



Best practices for video conferences

Hints and ideas for organizers and participants

1. Microphone and camera of online participants

If you attend a lecture via zoom from outside, please **disable your microphone** (as long as you have no questions), **but enable your camera** such that the other participants can see you. The speaker and the participants on site might feel uncomfortable if they would be confronted with a "black wall" of invisible online participants on the large screen in our lecture hall.

2. Microphone and loudspeakers of participants in person

If you attend the talk in our lecture hall in person and additionally participate via zoom on your laptop, it is essential that you **deactivate your microphone AND your loudspeakers** on your laptop! Otherwise, this would produce feedback loops with the fixed microphone and loudspeakers in the lecture hall which are needed for the connection and transmission to the online participants.

3. Length of talks

Talks which are transmitted online on a screen are more tedious to follow than talks with an attendance in person. Thus we urge you to have shorter talks during the whole hybrid/online workshop: The **length of talks should be not more than 30 minutes**, ideally 15-20 minutes. After a talk, about 5-10 minutes should be planned for discussion and the same amount for a short break.

4. Possibilities for a better incorporation of online participants

The given talks are usually only one part of a typical meeting in Oberwolfach. The other, equally important part are the many discussions in small groups during coffee breaks, at lunch time or in the evenings. It is definitely a challenge to also enable online participants to involve in these discussions, but we would like to encourage organizers and participants



to **think about possibilities for virtual coffee breaks**, for instance. Here are suggestions of technical tools that other workshops already used. Further ideas that have proven to be helpful are always welcome:

- Gitter: A chat and networking platform originally developed for joint programming projects, that can be used asynchronous discussions. In addition to a main chatroom for all participants also private communication for smaller groups are possible. The tool requires participants to have a GitHub, GitLab oder Twitter account.
- Gathertown (<https://gather.town>): A small online tool, that can be used for virtual coffee breaks. Everybody logged in has a small figure that one can move with their cursor. Once you get close to another person logged in, a video and audio of that person opens and you can talk with each other. The "walking around" allows to form different groups of people, similar as one would expect in a coffee break.