



VIRTUAL EVENTS POLICY

Effective Date: February 8, 2024

Approval Authority: Vice-President,
Services and Sustainability

Supersedes /Amends: N/A

Policy Number: VPSS-2

SCOPE

This Policy applies to:

- all Employees and Students (as such expressions are defined below) of the University;
- all academic and administrative units;
- all student associations, groups and organizations recognized by the University in accordance with the *Policy on Student Associations and Groups* ([PRVPA-10](#)); and
- any external individual or group collaborating with an internal unit who wishes to use University services to hold their Virtual Events (as defined below).

Any provision of any other University policy, guideline, directive and the like which is inconsistent with this Policy is superseded and replaced by this Policy.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy and its related [Virtual Events Handbook](#) (the “Handbook”) is to set out the parameters to plan and deliver Virtual Events at the University.

The Policy provides guidance to ensure that:

- Virtual Events reflect the mission and values of the University; and
- the terms and conditions related to the purchase and use of Virtual Tools (as defined below) support Virtual Events organised by Event Organizers (as defined below) as well as external clients collaborating with an internal unit.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions shall apply:

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“Branding” means the use and application of the University brand as per the *Policy on the Use of Concordia University’s Name, Logo and Related Insignia, and the Governance of its Visual Character and Digital Presence* ([SG-4](#)) and the [University’s Graphics Standards Manual](#).

“DIY (Do it yourself) Virtual Event(s)” means Virtual Events organized without an external guest speaker, and without the support of Hospitality Concordia (as defined below) where the Event Organizer may request information technology (“IT”) support provided by Instructional and Informational Technology Services. Administrative meetings such as retreats, research seminars and other type of meetings not listed herein shall also be a DIY Virtual Event for the purposes of this Policy.

“Employee(s)” means any full-time, part-time, or temporary employee of the University, including staff, faculty, postdoctoral fellows, researchers, members of the administration, stagiaires and interns; any individual engaged by the University on a consulting basis or in virtue of any other contractual agreement; and appointees (including volunteers) of the University.

“Event Organizer(s)” means any Employee or Student, and includes a recognized student association, group, or organization, acting as the main organizer for a Virtual Event who require access to and use of Virtual Tools (as defined below). The Event Organizer ensures compliance with all applicable University policies, guidelines, directive, and the like regarding the use of Virtual Tools.

“Hybrid Event(s)” means an in-person event in which a virtual audience also participates. Essentially, both the in-person as well as the virtual audience come together and partake simultaneously in the same experience, but from different locations.

“Hospitality Concordia” means the University office that offers a blend of event services and campus support services designed to simplify the on-campus and virtual experience of the University community and the public. Hospitality Concordia acts as the event planner and consultant for the planning of events, including Virtual Events.

“Instructional and Information Technology Services” or “IITS” means the University office that provides a wide range of IT services, including IT support, maintains a list of approved Virtual Tools. IITS also provides guidance for Virtual Tool selection and support for new Virtual Tool offerings.

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“Privacy Impact Assessment” or “PIA” means the process to evaluate cloud service platforms in terms of the platform’s compliance to applicable privacy legislation for potential use by the University community.

“Student(s)” means any person registered in a course or program on a full or part-time basis, for credit or not, and includes undergraduate and graduate students, independent students as well as visiting students, exchange students and interns.

“Student Group Booking Officer” means the person authorized by a Student association, group or organizations recognized by the University in accordance with the *Policy on Student Associations and Groups* ([PRVPA-10](#)) to request for bookings on behalf of such association, group or organization.

“UCS” refers to University Communications Services, the university unit providing internal and external communication advice and support for faculty and administrative units, including print and digital content, web design, and media relations.

“Virtual Tool(s)” means the IITS-approved Virtual Event tools, platforms and other cloud services for which a PIA has been performed and which are available to the University community for University-related meetings and events. The Virtual Tools vetted by IITS are listed on IT Service Catalogue.

“Virtual Events Committee” means the committee described in [section 4](#).

“Virtual Event(s)” means any event organized by an Employee or Student that is not course related and in which some or all the participants are not physically in the same location but are connected in a common environment; the common environment might be one of many types but is normally enabled through the use of technological means and accessible over the Internet. Unless stated otherwise, Virtual Events include Hybrid Events.

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POLICY

Use of Virtual Tools

1. The use of Virtual Tools is a privilege granted to members of the University and external clients collaborating with internal units, on the condition that the use of those tools does not:
 - contravene any law, ordinance, rule and/or regulation of Canada, Québec and the City of Montréal;
 - pose an unacceptable or apprehended risk to data and/or personal information;
 - create a climate of intimidation towards an individual or identifiable group; or
 - contravene any IITS, Hospitality Concordia or any other University policy, rule, guideline, directive or the like.
2. All Virtual Events organized on or after the effective date of this Policy, must be in compliance with its provisions. The University shall honor any existing and valid written contract entered into before the effective date of this Policy.

Virtual Events Committee

3. A Virtual Events Committee is established to:
 - a) periodically make recommendations to ensure continued compliance with existing University policies and practices; and
 - b) identify specific problem areas and recommend remedial actions.
4. The Virtual Events Committee is composed as follows:
 - Chair: Director, Hospitality Concordia or Conference Service Manager or delegate.
 - Manager, Student Life, Office of the Dean of Student
 - Manager, Events, University Advancement
 - Director, IT Client Experience & Solutions, IITS
 - Event Analyst, Campus Safety and Prevention Services (“CSPS”)
 - Director, Strategic Initiatives, UCS
 - Representative from the Office of the General Counsel, as needed.

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- Other units might be asked to join the Virtual Event Committee as appropriate.

Organizing Virtual Events and reservation of Virtual Tools

5. Event Organizers can use or request the use of Virtual Tools listed on the IT Service Catalogue. If the required Virtual Tool is not listed, a request can be made to IITS for assessment.
6. Event Organizers can organise a DIY Virtual Event. If Event Organizers need guidance, logistical support or if their event includes multiple sessions and platforms, they can also request the support of Hospitality Concordia, in which case it shall no longer be a DIY Virtual Event.
7. Unless otherwise specified by IITS, the access to the Virtual Tools are free.
8. Any procurement of goods and/or services required to support Virtual Events, including but not limited to Virtual Tools, must be made in compliance with the University's *Procurement Policy* ([CFO-20](#)) and its handbook, the University's *Policy on Computer Provisioning* ([VPSS-32](#)) as well as any other University policy, guideline and/or procedure relevant to this procurement.
9. The timeline for any request for the use of Virtual Tools is as follows:
 - a) All requests for multiple Virtual Tool licences and for any of the Virtual Events listed below must be submitted through [My Event](#) on the Hospitality Concordia webpage at least 20 business days prior to the Virtual Event. Requests that do not comply with this notice period may be considered at the sole discretion of Hospitality Concordia.
 - Virtual Events with multiple sessions, platforms, virtual tools;
 - Virtual fairs, exhibitions, poster sessions; or
 - Virtual social activities and/or networking activities.
 - b) All requests not covered under [section 9 \(a\)](#) above, for the use of an individual Virtual Tool licence and for technical support (DIY Virtual Event) must be submitted to IITS at least 10 business days prior to the Virtual Event date, unless otherwise specified.

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10. All requests for the use of Virtual Tools not on the approved list maintained by IITS must be submitted at least 40 business days prior to the Virtual Event.
11. In order to reserve Virtual Tools, requesting Students must be sponsored by a student association, group or organization, which is recognized by and in good standing with the Dean of Students as outlined in the *Policy on Student Associations and Groups* ([PRVPA-10](#)) or sponsored by their academic department. Reservations by a recognized student association, group or organization will only be considered if the Virtual Event date falls within the current academic year.
12. Notice of cancellation shall be given in writing by the Event Organizer to IITS and/or Hospitality Concordia, as applicable, at least 5 business days prior to the Virtual Event. Failure to provide adequate notice of cancellation may result in being charged for any expenses incurred, such as consulting time, planning time, technical support already booked, etc.
13. The use of Virtual Tools is restricted to the Event Organizer who has reserved them. In the case of a booking made by a Student Group Booking Officer on behalf of an Event Organizer, the Event Organizer must participate in and monitor the Virtual Event and remains responsible for it.
14. Prior notice to and written authorization from IITS is required prior to the transfer of Virtual Tools license to another individual or group. Failure to abide by this provision may result in the cancellation of the reservation without notice and without prejudice to any other rights the University may choose to exercise, including the suspension of future reservation privileges of said Event Organizer.
15. Where a high-profile individual is to be invited to a Virtual Event, the Event Organizer will immediately contact their [event coordinator](#) for an event planned by Hospitality Concordia, or [CSPS](#) for an event not planned by Hospitality Concordia.

The [event coordinator](#) shall ensure that the Executive Director, Government Relations, and the Executive Director, UCS or their respective designates, as applicable, are advised as soon as the idea or plan to host such individual is considered, so that the Virtual Event may be reviewed in advance. The University reserves the right to refuse approval for any

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event, including any Virtual Event, if it considers that there are significant concerns including but not limited to reputational or security concerns.

16. When University space is requested for filming and production purposes of all or a portion of a Virtual Event such use of University Space, filming and production must comply with applicable University policies, guidelines, directives and the like, including, but not limited to, the *Policy on the temporary use of University Space* ([VPSS-24](#)) and the *Policy on Filming and Photography on University Premises* ([VPSS-61](#)).
17. Recording of Virtual Events is not without limitation and risk, specifically in relation to the collection, use and storage of personal information and risks of introduction of malware that may disrupt computer systems. In general, Virtual Events that would not be typically recorded if held in person should not be recorded. If a Virtual Event must be recorded, it must be done in accordance with this Policy and the [Handbook](#).
18. Event Organizers planning to record Virtual Events are responsible to ensure that adequate consent has been obtained in advance from all the participants of the Virtual Events as per the procedure in the [Handbook](#).
19. Event Organizers are responsible to obtain necessary consents and/or copyright license for use of all images, voice recordings and/or other materials from all participants and presenters when any pre-event advertising is required or if a Virtual Event is broadcast and/or presented online at any future date. Where such broadcast or online presentation is going to be done on the University website, Event Organizers must seek guidance and prior approval from a representative of UCS.
20. Should any participant or presenter fail or refuse to agree to the recording of Virtual Events, or its subsequent broadcast and/or online presentation the Event Organizers shall be solely responsible for ensuring that such participant or presenter is not filmed and does not speak during the Virtual Events when filming or broadcast is occurring. The Event Organizer will advise such participant or presenter that, notwithstanding their failure or refusal to agree to be recorded, their voice and/or other aspects of their identity may still be inadvertently part of the recording of a Virtual Event, as they are still a participant in such event.

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21. Where Virtual Events include the participation of a minor, such participation shall be in compliance with the *Policy Concerning Minors on Campus* ([VPSS-8](#)). All parents or legal guardians of minors participating in a Virtual Event must, at least 48 hours prior to the beginning of the Virtual Event, sign and submit to the Event Organizer the parental waiver.
22. Virtual Events requesting registration payment or where any form of monetary transaction is involved, including fundraising, must use a University authorised payment platform as provided for in the [Handbook](#).
23. The University is not responsible for disruption or non-performance of services due to circumstances beyond its control.
24. A thesis proposal or thesis defence, when conducted virtually is not considered a Virtual Event for the purposes of this Policy. All thesis proposals and thesis defences conducted virtually shall be in accordance with the procedures set out by the [School of Graduate Studies](#).

Use of recordings and personal information

25. All Virtual Events recordings and personal information accessed or obtained as part thereof are subject to the *Policy Concerning the Protection of Personal Information* ([SG-9](#)) and the [Act respecting Access to documents held by public bodies and the Protection of personal information, CQLR, chapter A.2-1](#). All Virtual Events recordings may only be used for the purpose for which they were obtained or compiled, with the approval of the Event Organizer.

Advertising of Virtual Events

26. Prior written booking confirmation of Virtual Tools is required before advertising Virtual Events on social media or any other communication channels. Any advertising of Virtual Events, including on social media or other platforms, must be in compliance with the requirements established by UCS. Event Organizers should seek advice from UCS before promoting their Virtual Events.

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27. All Virtual Events, including DIY Virtual Events must be in compliance with the University's communications brand standards, including, but not limited to, the *Policy on the Use of Concordia University's Name, Logo and Related Insignia, and the Governance of its Visual Character and Digital Presence* ([SG-4](#)).

Storage, retention, and disposal

28. Virtual Events recordings may not be stored for longer than 30 calendar days on a device that is not a University device, even if that device has been safeguarded through encryption and password protection. Virtual Events recordings should be saved in CONDOR, [Concordia Document Repository](#); they shall not be saved in a solution not supported or approved by IITS, such as Google Drive or DropBox. Copies shouldn't be kept on a personal computer, external storage device such as a usb key or a public application.
29. The University reserves the right, at its discretion, to pull down any Virtual Event recording that is inconsistent with this Policy, any other University policy and/or the University's values, reputation and/or orientation (present or future).
30. Event Organizer ensures that all storage, retention and disposal of recorded material of a Virtual or Hybrid Event is in compliance with the *Policy on Records Management and Archives* ([SG-10](#)). The retention period for recorded materials is provided in the [Records Classification and Retention Plan](#).
31. Event Organizers may contact [University Records Management and Archives](#) for advice related to the retention rules.

Code of Conduct

32. The Event Organizer and participants follow and ensure compliance with the *Code of Rights and Responsibilities* ([BD-3](#)), *The Policy on Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Psychological Harassment* ([HR-38](#)) and the rules of conduct provided for in the [Handbook](#), in order to provide a safe environment to all participants of a Virtual Event.

Policy Responsibility and Review

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33. The overall responsibility for implementing and recommending amendments to this Policy shall rest with the Vice-President, Services and Sustainability.