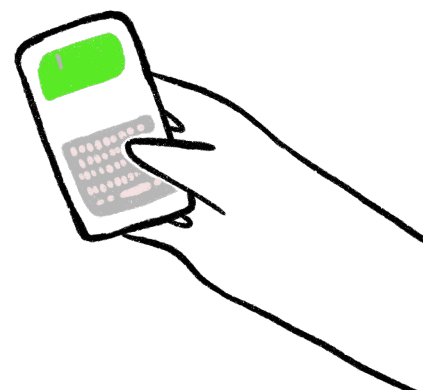


**HOW TO  
ORGANISE a  
SUCCESSFUL  
ONLINE CHAT  
ROULETTE  
FOR  
STUDENTS.**



We mostly talk about how the pandemic changed our daily work routines. Still, it also changed our social interactions at work and home. The current times are ideal for understanding how to set up human power mediating in our online communities and events; it is an opportunity for more humane digital interactions. This might be planting a seed for an overall more natural way of online socially interacting in the near future.

Organising online Chat Roulette for students and staff might just be the way to start.

### **What**

So, what is an online Chat Roulette?

It is a speed date type of event where participants are randomly or semi-randomly matched in short format one-on-one videos chats.

### **Why**

You may ask yourself: should I organise an event such as this?

The answer is yes! :)

Events like this are an easy and effective way to stimulate students to get to know each other, feel part of the student community and be motivated to keep socially connecting on their own.

### **How**

Organise events, even if the students already have an online environment such as MS teams or WhatsApp groups. It is important to have events where students are consciously engaging in social interaction.

You may improvise with such platforms or choose to use a specialised platform such as Glimpse or Connect.club.

A simple format would consist of an introductory moment with all participants together, reminding everyone of what to expect—followed by the chat roulette and finishing with a wrap-up session, again with everyone together. It might be nice to ask for participants feedbacks at this final stage.

The aim is for a **Quick, Easy & Low-Pressure experience**. So aim at a total duration of around 45 to 60 minutes, with each interaction ranging from 5 to 15 minutes.

You may have a completely random matching of participants, which in some cases works perfectly. But also, you can strive for more impact by matching participants by interests or specific criteria such as first and second-year students, faculty, courses and so on.

### **Going beyond**

Create “non-activities”. Many times the most valuable interactions happen in between events, activities or tasks. This may be when people are randomly waiting on something but still have the capability to communicate with each other. Often the magic happens when people are at their most relaxed and unpretentious states. So, if possible, have a small break in between matches and let participants naturally self organise.

## **It's super easy!**

Here is a step by step on how to set up a chat roulette event. Use this as a base but do explore the many other possibilities that might fit your specific context!

### **#1 Have a Game Plan**

Choose a key goal or theme for the event.

For example: Letting new students get to know each other.

### **#2 Choose your platform**

There are many possibilities to choose from. Keep in mind that if you choose to use platforms not specially designed for these activities, you will demand more human power from the event's host. Here are two examples of specialised platforms you can use:

Glimpse

Connect.Club

### **#3 Choose the date and time**

Try to identify the right time for your participants to be available and with energy for it.

### **#4 Promote the event**

Share the event's details within the appropriate medium for your participants to be aware of. It might be a good idea to share a link for a signup form, where participants demonstrate their interest and share their contact info (email), so you can remind them of the upcoming event a couple of days beforehand.

### **#5 Prepare for tech problems**

Ideally, run a pilot session beforehand. And be aware that participants might encounter technical difficulties. It might be wise to have a second moderator other than the host to assist in such situations.

### **#6 Facilitate engagement**

Provide participants with icebreakers and remind them this is supposed to be relaxing. This is just a way to establish the first contact and that they may exchange information for future talks.

### **#7 Ask for feedback**

If you intend to run this event more than once, provide participants with a simple survey where they may give you feedback on what works and what doesn't.

## People want and like it!

TU Delft's PhD councils have organised two pilot sessions of a chat roulette event. They had 48 participants on the first and 30 on the second edition. Overall, participants received it very well. They demonstrated a lot of excitement and willingness to participate more times. Here are some of the data and feedback collected:

### Who participated?

PhD candidates from 9 different faculties got together, generating more than 200 connections.

- 3mE
- TBM
- TNW
- AE
- IO/IDE
- EWI/EEMCS
- BK
- ImPhy-Optics research group
- CiTG

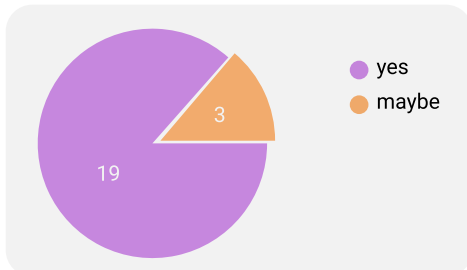
### How much did they enjoy it?

From 22 respondents, 15 gave it a 5 out of 5. The other 7 gave it a 4 out of 5.



### Who wants more?

From 22 respondents, 19 said Yes. 3 Said Maybe.



It's energising!

Kinda scary initially but fun afterwards. I need to work on my icebreakers.

Awesome social activity

A fun way to meet new people!

Very interesting. I was sceptical but it revealed to be a nice experience.

brilliant, a much needed exposure to new faces and new conversations

