



# AMERICAN ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

## AAS Virtual Press Conferences in a Nutshell

1. Please email your mobile phone number to [press@aaas.org](mailto:press@aaas.org) at your earliest convenience.
2. Make sure your institutional public-information officer (PIO) knows that you're participating in a briefing at the virtual AAS meeting. They will likely offer to help you prepare your presentation, appropriate graphics and other supporting materials, and a press release. (If they don't offer such help, ask for it!)
3. The virtual AAS press conferences will be conducted via Zoom Webinars. With this technology the moderator, assistants, and panelists can be seen and heard, share their screens, and privately text chat among themselves (e.g., to deal with technical problems). The audience will be able to watch and listen, and submit questions via a text-based Q&A window. Additional viewers who haven't registered for the meeting may watch and listen (but not ask questions) on the AAS Press Office YouTube channel.
4. You'll need a computer with an internet connection. You can access the webinar via either a web browser or the Zoom client app — your choice, though note that the app offers more functionality, including the ability to display a virtual background behind you. You'll need a webcam and microphone, both of which are built into most late-model computers; you may use a headset or earbuds with a built-in microphone if you wish. You may download the Zoom Client for Meetings at <https://zoom.us/download>.
5. You will receive an invitation to your Zoom press conference, with a personalized URL, at least a few days before the briefing. Plan to log in 20 minutes before the scheduled start time so we can ensure that your audio and video connections are working properly and that you are able to share your screen (i.e., your presentation slides). We will also go over some procedural details, such as how the Q&A period will work.
6. The purpose of a press conference is to get journalists interested in writing a story — it isn't to tell them the whole story. We'll have X (4 or 5) presenters, and each should speak for at most 30/X minutes (e.g., 7 to 8 minutes for 4 presenters); paired presenters share a single speaking slot. The briefings should take about 30 minutes, followed by up to 30 minutes of Q&A, for a total briefing time of no more than 1 hour.
7. You should encapsulate your presentation in no more than 6 to 8 PowerPoint or Keynote slides — 1 for the background, 2 or 3 for the results, 2 or 3 for the implications (as appropriate), and 1 with a recap/summary of your results and conclusions. We recommend slides formatted with a 16:9 aspect ratio, not 4:3. Do not use "presenter view" when sharing your screen, as the audience will then see your notes and the next slide too.
  - Don't use the same slides for the briefing that you would use in a scientific talk or on an iPoster — the audience is different (journalists, not specialists in your area of research).
  - Please put your name, affiliation, and a title for your presentation on the first slide. It's OK to list a few key collaborators, but don't list a large team. At the bottom of that first slide, please also give your email address and, if willing, your cell-phone number.
  - Because some reporters may arrive late or may not copy the info from your first slide, it's a good idea to repeat your contact info at the end of your final slide.
8. The AAS Press Officer or another AAS staff member will open and moderate the briefing, introduce the topic and speakers, and remind the audience to use the Q&A feature to ask questions. Then each speaker will give their presentation, one after the other. After the last presentation the moderator and assistants will manage the virtual Q&A until we either run out of questions or run out of time.
9. Questions? Please contact AAS Press Officer Susanna Kohler at [press@aaas.org](mailto:press@aaas.org) or +1 202-328-2010 x127.