

Virtual Event Best Practices & Code of Conduct

The Canadian Sociological Association provides programs and resources that benefit our members as well as the field of sociology within academia and community applications.

Building on the success of our Student Concerns Subcommittee Professional Development Webinar Series launched in January 2020, the CSA is now incorporating virtual events into our programming to enhance our efforts to inform, connect, share research, and discuss relevant issues affecting the world from the sociological lens.

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1. Virtual Event Policy

The Canadian Sociological Association promotes research, publication, and teaching of sociology. Our virtual events are intended to provide our membership and the community more broadly with an opportunity for knowledge sharing and professional development as well as to facilitate discussions on current issues affecting our discipline and society.

The opinions expressed during virtual events are those of the speakers and are not considered official statements or positions of the Canadian Sociological Association (unless otherwise stated).

We endeavour to provide a forum free of harassment or intimidation based on race, religion, ethnicity, language, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, appearance, or another group status.

All participants (speakers and attendees) must agree to our Virtual Event Code of Conduct in advance and compliance will be monitored during the event.

2. Virtual Event Code of Conduct

Recognizing that participants will come from a variety of different backgrounds and experiences, participants will be respectful of other opinions and refrain from making derogatory comments. These types of comments may include (but are not limited to) those deemed to be sexist, racist, ethnocentric, classist, heterosexist, ageist, ableist, or involve religious discrimination.

The Canadian Sociological Association will attempt to address issues of misunderstanding immediately if possible but reserves the right to remove participants from the event for non-compliance of this code.

3. Organization Structure

Several team members collaborate to effectively execute Canadian Sociological Association (CSA) virtual events. These events include webinars and virtual meetings organized by the Executive Committee, Subcommittees, and Research Clusters. The CSA will abide by this document of best practices as well as the Federation of the Humanities and Social Sciences Code of Conduct with respect to virtual events held as part of our annual Conference.

The roles and responsibilities for CSA virtual events are outlined below.

3.1. Virtual Event Facilitators

Planning Phase

- Develop concept for event
 - Determine if best suited for meeting or webinar format
- Assemble guest speaker(s)
- Propose scheduling (day and time)
- Obtain CSA Approval
 - Planning details must be submitted to the Executive Director at least 1 month in advance of the proposed scheduling
- Liaise with speakers (once CSA approves webinar)
 - Share Virtual Event Best Practices & Code of Conduct document
 - Seek approval to be recorded during the webinar
 - Includes posting of recording on the website as well as live-streamed*
 - Gather photos and bios for event promotion*
 - Share custom 'business' slide-deck with speakers for approval
 - Provide questions in advance to facilitate discussion
 - Schedule practice session

**Depending on the event concept, a posted recording may not be appropriate. Photos are also optional to protect speaker privacy.*

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During Event

CSA Representative

- Member from the Executive Committee, Subcommittee, or Research Cluster
- Open event and highlight the following
 - Land Acknowledgement
 - Code of Conduct
- Introduce speakers
- Prioritize and relate questions from the audience and/or identify who should be called on to ask a question (mic unmuted)
 - This task may be assumed by the event moderator if different than the CSA representative
- Close event and thank speakers

Compliance Monitor

- Monitor audience and speaker comments for obvious or potential concerns
 - See Code of Conduct (Item 2)
- Respond to person directly and privately regarding comment through Chat or Q & A
 - Questions may be 'dismissed' to hide from other attendees
 - Advise person that their comment is in conflict with the Code of Conduct and warn that any further infractions will result in removal from the event
- Ask moderator and/or CSA representative to address issue during event
 - Remind audience and speakers about Code of Conduct
 - Ask panelist to explain or clarify their comment if it has elicited complaints from audience or other speakers
- Advise Executive Director to remove person from event if the behaviour persists
 - Future exclusion from participation in virtual events may be considered

After Event

- Send post-event survey (if applicable) for all participants
- Collaborate on transcript and inform speakers of posted recording and transcript

3.2. CSA Executive Director

Planning Phase

- Virtual event concept review to ensure compliance with the objectives and policies of the CSA
- Promotion
 - Post event information on the website and set up registration form
 - Promote communication networks (Announcement and social media)
- Branding
 - Customize 'business' slide-deck to introduce event topic and speakers
- Manage practice session with speakers
- Zoom platform
 - Set up parameters for the event
 - Send custom login details to speakers

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During Event

- Manage the Zoom platform
 - Recording, screen sharing, live-streaming, etc
 - Audience participation (polls, Q&A, video and audio)
- Work with Compliance Monitor to remove attendee or speaker as directed

After

- Post recording on YouTube
- Finalize and post transcript and other documents on website as directed

3.3. Speakers

Includes moderator (if different than CSA representative), panelists, and meeting chairs

Planning Phase

- Review Virtual Event Best Practices & Code of Conduct document
- Give approval for event recording and posting
- Send photo and bio to facilitator (1 month in advance)
- Submit presentation for CSA branding (if applicable - 2 days in advance of event)
- Review discussion questions in advance
- Attend practice session (at least 2 days prior to event)

During

- Comply with Code of Conduct
- Abide by Discussion Guidelines (Item 5)

After

- Complete the post-event survey and alert the facilitator and/or CSA Executive Director to any issues or concerns arising from the virtual event

3.4. Audience / Attendees

- Register for event
 - Accept Code of Conduct
- Comply with the Code of Conduct during event
- Complete the post-event survey and alert the facilitator and/or CSA Executive Director to any issues or concerns arising from the virtual event

4. Environment

The CSA will endeavour to provide virtual event participants with a space that helps everyone feel comfortable. This involves the following procedural considerations;

4.1. Accessibility

- Schedule to accommodate all Canadian time-zones
- Participation possible by computer and phone
- Live streaming if registration exceeds capacity
- Transcript of event posted with recording
 - Additional documents (such as presentation slides) may also be posted
- *Translation to French to be considered once budgeting allows*

4.2. Audience Confidentiality

- Hide participant list
- Allow for anonymous questions and poll responses
- Set 'Chats' to be seen by panelists only

4.3. Code of Conduct Compliance

- Mandatory acceptance by speakers
- Mandatory acceptance by audience members as part of the registration process
- Reviewed with speakers prior to, and with the audience during, the event
- Compliance Monitor (Facilitator) will be assigned for every event to monitor audience and speaker comments and address any issues that may arise

4.4. Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Decolonization

- Event content will align with the objectives of the Canadian Sociological Association
 - This includes creating program material and facilitating discussions that openly address issues of race, sexuality, colonialism, gender, migration, religion, and activism in ways that are respectful
- Speakers with expertise in specific areas will be invited who represent the diversity of the membership and broader community
- Pronoun usage will be included with speaker bios and introductions
- Land acknowledgement to be expressed as part of welcome messages
- Facilitators and Moderators will demonstrate an understanding of;
 - Participants who will have come from a variety of different national, racial, economic, and academic backgrounds, with varied gender identities and presentations, sexual orientations, disabilities and life experiences
 - The impact of sexism, racism, ethnocentrism, classism, heterosexism, ageism, ableism, and religious intolerance on the lives of participants and presenters
 - The value in the experiences, abilities, and knowledge of each person participating in the event

5. Discussion Guidelines

- Avoid interrupting other speakers, unless for reasons relating to time management
- Assume positive or benign intent and ask for clarification of comments that raise concern
- Be brief in your responses and encourage others to speak
- Listen to all questions and responses
- Never dismiss a participant or panellist outright, but consider their comment/action/question in conjunction with the environment we are committed to creating
- Remember that no space is apolitical or atheoretical, especially in the context of critical discussion
- Be open to the possibility of growth and change
- Provide correct/factual information with sources, when applicable
 - This can involve providing references for slide show content or discussion material after the event

6. Utilizing this Governance Document

6.1 Organizers

Anyone proposing a virtual event will be required to review and accept the terms of this document as part of the Canadian Sociological Association approval process.

6.2 Speakers

Chair, Moderators, and panelists will be asked to review this document and/or a modified version customized to the particular format of the event in which they are participating.

6.3 Attendees

Items 1. and 2. will be included as part of the virtual event registration process with mandatory acceptance.