

### **Including Sign Language Interpretation in Events Hosted via Video Platforms – unofficial document**

Recent advances in technology have made virtual and remote meetings and events an everyday reality. The government of Canada's goal of a barrier-free Canada means that sign language interpretation should be incorporated whenever events take place. The following serves as a brief primer on how to do this successfully. As always, if there are any questions about specifics, the Translation Bureau is available to offer guidance.

## **MS Teams**

### **'Presenter' function:**

- invite interpreters as "presenter" rather than "participant"
  - allows interpreters to control their own camera and microphone
  - allows interpreters to log in to the meeting prior to the event start time, in order to check lighting, microphones, discuss logistics for working with interpreters, etc
  - if an interpreter was inadvertently sent a link to join as a participant rather than a presenter, they can be promoted to presenter by the event host even once the event has started
- instructions can be found here: [How to Assign Presenters in a Teams Meeting - Office 365 for IT Pros \(office365itpros.com\)](https://office365itpros.com)

### **'Make a signer' function:**

- in announcements at beginning of event, indicate that participants can set the interpreter's frame apart by using the "make a signer" function (note, accessibility features must be turned on in order to access the "make a signer" function)
  - ensures interpreters' frames are consistently larger than other frames, even when screen sharing occurs
  - allows those who need access to sign language interpretation to find the interpreters' frames easily
  - allows interpreters to see each other (helps them coordinate turn-taking, both within the interpreting team and with anyone watching the interpretation)

- allows those watching the sign language interpretation to easily switch their focus when turn-taking occurs
- those who wish to watch the interpretation can designate multiple people as signers (ie several ASL / LSQ interpreters, or a combination of ASL and LSQ)
- instructions can be found here: [Use Sign Language View in Microsoft Teams - Microsoft Support](#)

**'Pin' function:**

- participants can “pin” interpreters, but organizer will have to allow “multi-pin” if there is more than one interpreter present
  - when screen sharing is activated, it will replace the pinned frame as the larger frame
  - participants will have to click on the pinned frame in order to make it the larger frame (they will not have access to the information being shared at this time, as they will be focussing on technical aspects rather than content).
  - the participants will briefly lose access to interpretation when screen sharing is activated and deactivated

**'Pop-out' function:**

- participants can use the pop-out function once the meeting has started
  - allows participants to move either shared screen content or interpreter(s) frame to a separate monitor to allow for full-size visibility of both interpreter(s) and shared screen content
  - easiest for participants to activate pop-out function if screen sharing is activated by the host at the beginning of the event / meeting
  - allows participants to resize all frames, including that of the interpreter(s) to suit their viewing needs
- instructions can be found here: [Now in public preview: Pop out shared content into a separate window - Microsoft Community Hub](#)

## Zoom

### **'Panelist' function:**

- when the interpretation function is not being used (see below for instructions), invite interpreters as panelists rather than participants
  - allows interpreters to control their own camera and microphone
  - allows interpreters to log in prior to the event starting in order to check lighting, microphones, discuss logistics for working with interpreters, etc
  - in the event the interpreter has inadvertently not been invited as a panelist, and needs panelist functionality (eg to control their camera and microphone), they can be promoted to panelist by the host even after the event has started
- instructions on adding / inviting panelists can be found here: [Adding panelists to a webinar – Zoom Support](#)

### **'Interpretation' function:**

- when the interpretation function is being used, invite interpreters to join the event as “interpreters”
  - allows participants to select ASL or LSQ from the language (little world) icon at the bottom of the screen
  - interpreter’s frame will be visible only to the participants who choose to access it
  - gives interpreters the ability to control their own camera and microphone
  - eliminates the need for participants to look for the interpreters’ names in the list of participants
  - one limitation is that participants can only select one language (so a sign language user must choose between ASL and LSQ; they cannot access both simultaneously). This can be resolved by selecting their preferred language (ASL, for example), and then pinning the interpreter(s) in the other language (LSQ)
- instructions for how to use the interpretation function can be found here: [Using Language Interpretation in your meeting or webinar – Zoom Support](#)

**'Spotlight' function:**

- if the interpreter joined the meeting as a participant, the organizer can spotlight them (means all participants will see the interpreter), but since only one frame can have a spotlight, when the interpreters switch (eg the active interpreter turns their camera off and the support interpreter turns their camera on), the spotlight will need to be activated on the replacing interpreter's frame. If this is not done, the previous interpreter's frame will remain on spotlight, but their camera will be off, which means viewers will see an "empty" frame

**'Pin' function:**

- participants can "pin" the interpreter's frame, but this is not necessary if interpreters have been invited as panelists or interpreters
  - when presenters share their screen, the shared screen will take the place of the pinned frame . When this happens, viewers who had pinned the interpreter's frame will have to locate it once again, and click on it in order to restore it to the larger size (this will make the shared screen frame smaller)
  - not ideal, since participants will have to search the list of attendees in order to find and pin the interpreters, and because the interpreter's frame may be lost when screen sharing is initiated
  - participant will lose access to information while they are looking for the interpreter's frame to re-pin it

**'Side-by-side layout' function:**

- if the side-by-side layout is selected, viewers can watch both the interpreter and the shared screen
  - allows participant to re-size shared screen content and interpreter(s) frame to allow for improved visibility of both interpreter and shared screen content
  - easiest for participants to activate pop-out function if screen sharing is activated by the host at the beginning of the event / meeting
- instructions for using the side-by-side mode can be found here: [Side-by-side mode for screen sharing – Zoom Support](#)

### **Combination of MS Teams and Zoom**

- occasionally, A/V companies are involved in the creation of large remote or hybrid events
- sign language interpreters will work on-site in the A/V company's studio and their feed will be incorporated into the main event; these arrangements must be made by the client
- A/V company may create a separate Zoom link with which to merge the interpreters' frames into the MS Teams event
- the A/V company is the best resource for technical explanations in this scenario

### **Announcements and Reminders to Consider Sharing When the Event Begins**

- names of interpreters (MS Teams), or ASL1, ASL2, LSQ1, LSQ2, etc (Zoom)
- option for participants to pin interpreters
- option for participants to designate interpreters as signers (requires turning on accessibility functions in MS Teams)
- option for participants to use pop-out function to display either the interpreter's frame or content displayed via the share screen function
- select language / interpretation – English, French, ASL, LSQ

Please refer to the Translation Bureau's document, "**Tips and Tricks for working with a sign language interpreter**", which may be of further assistance to you in generating your pre-event announcements. As each event is unique, not all considerations will apply to every situation. The document offers a variety of specifics for you to include, as applicable, in your introduction.