

# The Future of Conferences: Lessons Learnt from EGU20: Sharing Geoscience Online

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## INTRODUCTION

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 EGU General Assembly was re-designed as 'EGU20: Sharing Geoscience Online', the first geoscience conference of its size to go fully online. Due to the nature of the pandemic, this re-design happened over an incredibly short time period (~ 6 weeks). In order to learn from this experience a survey was designed to capture the experiences of the attendees and to use this to develop best practice for future General Assemblies, and for online conferences more generally.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What did people miss from a regular General Assembly?
2. To what extent did going online impact the event itself, both in terms of **challenges** and **opportunities**?

## METHODOLOGY

Design & distribute survey (n=1,580)

Clean the data

Independently analyse qualitative responses (i.e. develop codebooks)

Combine codebooks

Define emergent categories

## EMERGENT CATEGORIES

Category	Definition
Connecting	How networking and socialising were impacted by moving to a virtual conference.
Engagement	The extent to which the online environment either encouraged or restricted engagement. Also includes spontaneity / discovery of sessions.
Environmental Impact	How changes to an online conference impacted the environment.
Accessibility	The extent to which an online conference was more or less accessible to different audiences.

## EXAMPLES OF RESPONSES

### CONNECTING

"90% of my motivation to go to the EGU General Assembly is to meet with colleagues and friends in person. That's a great loss."

### ENGAGEMENT

"This time was the first time that I got exactly the kind of feedback to my presentation I was hoping for. And that came one-two days after the actual presentation via the discussion section and via email."

### ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

"As geologists we really need to think about being more climate-friendly in our jobs!"

### ACCESSIBILITY

"Those unable to physically attend can gain some part of the experience from home."

## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS



Online conferences are appreciated and worth every effort.



A virtual space is needed to enable informal connections.

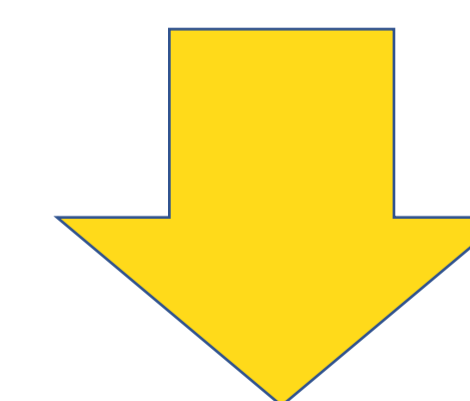


Accessibility needs to be considered.



The ownership & sharing of preliminary results needs to be outlined.

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