

Interacting in the Writers' Room

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For 5 of our regularly scheduled Writers' Room sessions this year, artist Sage Lovell will join Corrina Hodgson and Fatma Sarah Elkashef as a facilitator so that we can welcome d/Deaf artists to be part of the conversation.

In order to meet everyone's access needs, the facilitators of PWM's Writers' Room have co-created this set of guidelines and expectations for interacting as d/Deaf and hearing artists in our virtual space.

1. **Turn-taking:** We need to follow turn-taking in conversation. Because interpreters will be translating both spoken and signed communication, and because both English and ASL are their own languages with their own grammar and syntax, the interpreters need a bit of extra time to move between the two languages. This is to avoid interruption and ensure that we all have an opportunity to express ourselves. The most efficient way to do this is through moderated turn-taking, so we ask that you raise your hands, request a turn in chat, and use the built-in hand raising features to interact in the Writers' Room.
2. **Chat box:** If you have a thought to share or a question to ask, and another participant is communicating, or an interpreter is speaking or signing, we encourage you to use the chat feature in Zoom as a place to hold your thoughts. Of course, you can always keep a notebook handy to jot down a thought or question so that you remember it when it's your turn. The chat will be monitored and any messages placed there will regularly be read aloud and interpreted. We also encourage using the chat to share links and to clarify any names/titles/tools that you mention in conversation.
3. **Names:** We want to get to know each other and we want to be clear about who is speaking, so let's remember to say our names before we speak. Also, we want to make sure that our names and pronouns are visible to assist the interpreters in doing their job.

4. **Auto-generated captioning:** We will be using Auto-generated captioning, and anyone is welcome to use it. It can be turned on or off. Please be aware that it is auto-generated (as opposed to human-generated), and as a result not everything is captured and translated accurately.
5. **Multi-pin feature:** We will also be using the multi-pin feature. This will enable participants who are using sign-language to pin the interpreters.
6. **A note on ASL-English interpretation:** Interpreters are present as communication facilitators and not participants. When communicating, address the individual you are exchanging ideas with, and not the interpreter. Interpreters may occasionally interject to ask a question or seek clarity in order to better understand the meaning of what is being communicated. There will always be two interpreters in our Zoom room and they will switch out every 15 minutes. Interpreters adhere to a Code of Professional Ethics that requires them to maintain confidentiality.
7. **On-camera:** We encourage you to introduce yourself on-camera so d/Deaf participants differentiate between speakers. People who hear have access to different voices.

Don't be afraid to ask questions! If you are uncertain about how to proceed in a particular situation, just ask. We are all learning together. If you have a question about something, odds are very good that someone else in the group has that same question.

As we expand and grow, we want your experience to continue to be our guide. As such, we invite you to provide feedback however feels comfortable to you. You can email us, set up a VRS call, send us a video, etc – and you always have the option to remain anonymous. If you choose to remain anonymous, PWM Managing Director, Anne-Sophie Grenier, will gather your feedback through a Google form and then the form will be passed along to the facilitators without any identifying information.