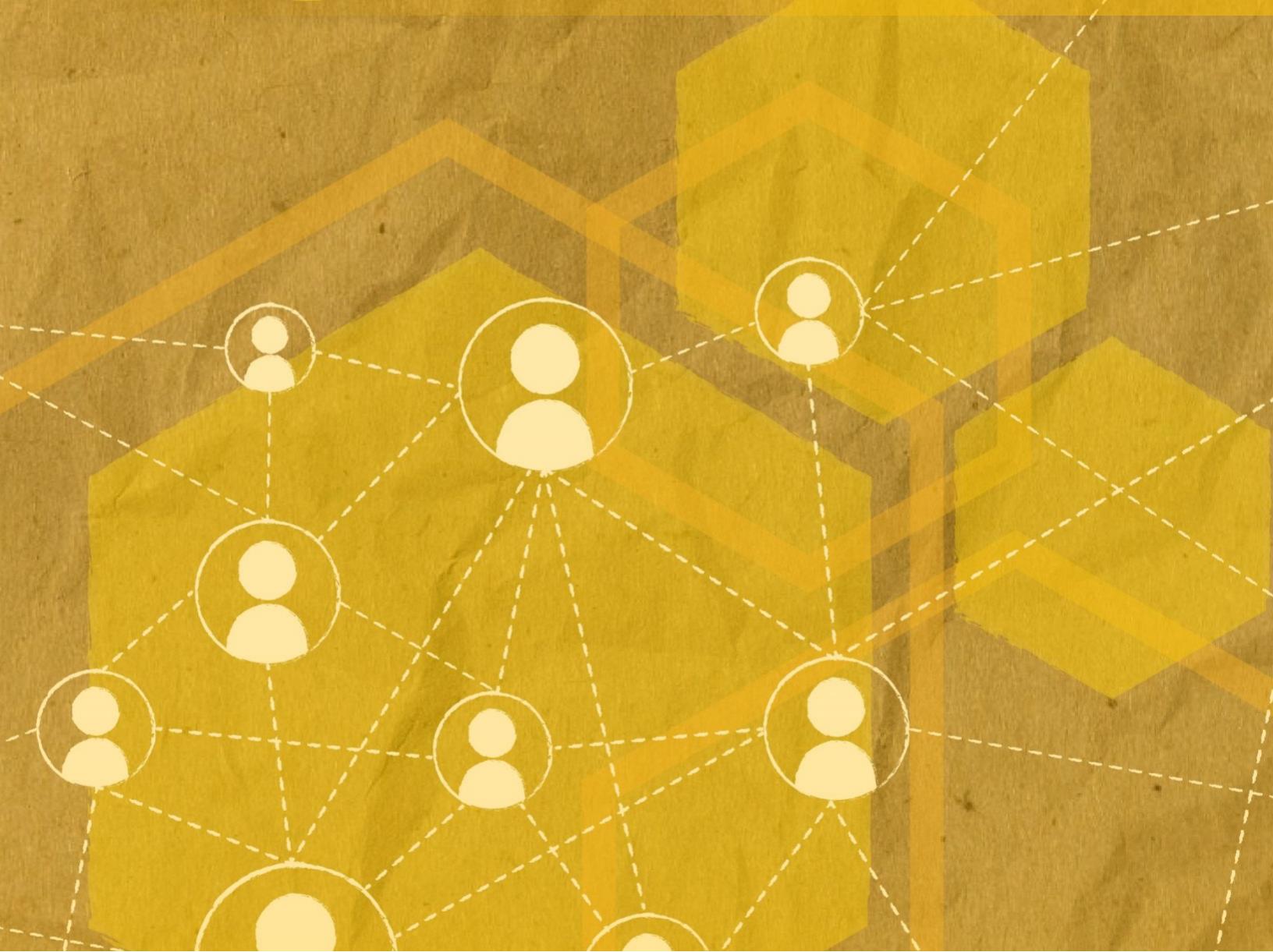




# ONLINE ART HIVE GUIDELINES



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Photos: Rachel Chainey

## INTRODUCTION

The following document provides general guidelines for facilitating an online art hive, as established by the Concordia University Art Hives HQ and engAGE Living Lab in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic, in the spring of 2020. The instructions for online community art making provided here are specific for the Zoom platform, but may apply to other digital platforms. These guidelines are outlined as the current working practices to provide an ethical online art hive experience, and are subject to change as the practice continues to evolve. Please use your best judgement as every virtual hive is unique and constantly adapting to changing contexts.

## FACILITATION

### ART HIVES PRINCIPLES

#### An Art Hive:

- welcomes everyone as an artist and believes art making is a human behavior.
- celebrates the strengths and creative capacities of individuals and communities.
- fosters self-directed experiences of creativity, learning, and skill sharing.
- encourages emerging grass roots leaders of all ages.
- provides free access as promoted by gift economy.
- shares resources including the abundant materials available for creative reuse.
- experiments with ideas through humble inquiry and arts-based research.
- exchanges knowledge about funding strategies and economic development.
- partners with colleges and universities to promote engaged scholarship.
- gardens wherever possible to renew, regenerate, and spread seeds of social change.

Source: Timm-Bottos, J. & Chainey, R. (2015). *Art Hives How-to-Guide*. Montreal, QC: authors.

[https://arthives.org/sites/arthives.org/files/art\\_hives.How-to-guide\\_1.pdf](https://arthives.org/sites/arthives.org/files/art_hives.How-to-guide_1.pdf)

Please consult [www.arthives.org](http://www.arthives.org) for more information about Art Hives principles, theories, methods and the worldwide network.

### ONLINE ART HIVE GUIDELINES

- Welcome and acknowledge each participant as soon as possible after they enter the art hive, letting them know what is happening in the current session.
- If it is their first visit, explain briefly what an Art Hive is. You may also explain details relating to Zoom, such as the different view settings (Gallery View, etc.), how to mute themselves, and the use of the Chat features. For security reasons, disable chatting between individuals; keep chats set for everybody or privately with the facilitators. Disable the Transfer Files feature to prevent inappropriate sharing (must be done by account administrator). Invite multiple forms of creativity such as visual arts, music, poetry, prose, gardening, cooking, etc. As in a physical art hive, active participation in some form of making is recommended and encouraged.
- Foster self-directed experiences of materials exploration and art making.
- Offer space for everybody to share art, art making experience, and brief anecdotes throughout the whole session.
- Provide a time frame, giving participants 30 minutes notice before the closing time, with a 15-minute notice to share artworks/medium/new ideas as participants wish. At this point, you may activate Screen-Sharing for all.
- Online sessions are usually kept to a 1.5 hour to 2 hours duration in total, to prevent “Zoom fatigue”.

### PRACTICAL FACILITATION TIPS

- Facilitators should meet 5-10 minutes before the call to decide who will take on certain tasks (i.e.who will be Facilitator A / Facilitator B, who will monitor waiting room, who will welcome participants as they arrive, etc.).
- Facilitators should use Gallery View to see all participants at once.
- Facilitators are encouraged to use headphones to reduce background noise and ensure a good audio quality.
- Prioritize self-directed art making and informal skill-sharing that emerges organically from participants in the hive, rather than structured workshops.

- Role-model art making by turning your camera towards your art while making it, showing the materials you are working with and encourage everyone to share ideas.
- Role-model art-making that is accessible for those with limited art materials, and also model other forms of creative expression (ex. poetry, gardening); art that requires limited materials (ex. collage, doodle), or experimenting with household items (ex. coffee, toilet paper rolls, vegetable dyes).
- Role-model curiosity of participants' methods and usage of materials, and allow space for community members to ask each other questions.
- Throw questions from the community back to the community.
- Facilitators should display their name (in Zoom) and if they wish to, the pronouns they use (she/her, he/him, they/them, etc.) and invite participants to rename themselves if their "Zoom name" is something generic like "Galaxy S9" or "iPhone."
- Debriefing between facilitators after the session is recommended (see addendum for an example, and feel free to create the debrief process that works for you).
- Community of Practice meetings for facilitators are available every second Friday 10 AM-12 PM to work through successes and challenges of the online art hives. See Art Hives' Facebook page for more information.

## BOUNDARIES

### RESPECT

- Mute all participants as they enter the hive and welcome everyone followed by introducing yourself.
- Some devices might be more sensitive to noise, adding background/unintended noise in the call. Let participants know what is happening and mute them if necessary. Unmute them so that they can participate verbally.
- Ask participants to be mindful of others in the room, especially kids that might be present. Try to keep conversations community-appropriate.
- A safer community space includes no consumption of alcohol and other substances, especially on camera. If anyone smokes cigarettes, they are welcome to take a break and go off camera to do so, the same way they would go outside during an art hive in a physical space. If someone is clearly inebriated or inappropriate in their comments please ask them to join you in the Waiting Room to discuss rules and invite them to come back during the next session when they are sober.
- Give all participants the opportunity to share their artwork without feeling pressured to do so. Instead of showing their final product, participants could choose to talk about the materials they used, their creative process, etc. Enable screen sharing only during the last 15-20 minutes of the call to prevent intrusive screen sharing during the art making time.
- When playing background music, ask all participants if the music volume is acceptable, or if the sound is interfering with discussion.
- Crediting the original creator/source of inspiration is always recommended. When using or posting any images/texts that are not their own a consent is required from the artist/author.
- When accepting a new participant in the last 15 minutes of the art hive, welcome them and explain that there are only a few minutes left and the community is sharing what they have worked on. Let them know that they are welcome to stay although they won't have time to make and share art this time, and invite them to come back to an upcoming session.
- Maintain the inclusive and secular space of the art hive by keeping sessions free of onscreen spiritual practices. Recognize that participants have diverse spiritual identities and that symbols of spirituality may inevitably arise through conversation and art making.
- If conversation starts to become too personal or exclusive, quickly redirect conversation to art making and the creative process, or a general subject that the entire group can participate in.
- Encourage people to be in the here and now and only talk about people who are present in the Zoom call.

- All participants, including facilitators, should avoid giving advice or suggestions beyond art material usage and to use “I” statements, denoting personal opinion.
- In order to respect the boundary of time at the end of the art hive, move participants back to the Waiting Room after closing if they are having trouble disconnecting or are reluctant to leave by themselves.

## SAFETY

- Facilitators need to be administrators of the Zoom account and the host/co-host(s) should be familiar with the platform’s features to maintain safety in the digital space. Be aware of how to remove someone from the group if needed.
- Enable the Waiting Room feature (if it is not automatic) to add a layer of security to the meeting. The Waiting Room lets the facilitators control who and when someone is admitted into the Art Hive. It helps keep the Art Hive space safer by preventing Zoom bombings and other intrusive actions.
- Ask all participants to introduce themselves to the facilitator (by video, audio, or Chat), especially if their name is anonymous or if their camera and voice feature is off. Ask privately (through private Chat) if they would be comfortable turning on their video while in the call, or at least turn on their audio to participate. If video and audio do not work for a participant, they can introduce themselves to the group via the Chat box.
- Ask participants publicly or by private Chat not to share personal information like addresses and phone numbers, including personal information about anyone who is not present. Foster “studio relationships” that develop over time in the safer container of the (online) studio, and do not necessarily need to be pursued as relationships outside of the studio.
- Discourage participants from visiting each other in person to exchange or pick-up art material, especially during the COVID-19 period.
- In the introduction and or at different times during the session, remind the group that this is an intergenerational space and should remain safe for people of all ages. If a problem arises, speak privately and explicitly to the participant and post reminders in the waiting room if necessary. Please note that these reminders may not be seen in the Chat box if participants are unaware of this feature or if participants arrive later in the session.
- Keep handy a list of external resources, where you can refer participants if they express being in distress, such as crisis helplines, shelters, etc.



Photos: Participants of the Pop-Up Virtual Art Hive

## HOSTING PLATFORMS

### ZOOM

Zoom is the one of the platforms used by the [Concordia University Art Hives](#) and [engAGE Living Lab](#). Here are the settings used for the security of the participants and the hosts.

<https://zoom.us/docs/en-us/covid19.html>

<https://blog.zoom.us/wordpress/2020/02/14/secure-your-meetings-zoom-waiting-rooms/>

<https://blog.zoom.us/wordpress/2019/12/04/hosts-admins-secure-zoom-meeting-experience/?zcid=1231>

The screenshot shows the Zoom meeting settings interface. It includes four main sections: 'Screen sharing', 'Disable desktop/screen share for users', 'Annotation', and 'Whiteboard'. Each section has a toggle switch and a lock icon.

- Screen sharing:** Toggled on. Description: 'Allow host and participants to share their screen or content during meetings'. Options: 'Who can share?' (Host Only selected), 'Who can start sharing when someone else is sharing?' (Host Only selected).
- Disable desktop/screen share for users:** Toggled off. Description: 'Disable desktop or screen share in a meeting and only allow sharing of selected applications.' (checkbox checked).
- Annotation:** Toggled off. Description: 'Allow participants to use annotation tools to add information to shared screens' (checkbox checked).
- Whiteboard:** Toggled off.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media accounts are another way to further conversation and community building, especially for participants who are unable to attend the Zoom sessions regularly. Social media groups or pages are also a good place to bring questions to the community (ex. using the Poll feature in Facebook). Every art hive can decide which social media platform(s) they would like to use. The most common ones include Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Be mindful of confidentiality, consent, and scam threats while using social media. Please note that maintaining social media pages or groups can be time consuming, and remember to factor this into your work hours for your Art Hive.

### FACEBOOK GROUP OR PAGE

Use the Group Rules feature sparingly by modeling strength-focused and positive behaviours instead of listing expectations.

- New groups can benefit from sharing boundaries to set expectations of the group culture from the start.
- Group Rules may help remind members how they can successfully engage with the community and may help provide consistency and possibly reduce conflict as the group grows and changes according to who is attending.

The **GROUP RULES** feature offers four example rules that are based on some of the most common rules facilitators use across many types of groups. These example rules can be edited or changed to highlight the Art Hives methodologies.

#### 1. BE KIND AND COURTEOUS

We are in this together to co-create a welcoming environment. Let's treat everyone with respect. Healthy debates are natural, and kindness is required.

#### 2. NO HATE SPEECH OR BULLYING

Diversity is at the heart of a healthy environment. Bullying or micro-aggression of any kind isn't allowed, and degrading comments about race, religion, culture, sexual orientation, gender or identity will not be tolerated.

#### 3. NO PROMOTIONS OR SPAM

Avoid self-promotion, spam and irrelevant links.

#### 4. RESPECT EVERYONE'S PRIVACY

Being part of an online community requires mutual trust, while recognizing that this is a public group activity. Sensitive and private information should not be shared. Ideally, what's shared in the group should stay in the group.

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**Redaction:** Monica Escobedo, Hannah Grabowecky, and Diana Vozian.

**Graphic Design and French translation:** Isabelle Fortier.

**Revision:** Rachel Chainey and Janis Timm-Bottos.