A retrospective on and lessons learned from #H02020, ESO's first e-conference

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arXiv: 2104.00089

Image credits: ESO / ESA

Post-facto thoughts on e-conferencing

e-conferencing *has become* part of scientific exchange, regardless of opinion. Let's:

- **Be creative:** embrace possibilities to increase diversity of exchange
- **Consider the consequences:** there is no one-size-fits-all
- **Coordinate:** do different things with different setups
- **Evaluate:** intention & impact can diverge
- **Communicate:** what worked, what did not?

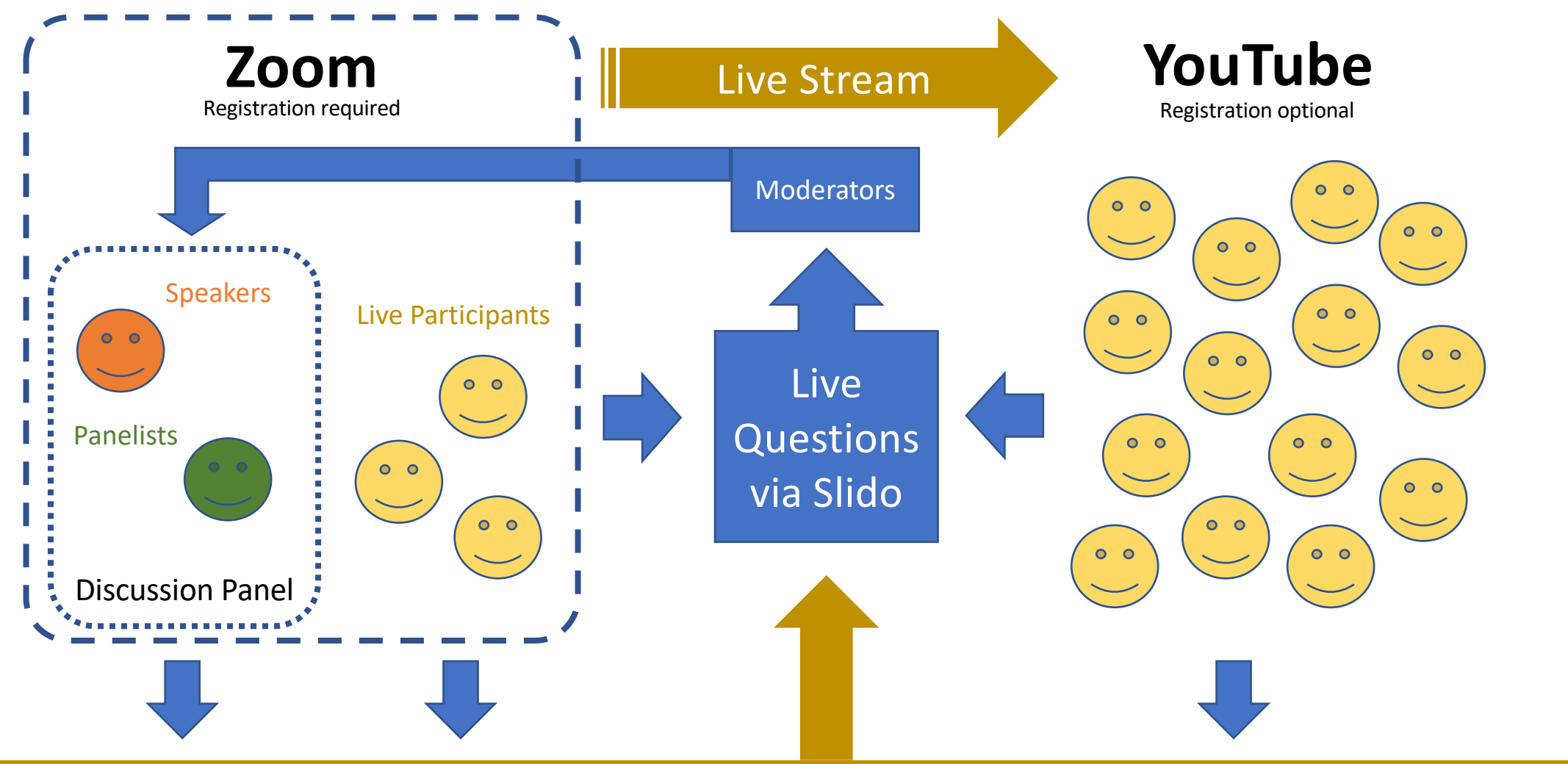
300 registered participants

5:50 am – 8:10 am

22 – 26 June 2020, 12:50 UTC – 15:10 UTC

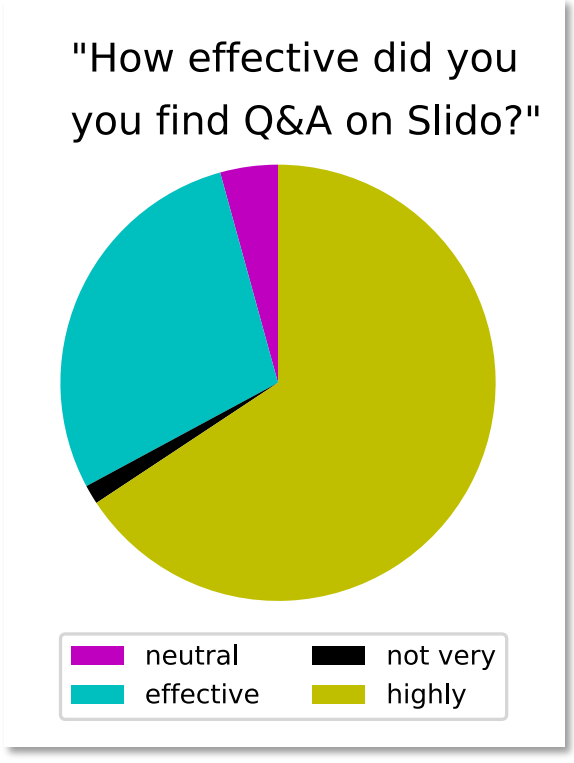
10:50 pm – 1:10 am

No registration fees
Full participation possible w/out registration

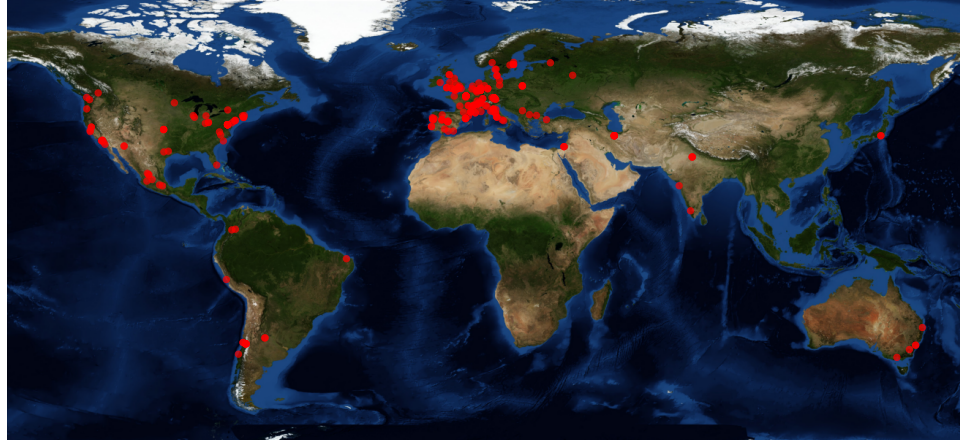

Zoom
Registration required
Live Stream
YouTube
Registration optional
Moderators
Speakers
Live Participants
Panelists
Discussion Panel
Live Questions via Slido
Live and asynchronous discussion on Slack (registered participants)

This worked

- **Lack of travel** was greatest benefit
- Slido **questions** highly appreciated
- **Remaining questions** on Slack
- Speaker & participant **onboarding**
- **Timing**: the right compromise
- **Attendance**: 3x more registration, 10x greater reach via YouTube



Areas to improve



- **Commitment** to asynchronous discussions
- Country **representation**
- **Switching applications** is tedious
- Common request: more time for **live discussions**

Exciting times! But let's not overlook…

- **Internet censorship:** Twitter, YouTube, etc. bans in certain countries
- **Free speech:** state surveillance can put speakers at risk
- **Data privacy:** self-hosting over ”free” solutions; *right to “forget?”*
- **IT complexity:** bias toward tech-savviness & IT requirements
- **Personal stress levels**: increased workload, pre-recording, etc.

Conclusions

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workshop report arXiv: 2104.00089

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Bonus round: thoughts on participating

- **Adapt:** Make your talk engaging without body language
- **Commit:** Make time & avoid distractions

Thanks for your attention!

Talks & videos available at:

https://www.eso.org/sci/meetings/2020/H0.html

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