link to log in to each session	Attendee uses a different join link for each session (provided in confirmation and reminder emails)
Useful for separate sessions of a virtual meeting or conference	Useful for repeated examples of the same workshop, or for a short series of linked seminars

Please note that in both cases the GoToWebinar **title and description for all sessions is identical** and will be shared in each confirmation and reminder email. It would therefore be helpful to include a rough outline of the content per session in the description for clarity.

When you are ready to book your event, please complete the relevant online booking form on the virtual events area of the Useful Forms & Documents page and indicate that you would like to book recurring sessions in the time/ date section of the form. The Networks Team will work with you to find availability for your sessions.

Can we add a poll or survey to engage our audience?

GoToWebinar and Zoom support interactive polls during your event, in GoToWebinar you can also set up a feedback survey for after your event.

For Zoom, you can request a poll when booking your Zoom meeting. You can find more about using polls during a Zoom meeting in this support article: https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/213756303-Polling-for-meetings

For GoToWebinar, you can request a poll or survey by completing the second part of the webinar booking form or by emailing your questions and answers to the Networks Team. Surveys are for after your event, you can choose for the survey to be launched at the end of the webinar or emailed to attendees/ absentees after the event. You can find more about using polls and surveys in GoToWebinar in our Using GoToWebinar webinar or in this support article: https://support.goto.com/webinar/help/engage-attendees-with-polls-and-surveys-g2w020005

After your event

How do we find out how many attended?
The Networks Team can prepare a report of the attendance and engagement for your event. This will include a breakdown of registrations per country and information about those who registered, attended, and watched the recording after the webinar.

If you would like to receive a report for your event, please let us know.

How can we get feedback from our audience?
You can set up a feedback survey for your audience members in GoToWebinar. This can be launched at the end of the webinar or emailed to attendees after the event. You can request a survey by completing the second part of the webinar booking form or you can email your questions and answers to the Networks Team.

For online events on other platforms, we can work with you to create a feedback survey using the member networks SmartSurvey enterprise account to share with registered attendees during or after the event.

How can we engage with people who missed the live event?
On GoToWebinar you can request an automatic email be sent to absentees with a link to the recording of the event (the default option is to only contact attendees to thank them for attending).

You can also set up a survey for absentees. Please note you can only set up **one survey** per webinar so if you also wish to survey attendees then you must

(a) create a survey suitable for all registered, or
(b) consider another feedback mechanism for attendees (e.g. conducting polls during the webinar, sending feedback to networksmeetings@rsc.org, posting on social media using an event hashtag, etc.).

For online events on other platforms, we can work with you to share a link to the recording where relevant or create a feedback survey using the member networks SmartSurvey enterprise account.

Recording your event

Can we record the event?
Yes, with the speaker's permission. If you choose to record an event in which attendees' names, images, comments, or questions are visible you must notify the attendees that the event is being recorded.

The default settings on GoToWebinar and Zoom are to begin recording when the event starts, please indicate when booking your event if you would **not** like your event to be recorded, or if you would only like your recording to be available for a limited time. Some committees choose to record their meetings on Zoom or GoToMeeting to facilitate minute taking, please note that due to storage limitations we will only keep these recordings for one month.

Who can see the recording?

After your live webinar the recording will be saved to the cloud and will be available to view by

(a) people who registered but missed the live event, and
(b) people who register after the event.

Please indicate when booking your webinar if you would **not** like your event to be recorded, if you would only like your recording to be available for a limited time, or if you would like us to send a follow up email with the video link to those who missed the live webinar (for GoToWebinar only).

Can we share the video?

Yes, if your presenters are happy for their work to be shared after the meeting then you can:

- share the recording link with your members or on social media (for GoToWebinar people will need to register to view the recording, however on Zoom anyone with the link can watch the recording),
- ask us to publish your recording to the RSC YouTube channel as an unlisted video (i.e. not searchable and only visible to those with the link), or
- publish the video to the RSC YouTube channel as a public video.

Please note if you choose to leave your video on GoToWebinar or Zoom then we can provide information about who is viewing it after the event. We can also remove the video after a set period (e.g. one week after your event).

Is it possible to make the individual presentations available as separate recordings?

On GoToWebinar and GoToMeeting, it is possible to stop and start recording but the final recording will be exported as a single file, the whole of which will be available after the event. To aid navigation, you can create a transcript of the recording, which would include timestamps for each presentation. If you want to separate the presentations into separate videos you will need to download and edit the recording after the event. The separate files can be made available elsewhere, for example, as an unlisted playlist on a YouTube channel.

Alternatively, on GoToWebinar you can set up your event as a webinar sequence as each of the separate sessions will have a separate recording.

On Zoom you can "pause" or "stop" recording between speakers to create continuous or separate videos.

If speakers do not want to be recorded, can we pause the recording for their presentations?

Yes, you can pause and restart the recording as many times as you need to. Please note, the final recording will be exported as an uninterrupted file so for the benefit of those who are watching the video after the event it might be helpful to explain you are pausing the recording and welcome viewers back after you restart.

Accessibility

Does Zoom, GoToMeeting, or GoToWebinar support a Sign Language translator?
Yes. In GoToMeeting and Zoom they can dial in and use their webcam to present. Audience members can "pin" their video and prioritise the translator over the slides to make it easier to see them.

In GoToWebinar, you will need to add the translator as a panellist so that their webcam can be enabled. Audience members can enlarge their video and prioritise the translator over the slides to make it easier to see them. Please note that when a poll is shared in GoToWebinar no webcams are visible so the translator will disappear briefly until the poll is closed. It is worth letting viewers know before you launch the poll so that any viewers depending on the translator can be prepared.

Does Zoom, GoToMeeting, or GoToWebinar support subtitles?
Zoom supports live transcription and the host can turn it on during the event. This feature is supported in later versions of the desktop or phone app – you might need to install updates to access it – or through your browser. Further information on using closed captions in this support article: https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/207279736.

Neither GoToWebinar nor GoToMeeting support live subtitles, however you can add an automatically generated transcript to the recording of your meeting or webinar.

Does Zoom, GoToMeeting, or GoToWebinar work for members in China?
GoToMeeting and GoToWebinar are available to members in China, however Zoom will not work for members in China.

Can I host an event on Linux?
Instructions for installing Zoom on a Linux machine can be found here: https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/204206269-Installing-or-updating-Zoom-on-Linux

To host an event on GoToWebinar you will need to download the desktop app but it is not compatible with Linux or Chromebook Operating Systems. Please check the system requirements for more information about hosting GoToWebinar events: https://support.goto.com/webinar/help/system-requirements-for-staff-g2w010024

Troubleshooting

Some of our meeting attendees have not received confirmation emails…
Please ask your attendees to add networksmeeting@rsc.org to their safe senders list.

If they are still not receiving emails, please tell the Networks Team; we can send them their join link from a different email address.

The webinar hasn't started…
Due to the high volume of events, the Networks Team cannot log in to start your event. We will share log in details with the organiser before the event and it will be up to the organiser to log in to start the webinar. We recommend that you log in 15–30 minutes early to test the system and equipment.

If you have not been sent the password 24 hours before your event, or if you have any issues logging in, please contact the Networks Team at Networks@rsc.org or +44 (0)1223 432269.

I can't join the session…

There are many possible reasons for this, for a comprehensive list of answers and solutions please visit the relevant support pages:

- GoToWebinar: https://support.goto.com/webinar/help/i-cant-join-my-session-g2w060002
- GoToMeeting: https://support.goto.com/meeting/help/i-cant-join-my-session-g2m050002
- Zoom: https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362193-Joining-a-meeting