



CANADA
4-H British Columbia

TIPS & TRICKS

For Hosting a Virtual 4-H Communications Competition

Selecting a Platform

There are numerous online video conferencing platforms, including free services, and paid subscriptions, each offering a wide range of features and capabilities. It is up to you to decide which platform is best suited for your event, but here are a few suggestions to get started:

[Zoom](#)

[Cisco Webex](#)

[Skype](#)

It is important to consider conference length allowance, number of participants, and audio, video, sharing capabilities as required for your event. These features will vary platform-to-platform and by account/subscription type.

Recruiting Volunteers

Just like an in-person communications event, a strong team of organizers is key to helping the event run smoothly. While the roles are similar, the responsibilities will be a little different.

EVENT HOST

- Organizer of the online event
- Coordinate event access to competitors and other volunteers (such as judges)
- Provide technical support to those participating in the event

MODERATOR

- Keep the event on-time and on-track
- Provide instruction for all participants, including introductions, presentation process, etc.

JUDGES

- Responsible for evaluating each presentation
- Hosting an online event is a great opportunity to recruit a wide-range of judges. Consider individuals, such as 4-H alumnus, who may not have a chance to participate at a local level otherwise.

OTHER SUPPORT

Other volunteers, who may or may not be required online will be critical to the success of your event, these roles may include:

- Scheduling competitors
- Ordering awards and mailing out
- Communicating results and distributing judge's comments

Other Considerations

- All 4-H BC Communications Program Score Cards have been made fillable for use in an virtual setting. These can be accessed by visiting the secured Leader Resources page at www.4hbc.ca.
- After the event, consider emailing results to all participants. Consider sharing general judges' comments via video recording or within the results email. Follow up with each participant to provide individual comment cards from the judges.
- Many platforms allow you to record meetings. Consider sharing recordings with participants after the event. Be sure to get member and parent/guardian consent before recording any presentation.

Participants

It is important that you provide clear expectations ahead of time for how members can participate to their fullest. Consider the following when organizing your event and coordinating member participation:

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY & SPACE

- A device to join video conferencing - most desktop/laptop computers, tablets or smartphones are compatible
- Access to microphone - either external or built into device
- Access to webcam - either external or built into device
- A stable internet connection
- Competitors should be situated in similar environments, as available, so that each presentation can be evaluated equally - **will competitors sit in front of a computer or will they stand away from their camera?**

SCHEDULING

It is recommended that participants be brought into the conference individually, when it is their turn to present. This helps to limit unintentional distractions (such as background noise) from others in the conference, and the quality of video conferencing is improved with a limited audience. Consider:

- **How will participants access the event?** - most platforms will generate an access link or code that can be shared with select individuals
- **When will participants access the event?** - it is advised to schedule a consistent block of time for each presentation. This will help keep the event on track, allow adequate time for judges to evaluate, and avoid overlap between presentations. Plan for more time than is necessary.
- For senior members, who are required to complete an impromptu, it is recommended that this be scheduled immediately following the prepared speech. This will enable participants to only have to connect to the conference once.

PRESENTATION PROCESS

Provide consistent and detailed direction on how the virtual communications competition will be conducted. Consider:

- Introductions - **who else is in the conference?**
- Presentation - **will members only be delivering their prepared speech or will impromptu be conducted at the same time?**
- Post presentation - **how will the results be communicated?**



For even more info on how to use video conferencing, see:

[Tips & Tricks for Using Video Conferencing for 4-H](#)