Virtual Collaboration Tools

ICERM's IT staff supports a wide variety of virtual collaboration tools, software, and platforms. We encourage organizers to contact IT staff before your workshop in order to assure we are ready to support your virtual events.

Zoom Video Conferencing

ICERM uses Zoom as our primary video conferencing service. Workshop events can use both Zoom Meetings and Zoom Webinars depending on the types of virtual sessions offered in each workshop. A short comparison of Meetings and Webinars is below. See the Zoom Introduction for more details and a full technical comparison.

Zoom Virtual Meetings

Zoom Meetings provides meetings with video, audio and screen sharing for up to 300 real time participants.

- ICERM uses Zoom Meetings for informal talks and discussion, working group meetings, and virtual social events such as coffee break sessions and workshop receptions.
- Zoom Meetings allow all participants to control their own microphones, cameras, and screen sharing so they can see, chat, and collaborate with each other.
- For officially scheduled workshop events, ICERM's IT staff creates the Zoom sessions and shares the links with all participants. A member of ICERM's IT staff also monitors the Zoom session to provide any technical support should the need arise.
- During long-term programs, ICERM can support a limited number of recurring working group meetings on Zoom.
- All attendees, speakers, and session chairs are encouraged to review our Zoom Meetings Guide.

Zoom Webinar

Zoom Webinar is an add-on to the Zoom Meetings service that allows more formal webinar broadcasting and live-streaming outside of Zoom.

- ICERM uses Webinar for most formal workshop talks.
- Webinar attendees will be in view-only mode but can still raise their hand to request microphone access or use chat to ask questions.
- Most ICERM Webinars are live-streamed on the icerm.brown.edu website via Panopto.
- All attendees, speakers, and session chairs are encouraged to review our Zoom Webinars Guide.
Email/Text Chat Platforms

Slack

Slack is an app and web based communication platform designed loosely around the classic Internet Relay Chat (IRC) model.

- Slack divides chat up into “channels” for topic-based discussion.
- Slack's app is available for all major platforms. A browser-based client is also available.
- Free Slack workspaces retain the last 10,000 messages for a searchable history and also provide 1-to-1 video calling.

Zulip

Zulip is an open-source web-based communication platform similar to Slack.

- Zulip divides chat up into “streams” (similar to Slack's channels). Streams also have topics to further organize the discussion.
- Zulip also has apps for all major platforms in addition to a browser-based web client.
- For ICERM users, Zulip has two major benefits over a free Slack workspace:
  1. Permissions are available for streams, allowing for private streams for specific groups of users.
  2. Zulip retains the full discussion history. It is hidden for free tiers, but can be viewed by upgrading to the paid tier.

Listserv

Long-term programs (Semester Programs and Summer@ICERM) are provided with a program mailing list via Brown's central listserv. All participants are members of the list and can use it to send email announcements to the other members of their program. Listserv is not available for short-term programs.

Web-based Collaboration

Discussion Board

ICERM’s discussion board ([discuss.icerm.brown.edu](https://discuss.icerm.brown.edu)) is a more traditional discussion board/forum powered by Vanilla Forums.

- The discussion board is a fully web based platform where participants can create threads and post comments.
- Access to the discussion board is available on request for group and project based research programs in addition to long-term programs.
- Participants can retain access to the discussion board after their program ends, making it a good option for groups who wish to continue their research collaborations after leaving ICERM.
**Overleaf**

*Overleaf* is an online collaborative LaTeX editor.

- Overleaf provides an online collaborative Google Docs-style editor for creating LaTeX documents. Several collaborators can work together on the same document making edits and suggestions/comments.
- Overleaf is available to all postdocs and Brown university students via Shibboleth login.
- ICERM can also support premium Overleaf projects for other workshop groups on a case-by-case basis. Organizers should contact IT staff to discuss this option.

**JupyterHub**

*JupyterHub* is a collaborative, online, multi-user version of the popular Jupyter Notebook software.

- Brown CCV hosts a *JupyterHub server* that can be made available on request to specific working groups.
- Advance notice is required for this service. Organizers should contact IT staff to discuss this option.

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