

Selecting Virtual Meeting and Collaboration Platforms

Meeting Platforms

Budget and Cost

1. Is there a budget for a paid version, and is the free version sufficient (e.g., meeting length, participant numbers, and features)?
2. Are costs transparent, with no hidden fees for features like extra participants, a dial-in number, or one-time webinars vs. recurring meetings?

Features and Functionality

1. Can you interact during screen sharing and view participants while presenting?
2. Does it offer the features needed to accomplish meeting objectives (chat, waiting rooms, polling, whiteboards, screen sharing, and/or breakout rooms)?
3. If features needed for meeting objectives are unavailable, are additional collaboration tools available to you and easy to incorporate?
4. Are accessibility features (support of ASL or other language interpretation, captions or integrating live captions, screen readers, background noise reduction) available?
5. Is there a dial-in option for participants without internet access or who experience connectivity issues during the meeting?
6. How many participants can you have and is there a limit to meeting length?
7. How easily can the platform accommodate hybrid meeting formats?

Ease of Use

1. Is the platform intuitive for all participants?
2. Can users join with minimal setup or software downloads?
3. Is technical support available, or tutorials or other onboarding resources?
4. Are mobile and desktop versions equally functional?

Security

1. Can sessions be recorded, stored, and shared in a secure manner appropriate for the content, such as password protection?
2. Does it offer meeting access controls, like passwords and waiting rooms?
3. Does the platform meet data privacy standards per your agency's policies?

Collaboration Platforms

Budget and Cost

1. Is there a budget for a paid version, and does the free version meet basic needs (storage, user limits, essential tools)?
2. Are costs transparent, without hidden fees for features like advanced analytics, additional storage, or extra users?
3. Does the platform offer scalable pricing tiers for growing teams or projects?

Features and Functionality

1. Does the platform support real-time collaboration (like editing shared documents, whiteboards, or other templates) and asynchronous work (tracking tasks, commenting on products between meetings, etc.)?
2. Does the platform support accessibility features (e.g., screen reader compatibility, adjustable text size, color contrast checking)? If not, is there a way to accommodate different functional limitations through an equitable exercise?
3. Can the facilitator view the platform while participants use it to provide support?
4. Can it accommodate the number of expected participants and the amount of content you expect to create?
5. Can you accomplish the same objectives using a more basic and common tool?
6. How easily can the platform be duplicated for use in a hybrid meeting, where in-person participants may not use the same tool?

Ease of Use

1. Is the platform intuitive for all participants?
2. Can users join with minimal setup or software downloads?
3. Is technical support available, or tutorials or other onboarding resources?
4. Are mobile and desktop versions equally functional?
5. Does it allow for offline access or syncing for users with limited internet access?

Security

1. Are there role-based permissions and access?
2. Does it offer activity and version tracking or other methods of data retention and recovery?
3. Does the platform meet data privacy standards per your agency's policies?