

How to Enjoy the 2021 Virtual Conference Format



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As most of you reading *DreamTime* probably know by now, IASD has converted our planned onsite conference to a virtual Zoom-based conference. This year's Conference Committee has been working diligently with this almost overwhelming conversion, requiring some highly creative solutions. We are hoping you will join us virtually via Zoom

for the full 5-day conference this June. We do not want to miss the lovely and exciting environment that Ashland, Oregon offers, so we plan to hold an onsite conference in that venue in 2023.

Although the main disadvantage of a virtual conference is not being able to physically gather as a community, one big advantage is the much greater global access – without the expense of travel, lodging and meals, and at a lower conference fee. Both attendees and presenters can join the conference from home or from a local access point.

What Remains the Same (or at least similar!)

For those who have attended previous in-person conferences, the daily, multi-track session options will be familiar. The online conference follows that format: more than 130 presentations, along with Keynote and Invited speakers. It will feature the same quantity and high quality of symposia, panels, workshops, morning dream groups, virtual receptions, and special events, even the costume parade and virtual dream ball! Everything is scheduled on the Pacific time zone. The easy-to-navigate Schedule-at-a-Glance can be found on the conference website: www.iasdconferences.org/2021/schedule/

So Many Sessions! So Many Choices!

Just as with our in-person conferences, it is sometimes difficult to choose which session to attend. Participants often say they wish to be two places at once! Great news: Zoom lecture style sessions (symposia, panels, talks) will be recorded and made available via Drop Box for attendees to watch later. Due to privacy reasons, the following will **not** be recorded: Workshops and Morning Dream Groups, and times where there is personal dream sharing. Recordings will be zoom video and audio, and **are included in the cost** of your registration. Most sessions are interactive, so it is best to try to attend if you want a chance to ask questions.

No Jet Lag! No Problem!

Global time zone differences can be perceived as a problem, but the problem is the same with an onsite conference; it just depends on how one navigates those differences. Everyone who attends a physical conference takes time off from work for most of that week, travels to the site, fights jet lag, and then gets up before, or stays up after, their local time zone waking hours to attend the sessions they want. With a virtual conference, without the need to travel, attendees in other time zones have the option to try to fit virtual sessions into their daily life and local time zone sleeping and waking habits.



Although there were some limitations with scheduling, the CAC committee has been mindful to place presenters outside of the USA, both East and West, in earlier or later time slots respectively. There will still be some late nights and early mornings for both presenters and attendees.

Navigating the Differences

So, what to do? Here are some helpful mindset and planning hints. As a minimum, take off the same days you would have if you attended the in-person conference. Remember that this will be shorter than the time you would have spent for an onsite conference since you are subtracting travel time and we have also shortened each program day. Try to mentally reset your wake time to Pacific US time as much as possible for those days, so that you can enjoy the live sessions. Select the sessions on the calendar you want to attend live and those for which you can wait for the recordings, remembering that workshop sessions will not be recorded.

Getting Technical

Now for the technical part. There are some things you should or must do to make your Zoom virtual experience as good as technology permits. For the best control over your experience, if you do not already have it, download the free version of Zoom on your computer or device by going to www.zoom.us/download. You can also attend even if you do not have the application on your device by using the Zoom URL that will accompany the session rooms. Although we will hold some orientation sessions for attendees prior to the conference, it is still best to become familiar with your Zoom application well before the conference.

Also realize that Zoom may be working, but the internet itself can become congested and create problems. To avoid a drop-out or screen “freeze” during a session, participants will need a relatively good internet service that is not congested. Zoom is somewhat forgiving in that it will try to keep you connected, or if you get dropped you can fairly easily re-enter the session. Problems can sometimes occur if you have multiple internet services running in your home or on your computer at the same time; so during a session it is best to shut off any streaming TV or other active internet-connected devices in your home, and any applications on your device that stream in

the background (such as Drop Box). If possible, ask others using your internet connection or local network to try to avoid connecting their computers to the internet while you are in a session.



Using a laptop will allow you to move around and get comfortable while joining the conference. You can connect with other devices such as tablets or smart phones, but they may not allow the same viewing and menu options as a computer. Nonetheless it is a very good idea to download Zoom on another device or smart phone as a backup in the event something happens with your computer.

Bring on the Fun!

And now for the fun part: with a virtual conference there are “Virtual Receptions.” On the opening night, Sunday, there will be four separate receptions to meet your interests:

- 1) a main reception Open to All;
- 2) a First Timer’s Reception for those who want to get acquainted with IASD and our conference;
- 3) a third for Regional Representatives;
- 4) and a fourth for Researchers to gather.

We are looking for other ways that you may casually connect as well. Also on the schedule:

- An Arts panel followed by a reception where you can meet the artists.
- The virtual Dream Ball which will begin with our ever-popular Costume Parade and continue with live music for those who want to “virtually” dance (see conference website for advice about Dream Ball costumes). If you want to be part of the Costume Parade, prepare a costume or mask that will portray one of your dreams or dream figures, and you will be given an opportunity to show it off and briefly describe what it represents.

Since the receptions are for the most part open, where

anyone can interact with the group, they can get chaotic with background noises or trying to talk all at the same time. So, as you get used to the pace, some prudent use of the mute function when you don't need to speak will help us all enjoy those gatherings.

The Value of Virtual

From the response of some of our members and those yet to be members, there has been much more positive feedback than negative about holding this year's conference virtually. Jeanne Van Bronkhorst, our new co-chair of the Regional Representative Committee, a committee that represents the global reach of IASD, had the following observations.

"As a new member of the Regional Reps Committee, I took it upon myself to zoom with as many Regional Reps as I could...with IASD members in Australia/NZ, Japan, India, South Korea, the U.K., Switzerland, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, South Africa, to name too many. We are indeed spread across the globe, but most of these people don't reach the annual conference. Many of them were already hoping we will meet online this



year, as it would give them a chance to participate. Some haven't been to a conference in a decade or more; some have never gone. They reminded me there are real advantages to being online. It will be different, the intimacy and immediacy will be different, but I believe it can still feel emotionally connecting. There is space for doing deep dreamwork here, depending on how able we each are to pull ourselves out of our daily lives and attend. What we may lose in the immersive quality of in-person, we make up for with the delight of new connections and strengthened bonds with people around the world."

We hope to see you all virtually this year!

Robert Hoss, MS is IASD's Conference Director, among many vital roles. An internationally acclaimed lecturer, he has authored and/or edited several books, most recently *Dreams: Understanding Biology, Psychology and Culture*. His *Transformative Dreamwork* protocol is based on research and psychology, including his own research on color in dreams. He can be reached at bob@dreamscience.org.



**2021 IASD ANNUAL
INTERNATIONAL DREAM CONFERENCE**
Now a **VIRTUAL** Conference
with Global Reach via Zoom
June 13 - 17, 2021
(Sunday - Thursday)
"A multidisciplinary conference for dream studies and dream work."
Host: Angel Morgan
Conference Director: Bob Hoss
<https://iasdconferences.org/2021/>

