



The purpose of this Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document is to provide information on the virtual review conferences 2021, for the consortia of proposals and for delegates (i.e. referees and Joint Research Project (JRP) representatives).

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## 1. Why are virtual review conferences necessary?

Due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, the review conferences for Call 2021 will be held virtually. This is in order to:

- support the safety and well-being of delegates attending the review conferences
- conform with restrictions on travel and social movement due to COVID-19, that may be in place at the time
- ensure fairness and consistency for delegates attending the virtual review conferences. By allowing delegates to attend the review conferences virtually this should prevent any bias due to differing levels of restrictions on travel and social movement due to the status of COVID-19 across different countries
- ensure that proposals can be evaluated as per the EC's requirements and to the same high standard as previously

The virtual review conferences in 2021 will be very similar to previous EURAMET review conferences. Delegates, such as referees and JRP proposal representatives will be able to attend the virtual review conferences using web conferencing.

This is the same as the virtual review conferences which the EURAMET MSU successfully hosted in 2020. However, based on feedback from the 2020 virtual review conferences, the pre-recorded video sessions will be replaced by an interactive Presentation session between JRP representatives and referees.

## 2. Are virtual review conferences different to what is happening with the EC?

Since March 2020, the EC has been hosting its evaluations virtually, as either video or web conferences.

[Expert contract in the context of the COVID-19 outbreak – Are evaluations and monitoring reviews still taking place?](#)

Published on : 22-04-2021 12:47 PM

FAQ ID : 13072

### Call evaluations

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, until further notice, all evaluations are carried out remotely using video or web-conference facilities. All contracted experts will receive further instructions from the call coordinator or EU services. An amendment of their contract is not necessary.

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/support/faq/13072?type=1;categories=experts;programme=H2020;actions=;keyword=COVID-19%20outbreak>

## 3. When will the virtual review conferences be held?

<b>NORMATIVE</b> review conference	Monday 22nd (DAY 1) & Tuesday 23rd (DAY 2) November
<b>GREEN DEAL</b> review conference	Wednesday 24th (DAY 1) & Thursday 25th (DAY 2) November

For 2021, **referees AND JRP representatives are required on DAYS 1 & 2** of the virtual review conference (for the respective Call they are involved in i.e. Normative or Green Deal).

The agenda for the virtual review conferences will be provided to delegates approx. 1-2 weeks prior to the virtual review conferences.

**PLEASE NOTE: Agenda timings will be Central European Time (CET).**

## 4. What days do delegates need to attend the virtual review conferences?

Attendance of ALL DELEGATES at the virtual review conferences is by INVITATION ONLY.

**Both referees AND JRP representatives are required on DAYS 1 & 2** of the virtual review conference (for the respective Call they are involved in i.e. Normative or Green Deal).

This is new for 2021 for JRP representatives, and it is necessary in order to accommodate the timings required for an interactive presentation session between JRP representatives and referees on DAY 1.

This means that, the **Formal Question & Answer (Q&A) session will be held on the morning of DAY 2** of each virtual review conference in 2021.

## 5. How will delegates be invited to join the virtual review conferences?

The EURAMET MSU intends to host the virtual review conferences using Microsoft (MS) Teams. MS Teams has been chosen for its security, ability to be used with multiple operating systems, widespread access and successful use at EURAMET's virtual review conferences in 2020.

Delegates will be invited to join the virtual review conferences, as follows:

- **Referees:** will be emailed by the EURAMET MSU confirming their selection to participate in the virtual review conferences by mid-September. Following this, they will receive further details of the review conferences, including joining instructions, nearer to the date of the meetings (mid- late October).
- **JRP representatives:** ONLY ONE REPRESENTATIVE (for each eligible proposal) can virtually attend a review conference. The REPRESENTATIVE MUST BE AN EMPLOYEE at ONE OF THE PARTNERS in the consortium. Ideally, they will be the coordinator or an employee from a Funded Partner.

The EURAMET MSU will send email invitations to consortia after the eligibility of submitted proposals has been established (i.e. following the close of Stage 2). Once each consortium has confirmed its representative, the EURAMET MSU will email further details of the review conferences, including joining instructions, nearer to the date of the meetings (mid-late October).

## 6. Joining instructions for the virtual review conferences

To help delegates in joining the virtual review conferences a 'joining instructions' document will be emailed to them nearer to the date of the meetings (mid- late October).

The joining instructions is a detailed document covering necessary aspects of joining the virtual review conferences and contains helpful examples.

There is one joining instructions document specifically for **referees** and one specifically for **JRP representatives**.

The joining instruction document for **JRP representatives** includes (but is not limited to):

- Who can be a JRP representative at the virtual review conferences?
- Do JRP representatives need other documentation for the virtual review conference?
- What should JRP representatives do if they have a connection issue?
- How are JRP representatives invited to join the virtual review conferences?
- How to join the mandatory preparatory joining sessions
- Joining the virtual review conference via MS Teams & Windows or via the MS Teams App
- How many joining links will JRP representatives receive for a virtual review conference?
- MS Teams lobby system the for virtual review conferences
- Meeting etiquette for the virtual review conference
- JRP representative attendance at the Presentation session
- Requirements for the Presentation session
- JRP representative requirements for the Formal Q&A session

The joining instruction document for **referees** includes (but is not limited to):

- How referees access the documentation for the virtual review conferences?
- What should referees do if they have a connection issue?
- How are referees invited to join the virtual review conferences?
- How to join the mandatory preparatory joining sessions
- Joining the virtual review conferences via MS Teams & Windows or via the MS Teams App
- How many joining links will referees receive for each virtual review conference?
- MS Teams lobby system the for virtual review conferences
- Meeting etiquette for virtual review conferences
- Confidentiality

## 7. Agenda for the virtual review conferences

The agenda will be provided to delegates approx. 1-2 weeks prior to the virtual review conferences. It will also be made available on the MSU website <https://msu.euramet.org/calls.html> (following the close of Stage 2).

**PLEASE NOTE: Agenda timings will be Central European Time (CET).**

To ensure consistency, the structure of the virtual review conferences is almost identical to those of previous review conferences (held in a physical location). The only minor change is the necessary substitution of the face-to-face poster session between referees and JRP representatives, with a Presentation session.

In 2021, this **Presentation session will be an interactive session between JRP representatives and referees**. The session is intended to allow a presentation by the representatives, followed by time for questions raised by the referees and answered by JRP representatives.

## 8. IT requirements for joining the virtual review conferences

The minimum requirements for joining the virtual review conferences are;

1. **a private (quiet) space to join from**
2. **an internet capable device** (e.g. laptop, PC, electronic tablet) **with:**
  - a minimum internet connection of 10mbps upload and 10mbps download bandwidth (internet speed can be tested using <https://www.speedtest.net/result/9795594238>)
  - a camera, speakers and a microphone

**EURAMET strongly recommends that delegates identify a backup device** for joining the virtual review conferences. This is particularly important if you intend to join using a corporate computer with a firewall or VPN connection as this may interfere with your ability to join.

## 9. What software do delegates need for joining the virtual review conferences?

The virtual review conferences will be hosted using MS Teams, which can be downloaded for free at <https://www.microsoft.com/en-gb/microsoft-365/microsoft-teams/download-app>

This is the same as the virtual review conferences which the EURAMET MSU successfully hosted in 2020.

**All delegates MUST familiarise themselves with MS Teams prior to the virtual review conferences.**

To help delegates familiarise themselves with MS Teams, video training and guidance is available at <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/video-what-is-microsoft-teams-422bf3aa-9ae8-46f1-83a2-e65720e1a34d>

In addition, the EURAMET MSU will invite delegates to a **mandatory preparatory joining session** approx. 1-2 weeks before the virtual review conferences (to help support them with joining sessions).

Further to this, on the morning of each virtual review conference there will be a registration session and delegates are advised to register early so that any issues with joining can be resolved before the review conferences begin.

**PLEASE NOTE: whilst the EURAMET MSU will try to assist delegates with their use of MS Teams for the virtual review conferences, they cannot be held responsible for a delegates' inability to join virtual review conference sessions.**

## 10. JRP representative attendance at the Presentation session

The Presentation session will be on DAY 1 of the virtual review conferences.

**ONLY ONE JRP representative may attend the Presentation session and this SHOULD be the SAME PERSON that attends the Formal Question & Answer (Q&A) session.**

The Presentation session will be comprised of pre-allocated sessions of 25 minutes (maximum) for each proposal/representative. JRP representatives will have been assigned their pre-allocated session in ascending proposal number order within their respective groups.

Each pre-allocated session will comprise:

- A 10 minute presentation from the JRP representative to the referees.
- 15 minutes of informal questions from the referees to the JRP representative. Referees within the group who were asked to focus on the proposal will ask their questions first. Then questions from the remaining referees in the group can be asked.

**To ensure fairness to all proposals/JRP representatives the EURAMET MSU will end all pre-allocated sessions at 25 minutes** This will be done whether discussions between the referees and JRP Representative are complete or not.

## 11. Requirements for the Presentation session

The Presentation session replaces the face-to-face Poster session that usually occurs at EURAMET review conferences (held in a physical location). The Presentation session is intended to allow a presentation by the representatives, followed by time for questions raised by the referees and answered by representatives.

Ideally, the JRP representative's presentation should:

- Present the key aspects of the proposal in a clear and concise manner
- Help the referees evaluate the proposal against the 3 evaluation criteria
- Help to clarify the referees' understanding of the proposal
- If necessary, address any omissions/errors identified by the consortium since the proposal was submitted.

ONLY ONE JRP representative may give the presentation to the referees and this SHOULD be the same person that attends the Formal Q&A session.

The consortium is free to choose the exact form of their presentation e.g. PowerPoint with audio, video with audio, a poster with audio etc.

There is NO SPECIFIC FILE FORMAT required for the presentation, however the **general requirements are** that it:

- **MUST be able to be easily shared/played by the JRP representative via MS Teams** (a smaller file size maybe more likely to play more smoothly through MS Teams. Please be aware that EURAMET CANNOT guarantee the bandwidth of external participants joining virtual review conference sessions)
- should **NOT EXCEED 10 minutes in duration**
- MUST ONLY include organisational logos where (i) the organisation is a partner or (ii) the organisation has specifically supported the project i.e. through a letter of support.
- MUST NOT include EURAMET logos e.g. EURAMET Technical Committees (TCs) and European Metrology Networks (EMNs).

**The presentation does NOT need to be sent to the EURAMET MSU prior to the virtual review conferences.** The EURAMET MSU will NOT check OR STORE presentations for consortia.

Please be aware that the presentation session will NOT be recorded by EURAMET and that presentations WILL NOT be made available by the EURAMET MSU to referees after the Presentation session.

**PLEASE NOTE: JRP representatives' will share/play their own presentations to the referees during the Presentation session NOT the EURAMET MSU.**

**It is therefore the RESPONSIBILITY of the CONSORTIUM/JRP REPRESENTATIVE to ensure that their presentation can be successfully shared via MS Teams during the session.**

EURAMET CANNOT guarantee the quality of presentations when shared/played via MS Teams at the virtual review conference. Therefore, consortia should check that they are satisfied with the overall look of their presentation when shared/played in MS Teams prior to the virtual review conferences.

## 12. JRP representative requirements for the Formal Q&A session

For 2021, JRP representatives are required on DAYS 1 & 2 of the virtual review conference for their respective Call. This is necessary in order to accommodate the timings required for the Presentation session between JRP representatives and referees on DAY 1.

This means that the **Formal Question & Answer (Q&A) session will be held on the morning of DAY 2** of each virtual review conference.

In the Formal Q&A session JRP representatives will be questioned individually in ascending proposal number order within their respective groups. JRP representatives will be asked the questions the referees have developed for them in the previous session (at the end of DAY 1).

Each JRP representative's Q&A session will be allocated 5 minutes maximum for the representative's declaration and 15 minutes maximum for their questions and answers.

**To ensure fairness to all proposals/JRP representatives the EURAMET MSU will promptly end the JRP representatives Q&A session when their 15 minutes of questions has ended.** This will be done whether discussions between the referees and JRP Representative are complete or not.

**The Formal Q&A session will be recorded by EURAMET** in order to provide evidence of the answers given by JRP representatives and evidence of the JRP representatives declaration.

Please be aware that the Formal Q&A session recordings WILL NOT be made available by the EURAMET MSU to referees after the Formal Q&A session.

Virtual review conference recordings will be kept securely by EURAMET and external meeting attendees will not have access to them.

For further information on MS Teams recordings please see <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/record-a-meeting-in-teams-34dfbe7f-b07d-4a27-b4c6-de62f1348c24>