

Using Zoom for research involving human participants

Yukon University (YukonU) has a site licence for Zoom, that instructors and staff can access and use for research purposes. Instructors and staff are expected to use the YukonU-licensed version of Zoom rather than the public version available on the Zoom website. Zoom is a useful tool for online research interviews and focus groups. Zoom has many features including video and audio recordings as well as the ability to share screens between those participating in the conversation. Care needs to be taken when using Zoom, however, to maintain the confidentiality of participants and to ensure that the data is being collected in a secure manner.

Some best practices to ensure secure and effective video conference sessions are provided in [REB Guidelines: Interviews on Zoom 5.0](#)

For research activities, in particular, please consider the following best practices and outline all of the Zoom security measures that a project will use in your research ethics application.

- Manage invitations so that only those who need to be in the meeting have access to the link/invitation. Avoid sharing meeting links on social media or public outlets (unwanted participants may join a meeting that they do not intend to participate in).
- Do not use your Personal Meeting ID (PMI) to host public event. Your PMI is a permanent meeting room that anyone can pop into and out of at any time. You should randomly generate an ID for the meeting.
- Manage how participants enter the meeting:
 - Include a password to gain access to the meeting room.
 - For larger groups with external participants, require participants to register
- Use the Waiting room feature. This allows you to invite guests when you are ready for them
- Use the options within Zoom to control screen / whiteboard sharing. To prevent others from taking over sharing you should restrict sharing to the host.
- When sharing screens, ensure no private information is open on your desktop.
- Lock meeting after it has started (no new participants can join).
- Disable the video if you do not require the video feature for your project. A host can block the video capacity of the participant to prevent unwanted, distracting, or inappropriate gestures on the video.
- Remove participants if they do not follow proper netiquette.

Participants should be told that they can protect their identity and increase the protection of their personal information if they do not use their actual name in Zoom. They can do this by:

- Using only a nickname or a substitute name
- They can turn off their camera (if the research allows for this and they would like to do this)
- They can mute their microphone (if it is not needed).
- They should be mindful of what is in their background and visible to other participants during the meeting. They should be informed of the ability to use a virtual background in the meeting.
- They should be aware of who can listen to the meeting (who is physically around them)

Participants must be told that they can not share anything from the session on social media without consent form each of the participants if a group session.

Due to FIPPA regulations, Cloud recording has been turned off by YukonU IT and cannot be enabled. If the meeting host activates the local recording option, the recordings will be stored on the host's computer. All participants will receive an automatic notification when recording is enabled. The researcher needs to outline in the research ethics application and consent form, where the recording will be stored and how it is kept secure (encrypted). Participants must be informed of these details.

YukonU researchers who would like to access the YukonU's Zoom licence (this is strongly recommended) should contact the YukonU help desk at <https://help.yukonu.ca/> to request access. You must include your YukonU email address and indicate that the purpose is for research. You will need to agree to have your name and email address visible to all users of the YukonU Zoom licence. Instructors may obtain YukonU Zoom accounts for course-based research by sending a list of the students' YukonU email addresses in a spreadsheet to the help desk and indicate the timeframe of the course research. Instructors can get support through [The Teaching & Learning team](#) by emailing: teachlearn@yukonu.ca

For those who are unable to access the YukonU licensed version of Zoom and are using the publicly available version, you must ensure that you are not using Cloud recording if you are using the record feature on Zoom. All recordings can only be stored securely on the host device.

Zoom training seminars are available on the Zoom Help Centre <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/360029527911-Live-training-webinars> and tutorials at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206618765-Zoom-Video-Tutorials>

These guidelines have been adapted from resource materials posted online by University of BC.