Open Ground: Music Therapy in Collaboration & Exchange
9th - 11th April 2021

Protocol for Chairs

Dear Chair,

Thank you for agreeing to Chair at BAMT's 2021 conference 'Open Ground: Music Therapy in Collaboration & Exchange'. We are particularly grateful for your flexibility with the change to a virtual conference. This document details essential information about the conference. Please ensure you have read the following information in advance of the conference, which takes place from the 9th – 11th April 2021.

To ensure smooth running of the event, all Chairs are required to attend online training on the platform; we will be circulating dates for these in the coming weeks. If you are unable to attend in person, you **must** watch a recording of the training which will be supplied by the BAMT team.

Please ensure you read all of the following information.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Online platform & training
We are working with Fresh Start Events to create a bespoke online platform for the conference. It is accessed using a web browser, there is no app or additional software required. The team at Fresh Start Events will host a series of brief training opportunities to ensure you are familiar with the platform in advance of the main event. We will be in touch with dates for this in due course.

Fresh Start Events are highly experienced in running online conferences, and you can find out more about their work here: **https://freshstartevents.uk/**

Marc, one of the team from Fresh Start Events recommends the following should you experience any issues with firewalls or proxy settings (please note these are most relevant if you are using a laptop supplied by your place of work, most personal laptop settings will not be affected):

"The FLOOR virtual event platform works extremely well in most IT environments but can sometimes encounter challenges so we recommend accessing the platform from either Chrome or Safari browsers. If connecting online via a corporate firewall, a virtual private network (VPN) or proxy server we advise speaking with your IT Department first as these are often set to block streaming video and sound, if using this form of connection, speak to IT and ask them to white-label the webcast domain."

We will be recording training sessions so if you are unable to attend training live you will still be able to access the training prior to the conference beginning.

Availability of recordings

Where permission has been granted by the presenters, recordings of each event will be available on the platform for delegates to access for up to 2 weeks following the conference. Confirmation of which events will and will not be available after the conference will be clearly displayed on the platform timetable.

Timetable

We will be sending out the formal timetable in the coming weeks.

Accessibility

We are working collaboratively with members to try and ensure the conference is accessible to all. This may include incorporating additional software on the platform (this will all be hosted on the events page, you will not be required to download additional software) to ensure that delegates with visual impairments can still access the conference. We will update on these procedures in due course.

Self-care

We appreciate that participating at any conference can be tiring, and especially so with virtual conferences where a great deal of screen time is required. Please know we are here to support you, so if you are struggling at any point do get in touch and we will assist where we can. We will be scheduling in regular breaks throughout the conference weekend. Delegates will also be able to view recordings after the event, so should you require a longer break during each day you will be able to catch up with content at a convenient time.

Technical assistance

The tech team at Fresh Start Events will be on hand throughout the conference weekend to assist with any technical hitches. They will be contactable via the platform, and their contact details will be covered in the online training.

The team have stated that they have not had any issues with the platform in any of their previous events. They have, however, highlighted that a good internet connection is important. The majority of any technical hitches have come down to poor internet connection, therefore we would ask that where possible you ensure your connection is reliable.

SPECIFIC CHAIR RESPONSIBILITIES

Every session will have a Chair, and it will be your responsibility to assist inviting presenter(s)/audience members onto the online stage area, take charge of the follow up Q&A and be on hand to offer assistance should it be required. You will also need to ensure that sessions run to time by prompting the presenter and delegates during the Q&A but given the online nature of this conference that does mean you can close sessions with the click of a button!

Please remember that all of the following will be covered in the online trainings – if it does not make complete sense now, it will once you have viewed the platform.

Q&A

For every type of session there are two options for how the Q&A is managed: delegates can either contribute all questions using the chat function for you to facilitate questions from the chat or you will have the option of inviting delegates onto the stage. This will allow you, the presenter(s) and the audience to see them and to interact with them more directly. Otherwise audience members cannot be seen or heard directly unless they use the chat function.

You will need to discuss this with your presenter in advance of your session. All the technical details will be covered in the training. Please be prepared to manage questions that may challenge the presenter, as well as manage any potential conflict or distress that is expressed due to difficult material or ideas.

Paper presentations
We are asking all presenters of papers to pre-record their presentations in advance. This will allow ease of running during the conference weekend and also removes the challenges faced when presenting live online.

For each session, the pre-recorded material will be played and then you, the Chair, will invite the presenter onto the online stage area for Q&A. You will be able to see yourself and the presenter on screen, the audience members will not be able to be viewed on video unless you arrange with the presenter(s) in advance to have a set number on stage with you. Audience members will be able to see and hear you but will not be able to be seen or unmuted unless invited onto the stage. You can interact with the audience using the chat function.

We would ask that you ensure the session runs to time, it is very important that sessions finish on schedule to ensure the smooth running of the event and also to ensure plenty of screen breaks.

Workshops
Where possible, we are asking that workshops are conducted live. This is to try and ensure a similar level of interaction that would take place at in-person conferences. As we have done in previous conferences, there will be limited places offered for participants for each workshop.

You will invite these participants onto the stage with you and the presenter(s), so you will be able to see their videos and speak directly with them. Other audience members will be able to watch and interact via the chat option, which will be managed by you, the Chair. You will not be able to see or hear the audience members, but there will be a count on the screen to show you how many people are watching.

We would ask that you ensure the session runs to time, it is very important that sessions finish on schedule to ensure the smooth running of the event and also to ensure plenty of screen breaks. You may be required to do this by prompting the facilitator and reminding delegates of timings. Ensuring that workshops run to time is one of the main roles of the Chair, and in an online conference format, there is no capacity to run over time; the workshop will end abruptly should it run into the next session.

Roundtables
We are planning for most of the roundtable material to be conducted live (if you wish to pre-record some of your material, please follow the recording guidelines). You will invite each member of the panel to the stage, who will then appear with their video and they will be able to see and hear the other panelists. You will not be able to see audience members, but there will be a count on the screen to indicate how many people are watching.

You will then help facilitate the Q&A at the end of the discussion. This will use one of the two formats available (please see Q&A section above).

We ask that you ensure the session runs to time, it is very important that sessions finish on schedule to ensure the smooth running of the event and also to ensure plenty of screen breaks. You may be required to do this by prompting the facilitator and reminding delegates of timings. Ensuring that workshops run to time is one of the main roles of the Chair, and in an online conference format, there is no capacity to run over time; the workshop will end abruptly should it run into the next session.