

Blackboard Collaborate in the SIG 10/21/25 Online Conference: Manual for Participants

The conference program

You can explore the program and sessions by checking [the Google Calendar](#) or the full conference program [Google Document](#). Both, the calendar and the document, include links through which you can access all sessions in the program.

Note that times communicated in the full conference program document correspond to CEST (=Central European Summer Time: Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Oslo, Stockholm).

The [Google Calendar](#) contains all session details and corresponding links. By downloading an event to your personal calendar, you can automatically convert the time to your timezone. To download a single session, click on the exact session you wish to take part in. To download the entire conference event, click on the blue plus icon on the low right corner.

What is Blackboard Collaborate and how to access the conference environment?

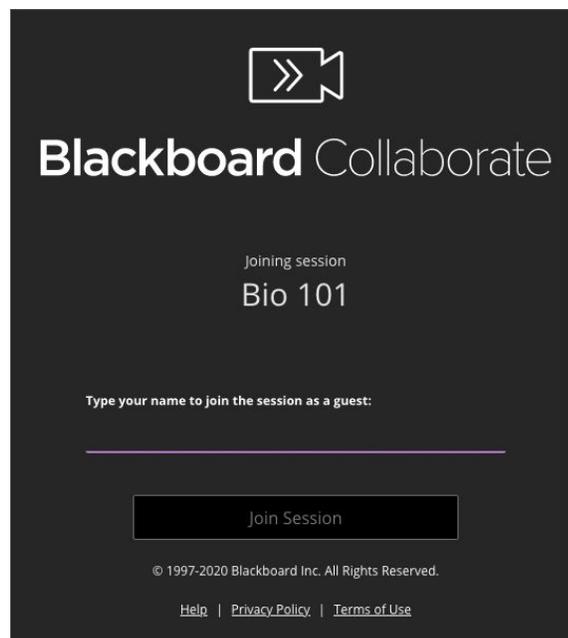
The platform

The SIG 10-21-25 Online conference will use [Blackboard Collaborate](#), a virtual classroom environment, embedded in a Nestor platform provided by the University of Groningen. The social events will be organized via Zoom. For more information about this, please see below (session types).

There is no need to install software in order to run Blackboard Collaborate. Please make sure you use either Google Chrome, Firefox, Safari, or Microsoft Edge as your browser (NOTE: there are more browser limitations for some presenting functions, explained in the presenters' manual). We recommend not using Internet Explorer, as it might not be compatible with the Blackboard Collaborate environment.

Joining a session

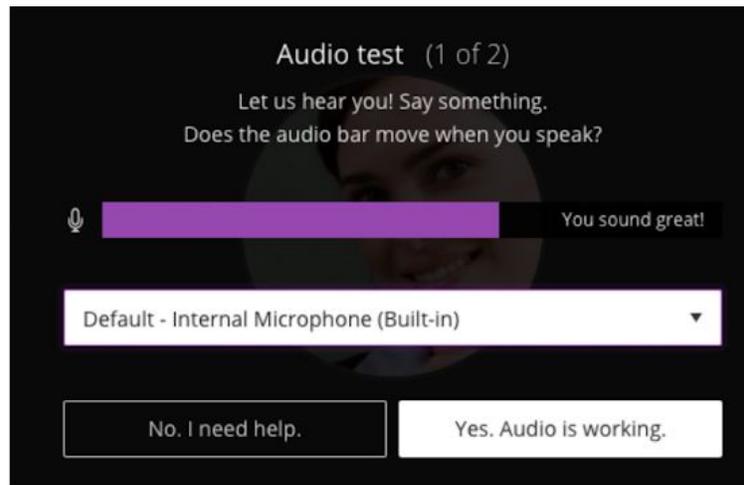
- Click on the session link on the Google Calendar or Google Doc.
- The **first time** you join a session, please join **10 minutes before the start** of the session, so you can complete the audio and video setup (see below). The following times, please join sessions at least 5 minutes before the start of the session.
- You will be prompted to enter your name before joining the session. Then click on 'Join Session'.



- The first time you enter a session, you will have to give your browser permission to access your microphone, even if you don't plan to speak during the session. Your

browser might need the permission for you to be able to hear others when they speak. Blackboard Collaborate remembers your choice. You don't have to do this again from the same device or browser.

- The audio and video setup will look like this:



- After you are set up, select the microphone  and video camera  icons any time during a session to turn them on or off. With your keyboard, press Alt + M to turn your microphone on and off. Press Alt + C to turn your camera on and off.
- After the set-up, Blackboard Collaborate offers you a 'tutorial' that shows you around with text boxes. This might be helpful, but the most important things are also addressed in this manual.

During the session

- Every session will have a chair and a moderator. These can be recognized by the labels '**CHAIR**' and '**MODERATOR**' in front of their names. When the session starts, the chair will briefly go over general guidelines for participation. These will depend upon the session type. (see below for session types).

- Please make sure that your **microphone is turned off** at all times. Do this by

clicking on the microphone icon . You can turn it on once the session chair has given you the turn to speak. In that moment, preferably also turn on your camera so the others can see you while you take the floor.

- Also **limit the video use** during sessions. Switch on your camera by clicking on the

 only when necessary.

- On the top left of the screen, the icon  will lead you to several options to **adjust**

your screen: The open menu  will show options to enlarge or reduce the presentation, fit to screen and go back to original size

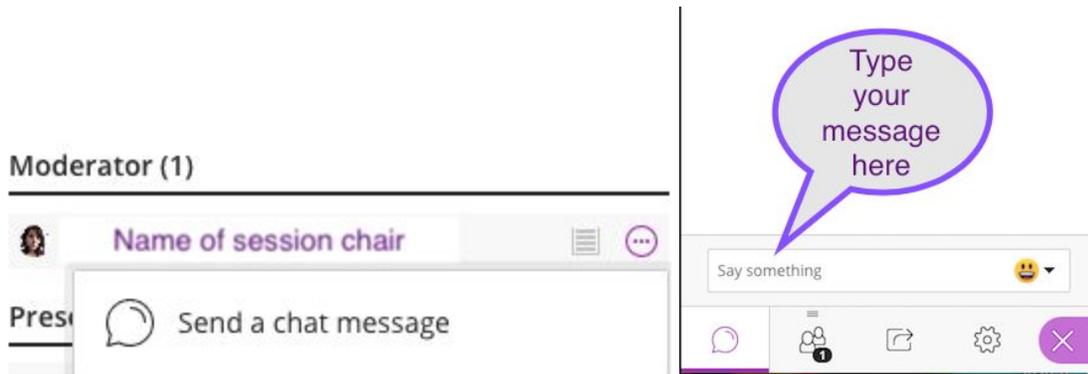
- By clicking on the presenter, you will be able to see a large image of the presenter and a smaller image of the presentation. By clicking on the presentation, you will have a large image of the presentation and a smaller image of the presenter.
- Use the **Raising hand function** to ask a question during sessions. You can do this by clicking on the  icon, which will turn purple once you have raised your hand . With your keyboard, you can also do this by pressing Alt + H. The chair will appoint you your speaking turn during the discussion.
- Questions can also be posed via the **chat function**, which you can find on the right, bottom side of the screen, after opening the Collaborate panel from the low right corner of the screen.

- If you have questions about the presentations, you can post a question in the chat by directing a **private message to the CHAIR**; this way the presenters won't be distracted by the chat while presenting. Open the Collaborate panel by clicking the

 icon at the bottom right corner of the screen. Click on the attendees icon

 and find the chair under the moderators' list. Click on the circle with three

dots on the right side of the name, and press *send a chat message*, as shown below. This will open a separate chat window where you can send your questions.



- You may also use this private chat function to interact with other people present in the room individually. By default you see the Everyone chat when you first open Chat. Select Previous Panel by the Everyone heading. Then just type the name of the person you want to chat with and start chatting. You may also use this to report technical issues to the moderator in private.

Session types

Here is a very general description of the session types planned in the conference. More specific instructions for attendees will be provided by the chair or moderator of the session.

- **Workshops:** Workshops will each use a format most suitable for its needs. The workshop leaders will instruct you during the session.
- **Plenary sessions:** Plenary sessions correspond to moments in which there are no parallel sessions. This will be the case of the opening and closing moments, and the keynote lecture of Professor Sara Hennessy.

- **Data sessions:** Data sessions will follow the format most suitable for the nature of the data and the questions of presenters. Specific participation information will be provided by the presenter at the beginning of the session.
- **Poster sessions:** The poster session will run in two parallel virtual rooms of which both will be open for one hour. Three presenters will be appointed to each room and will present a pitch of their poster, followed by open discussion led by the chair. After half an hour, attendees can switch between rooms to attend the presentation of the other three posters.
- **Paper sessions:** Each paper session will contain two paper presentations and is scheduled for one hour. There will be an opportunity to ask questions after each individual paper and at the end of the session once all papers have been presented. The chair will lead the discussions.
- **Symposia:** Symposia sessions contain four papers and one integrative discussion around a common topic. The sessions are scheduled for 1h45 minutes with a 15 minute break in the middle of the session. There will be room for questions at the end of the session (and sometimes right after every presentation), led by the symposium chair.
- **Social events:** Social events will be organized in Zoom. The Zoom used in the conference is operated by NORDUnet, i.e. different from commercial Zoom. More information on security in [Zoom provided by NORDUnet can be found here](#). The leaders of the social events will send you an information email with more instructions on Wednesday June 24th. The event can be accessed via a link provided in the Google Calendar and/or the Google Doc.

Technical support

- General technical support during the sessions will be provided by the moderator of the session. This role becomes visible when looking at the list of people in the session and is also displayed in the programme.
- In case you experience technical problems with accessing the Blackboard Collaborate sessions, please send an email to the support team of the University of Groningen nestorsupport@rug.nl with your support request. Please make sure the subject line starts with SIG CONFERENCE [topic].
- Note that this technical support is available during working hours, that is from 09:00 to 17:00 hours CEST.
- For organization related questions, please send an e-mail to sig102125-groningen@rug.nl. In case you need assistance right away please start the subject line with URGENT.
- Blackboard Collaborate also has a complete [troubleshooting](#) section that you can explore.

Blackboard Collaborate knowledge base

For the Blackboard Collaborate knowledge base, follow this [link](#). This manual is largely based on information contained there.