

GENERAL SESSION CHAIR TIPS:

Thank you for serving as a leader and moderator of your AGU Fall Meeting session. Your participation is critical for fostering an engaging online session. We recommend following these tips and guidelines for the best session.

BEFORE THE SESSION:

- Select one primary chair to introduce and moderate the entire session with co-conveners/co-chairs as back-ups (if needed). You will identify this person to the technician prior to the start of the live session.
 - This simplifies support and primary host of the virtual conference software.
- Check the [online program](#) for possible changes or updates.
- View and download all of the short overview/introduction presentations for your session via the Participant's Corner.
 - These are due by 4 December before the session and should all be PDF files.
 - Download and collate them into one file that follows the order for the presentations.
 - Upload this collated file via the Participant's Corner at least 24 hours before your session.
- Practice pronouncing all presenter names and affiliations.
- Know AGU's:
 - [Meetings Code of Conduct](#) for guidance on potential issues you may face as a convener or session chair.
 - [Best Practices for Inclusive Remote Meetings](#).
 - [Meetings Guidelines on Photography and Social Media](#).
 - Photos are allowed for personal use in all settings, including scientific sessions, unless the presenter indicates otherwise. Presenters can do this by displaying a digital “No Photo” image on their slides or poster. This image is available for download from the [presenter guidelines](#) on the AGU Fall Meeting website.
- Communicate, at least through email, with all presenters outlining how you will moderate the meeting, reminding them of their roles, and asking for discussion questions.
 - Most oral sessions are organized for summary presentations and then discussion.
 - The best online sessions optimize moderated (by you) discussion, while also addressing questions from the audience. For additional discussion, consider questions that span several of the presentations, like “what’s next for this topic or to address future work.”
 - Encourage your presenters to ask questions of the group. Have some discussion ready in case there are not many audience questions. You can allow one or two individual questions after each presentation or decide to wait until after all presentations (may work best for summary presentations).
- Know that all sessions will be recorded. The recording will be available for attendees during the meeting, usually within 48 hours. Close captioning will be included.
- Union and Named Lectures only:** you will be contacted by AGU staff in advance to schedule a mic and video check as these are held on a separate platform (not Zoom).

DURING THE SESSION:

- Login to the [online program](#) 20-30 minutes before your session start time. You will receive specific instructions in advance of the meeting.
- Give short welcome/introductory remarks that acknowledge the virtual audience.
- Ensure that all speakers are treated equally and have their fully allotted time.
 - Use any reasonable means to stop a speaker who has exceeded the allotted time. The session must stay on schedule for both the audience and other speakers, per the approved program.
 - One tip is to ask Projection technical support to advance a slide and say you will do that to all speakers in preparation for the session.
- Know that only an author listed on a paper may present. No substitutions are permitted.
 - No new presentations may be added to the session.
- Interrupt speakers to ask them to speak more audibly, slowly, or clearly.
- Take questions from the online question and answer platform during your session.
 - Designate someone (you or a co-convener/co-chair) to monitor the Q&A queue and identify and ask the most popular and appropriate submitted questions. Select at least one or two of these questions to ensure that some of the online questions are answered.
 - You (the chair), not the speaker, conducts the Q&A discussion by recognizing questions in the chat or asking other questions that you have.
 - Call on presenters to reply or engage in a discussion. You or your co-chair should read the question (do not call on the attendee).
 - If a presentation draws no questions from the audience, ask your own questions to try to stimulate discussion, if time allows. However, some papers elicit more than the usual number of comments, use your best judgement.
 - Be aware of signs of aggressive questioning which may border on bullying, especially if directed toward student or early career scientists. Please intervene in real time if you witness such behavior.

AFTER THE SESSION:

- End the session at the scheduled time.
 - If there is active discussion, encourage open online discussions during the meeting that are available for attendees. Tell attendees to reserve a [“pod” for live discussion](#) or start a discussion thread in the section [“AGU Connect”](#) site.
- You will receive an email with the online session chair evaluation prior to Fall Meeting.
 - Complete your online evaluation as soon as your session is complete.
 - Include an assessment of the session’s attendance as well as any abstracts that were not presented.