

## **Virtual RECS 2022 Speaker and Moderator Guidelines Plenary and Breakout Sessions**

Thank you for agreeing to speak at the Virtual Research and Evaluation Conference on Self-Sufficiency (RECS) 2022. We are honored to have a distinguished group of experts participating.

This year's conference will be held virtually from June 1-3, 2022. Virtual RECS 2022 will feature sessions delivered live during the event, and no sessions will be pre-recorded. All sessions will begin with a 30-minute tech check with producers from a company called Flying Colors, immediately followed by the live session. All sessions will feature moderated question-and-answer (Q&A) with the audience.

General attendees of RECS 2022 will join sessions from the virtual conference venue, while speakers will follow a customized link to join a speakers' room in a production platform called vMix. All speakers' calendar holds for RECS sessions will be updated with the link to their vMix speakers' room no later than the morning of the live session. If you have any questions, please contact Jessica Cruttenden at [RECS@air.org](mailto:RECS@air.org).

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## ***Tips and Best Practices for All Speakers***

### **Required Equipment and Internet Connectivity**

- You will need a computer or laptop with a camera and audio system.
- Ideally, connect through a hard-wired Internet connection.
- If relying on Wi-Fi, you will need a strong broadband wireless Internet connection. Sit as close to your Internet HUB/ROUTER as possible.
- [Sign up](#) for a brief tech check with Flying Colors on May 16-19. Please select only one time slot; the time will be used to optimize your video, audio, and lighting to ensure the best possible virtual presentation during the conference. You will receive a calendar hold for your tech check from [RECS@air.org](mailto:RECS@air.org) after you sign up.

### **Connect for your Session**

- Please use Firefox, Chrome, or a Safari web browser (NOT Microsoft Edge or Internet Explorer).
- Close all browsers and unnecessary connections one logged into vMix. This includes email, video playback sites such as YouTube, and websites that utilize a lot of bandwidth.
- You will be sent an Outlook calendar invitation for the scheduled date and time of your session. This invitation will include a personalized link that will allow you to access the vMix speakers room for your session. When it is time to log in to your session, click on your assigned link in your Outlook invitation to be taken directly to the speakers vMix room for your live session.
- You are in vMix when you see your fellow speakers and producers in the room. The Flying Colors producer will introduce themselves.
- If you see a blue screen with a picture-on-picture of yourself in the upper left corner, then you are not in the vMix room yet. Make sure you are logged out of VPN or use a different browser (Chrome, Firefox, or Safari) and click the link again.

### **Audio Setup**

- The session producer will connect to your built-in or external microphone.
- We recommend an external microphone. While not required, using headphones will enhance audio quality, resulting in a more polished presentation.
- Wired headsets with a microphone are preferred to limit background noise or echoing.
- When using Bluetooth headphones, some people experience interference. If that becomes an issue, resetting the connection can help. All Bluetooth headphones should be charged prior to your session.
- Back-up Audio: If your connection is poor, you will be switched to an audio-only back-up link. Please have access to your slides (printed or on your computer) for your reference – the slides will continue

to present as you speak through the back-up audio connection.

### **Camera/Video Setup**

- The session producer will connect to your built-in or external webcam.
- Be sure to be centered in the camera shot and place the camera at eye level. It may help to elevate your laptop on a stand or a stack of books.
- If working with two monitors, make sure the presentation is on the laptop/monitor with the camera (so as not to look away while presenting).
- If you have notes, try to keep them just under the camera so you are not looking down throughout the presentation. You may consider using a teleprompter web app such as <https://cueprompter.com/>, open in a separate window from vMix.

### **Lighting**

- Avoid having natural lighting or reflective surfaces behind you.
- Lighting should be coming from the direction of your camera. If you are using natural light, try to avoid direct sunlight or shadow lines from blinds.
- A desk lamp placed behind the computer is typically sufficient for additional lighting.

### **Presentation Background**

- Find a decluttered space as a backdrop. A well-organized bookshelf is a great option, but neutral walls also work well.
- Try to avoid virtual backgrounds, if possible. If a virtual background must be used, please test the quality by moving around. If you experience flickering outlines or disappear into the backdrop, try adjusting your lighting for more even coverage.

### **Preparing Your “Studio”**

- Choose a quiet, distraction-free location to participate in the session.
- Close the door and ask your housemates to minimize noise and not to use the Internet if possible.
- To keep your image sharp on camera, we recommend wearing solid colors.
- To minimize background noise, avoid clothing or jewelry that makes noise when you move or gesture.
- Turn off all notifications on your computer.
- Mute your cell phone and landline.
- Have water nearby.

## ***Session Process***

### **What to Expect Right Before Show Time**

- You will be asked to access the vMix link approximately 30 minutes prior to the start of your scheduled session (these 30 minutes have been included in your Outlook invitation). During this time before the live session begins, the event producer will check your audio and video and answer any questions.
- The producer will work with you to optimize your connection and video shot.
- The producer will go through the run-of-show for the session and confirm that your slides/videos are correct (if you are using slides/videos).
- We will review how the Q&A and any other audience interactivity pieces will work.
- The event producer will monitor timing for the session as a whole, including time allotment for each presentation. Prior to the start of the session, please confirm with the event producer the breakdown of how session time will be distributed among speakers.
- You will have time to discuss with the other speakers in the session any last-minute thoughts about the session.
- With about 5 minutes left before the start of the program, the producer will mute everyone's microphones and get into "show mode."
- The producer will count the first speaker down and say "Go!" to begin.

### **Support During the Session**

- Each session will have a moderator, who will introduce the speakers at the beginning of the session and facilitate the Q&A portion after speaker remarks conclude.
- There is the chat window in vMix where speakers and producers can send messages to everyone in the vMix room. The producers will use this to send messages to you as well. This chat window is not visible to attendees. This will include time notifications from the producer, so it is important to keep an eye on the chat box throughout your presentation.
- The event producer will provide a countdown to ensure that all speakers know when they are live.
- At least 15 minutes of live moderated Q&A with the audience will immediately follow the presentation.
- During the Q&A portion, participants will enter questions throughout the session into a chat box in the virtual venue. The logistics team member assigned to the session will copy the questions into the private vMix chat box so that the moderator and speakers can view them. The session moderator will select questions to verbally pose to the speakers. The speakers will answer questions verbally, as they would at an in-person conference session.
- Speakers will receive an "all clear" by the event producer at the end of the event so that they know when they are no longer live.

## **Delivering a Great Presentation**

We know most of you are already pros, but here are some helpful tips:

- Look directly into the camera.
- A member of Flying Colors' production team will advance the slides. If you are presenting slides, please let the producer know to advance the slide by saying, "next slide please... in the next slide you'll see... the next slide shows..."
- No need to mute or unmute your microphone – the producer has you covered!
- No need to turn your camera off – please keep it on so we know you are there and ready.
- Once you are finished presenting, it is nice to throw it to the next speaker, "...And now I'll hand it over to Janet."

## **Session Format**

- The **plenary sessions** are 75 minutes in duration. Please follow time limits for presentations and remarks agreed upon during session prep calls to ensure sufficient time for Q&A with the audience.
- The **breakout sessions** are 60 minutes in duration. It is recommended that each presenter or discussant limit their presentation to 10-12 minutes (depending on the total number of speakers and agreed upon during session prep calls), resulting in prepared remarks that are no more than 45 minutes in total. Speakers' remarks will immediately be followed by 15 minutes of moderated Q&A with the audience.

## **Speaker Responsibilities**

- **Registration**  
All speakers will be registered for the conference by our conference logistics contractor. **You will not need to take any steps to register.** In late May, you will receive an email from our virtual conference platform with instructions to access and update your profile in the virtual venue.
- **Bios and Headshots**  
All speakers are asked to submit their updated biography (500 words max) and headshot (PNG or JPG format) to [RECS@air.org](mailto:RECS@air.org), no later than **Monday, May 2**. If you presented at RECS 2020, we have a headshot on file and there is no need to submit a new photo. If you are part of a session that was submitted to the Call for Proposals, you were sent your bio as an attachment to your speaker invitation. If you do not provide an updated bio by May 2, the bio submitted with your session submission will be used in conference materials.
- **Presentation Slides and Materials**  
All PowerPoint slides must be in widescreen format (16:9) and cannot contain animations. **Our logistics contractor will compile all slide decks in presenter order and send the final deck back to all speakers for approval, so it is imperative that all slides are submitted no later than Sunday.**

**May 15, 2022.** A Box link where presentations and handouts can be uploaded for your session will be shared on May 5.

- **Speaker Orientation Webinar**

A speaker orientation webinar is scheduled for Tuesday, May 3 from 2:00 to 3:00 pm ET. The webinar will include best practices for presenting your fully live session and will be recorded. The recording will be sent to all speakers following the webinar.

- **Speaker Tech Checks**

Brief speaker tech checks will be scheduled with our session producer, Flying Colors, on May 16-19. Please [sign up for a tech check](#) and select only one time slot; the time will be used to optimize your video, audio, and lighting to ensure the best possible virtual presentation during the conference. You will receive a calendar hold for your tech check from [RECS@air.org](mailto:RECS@air.org) after you sign up.

### ***Additional Guidelines for Moderators***

- All moderators will receive a moderator packet by email on May 16 that includes your session details, speaker bios for introductions, and information that OPRE would like for you to share during the session.
- You will receive a copy of the final compiled slide deck the week of May 23. You will not need to advance slides during your session but may want to refer to the slide deck to prepare your opening remarks.
- You will not need to monitor timing for the session as a whole or for each presentation; the event producer will do this.
- At the beginning of the session, please remind attendees to submit questions in the virtual venue chat box.
- Please prepare two or three questions in advance in case there are none from the audience.
- You will select questions from the private vMix chat box to verbally pose to the speakers. The speakers will answer questions verbally, as they would in an in-person conference session.
- At the end of the session, as applicable, please let audience members know that it is time to transition into the next session, a break, or that the conference day is over and RECS will resume at 1:00 pm ET the following day. Please check the conference agenda to gather this information.