



PFLAG Hybrid Support Group Meetings: How to Prepare and Host Hybrid Meetings

What is a hybrid meeting?

Hybrid meetings are meetings that have both an in-person and virtual meeting component. They are alternatives to solely in-person or solely virtual meeting environments and allow our chapters the flexibility to reach different audiences. Throughout our time online, we have learned from our chapters' experiences that the virtual space can increase engagement from people situated anywhere in the country and can offer those in vulnerable situations access they may not have had otherwise.

I want to run a hybrid meeting.

Wonderful! Hybrid meetings can seem daunting at first, but with some tips and tricks to guide you, you can start leveraging these meetings for the continued success of your chapter.

How do I do that?

First, understand that there are two pieces to consider when it comes to running hybrid meetings. First, you must consider your technology. If your current room is not set up to accommodate a hybrid meeting, you have a bit of work to do. Namely:

- Buy, rent, or borrow a large monitor, TV screen, or projector so that your in-person attendees can see your virtual attendees.
- Buy, rent, or borrow a speaker and a microphone (or a dual speaker/microphone) in order to project the voices in the physical room and hear the voices in the virtual room.
- Buy, rent, or borrow a web camera so that all of your virtual attendees can see the in-person attendees.

Can you offer any examples of these technologies?

There are all-in-one options like the ones offered through [Owl Labs](#) or you can set up your room based on your own preferences and budget. There are infinite options available, so we recommend working with our [PFLAG Connects Manager, Laura Galeano](#), to come up with a plan that works best for you and your chapter.

How can I pay for these technologies?

If your chapter has a budget allocated for meeting space or other activities, you can use these funds. Alternatively, we recommend applying to grants for the money you may need to set up your room. There are many local and national grants available for non-profit organizations and, with hybrid meetings being the next best option as we slowly move out of virtual-only spaces, you can use this as an opportunity to showcase your forward-thinking hybrid meeting plans. [GrantWatch](#) is a great place to start if you're not sure what grants you are eligible for. You can also check out our PFLAG Academy Online [recording and toolkit](#) on raising funds.

What's the second piece to hybrid meetings?

Your second piece is the facilitation of your meetings. Unlike in-person or virtual meetings, hybrid meetings require more planning time and in-meeting support. When in hybrid meetings, facilitators must be aware of both the in-person and virtual space in order to accommodate the needs of all attendees. This can be almost impossible without the help of another facilitator. Our top-line recommendations are to:

- Prepare 2 (or 3) facilitators for each meeting depending on the size of your meetings: It's best to have a "lead" facilitator running the meeting in-person and have the secondary and tertiary facilitators support with tech and the virtual room.
- Find ways to engage and check in with your in-person and virtual attendees: Make use of your video conferencing tools for your virtual attendees like reaction buttons, polls, and the whiteboard.
- Provide follow up: Whether it's during the meeting or following the meeting, you should communicate your next steps (next meeting date, proposed agenda items, resources).

How do I know I'm prepared for my hybrid meeting?

Practice. Make time to have a "dress rehearsal" with your facilitators and a few volunteers from your Board. Test out the tech functions in the virtual and in-person rooms, make time to answer any questions and address any concerns, and figure out your line of communication with everyone involved.

What else should I know?

Your follow up with attendees is vital. You should prepare surveys or have one-on-one communication with your attendees to understand how they're feeling about your meetings and what you can do to improve their experience. Always be open to constructive feedback in order to make your chapter as successful as possible.

You didn't answer my question.

That's completely possible! This list isn't exhaustive, and you should work with your chapter to figure out what you need. If you're stuck in the ideating, planning, or follow up steps, reach out to [PFLAG Connects Manager, Laura Galeano](#).