

DIGITAL HACKS

STAYING IN TOUCH WITH YOUR VOLUNTEERS

Just because your volunteers aren't in the office with you doesn't mean you can't have meetings and catch ups. Team meetings and social events can all be held over video conferencing technology and are a great way to stay in touch.

Depending on your organisation's budget and technology suite as well as your volunteer's access to technology there are many different options including:-

- Zoom
- Google Meet
- GoToMeeting
- Webex
- Microsoft Teams
- Facebook live events
- WhatsApp

Top 5 Tips for Hosting Virtual Meetings



- Be prepared – I have a full run sheet which includes timings for each section, links to share in the chat box and information on who is responsible for what part of the meeting.
- Delegate – I have helpers at each meeting who are responsible for admitting guests from the waiting room, responding to chat questions, sharing links into the chat box and sharing documents or presentations. I have another helper who is solely responsible for taking minutes. This allows me to focus on hosting the meeting.
- Allow time for networking – I use breakout rooms to allow informal networking time, just like an in-person network meeting where you get to chat to different people on arrival, we schedule time for small groups to chat and get to know each other.



- Use other tools like polls and chat box – I use polls to get an idea of where the group is at before we introduce our speakers for the meeting.-
- Be yourself and have fun– I insert a bit of myself into my role as facilitator. The network is hearing about my life and the challenges I face in juggling the working from home experience. I share stories of remote learning, veggie gardening, iso-baking, exploring my neighbourhood and chickens.

There are lots of videos and how to guides available to help people get online. Don't assume based on the demographics of your volunteers that they won't want or be able to engage virtually.

As well as catching up in formal meetings you may set up other virtual spaces for volunteers to meet and share information such as Facebook groups, Slack or Whatsapp groups. Just remember that you may need to moderate these groups and set up a code of conduct and rules for what is shared or discussed. This could be a great role for a group of volunteers too. There are many other ways to stay in touch with your volunteers too:

- Newsletters
- Emails
- Phone Calls
- Postcards