



MUSEUM EDUCATORS ROUNDTABLE

Technology Resources

October 2020

This document emerged from NYCMER's program titled
"More than Zoom: Exploring Tools + Platforms for Virtual Learning."
Note: NYCMER does not endorse any specific products or services on this list.
Please contact web@nycmer.org for more information.

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Introduction

This technology resource document was created as part of NYCMER's October 2020 Monthly Program, "More than Zoom: Exploring Tools + Platforms for Virtual Learning." The program featured Shay Saleem from the Intrepid Sea, Air, & Space Museum, Emilie Lygren from the BEETLES project, and Nell Klugman from the Bronx Museum of the Arts. During the webinar, panelists discussed the pros and cons of different technological platforms.

In an effort to continue the conversation and introduce museum educators to tools and platforms that can assist with remote work and teaching, members of the NYCMER Board worked to compile these resources for you. Where possible, we added **open-source** options which are generally free and secure. We hope this serves as a launching point for finding resources that meet your specific program needs. We also acknowledge that this list is not complete - this is just the beginning. If you have additional programs and software that you would like to recommend or comments on those listed here, please reach out to web@nycmer.org.

NYCMER does not endorse any specific products or services on this list. We tried to showcase programs we are familiar with and have experience using, however, there are many options we did not have space to include and others may work better for you and your needs.

We highly recommend **watching youtube tutorials** before deciding whether to download an app or program.

Ready to upgrade your virtual toolkit?
Take a look through this document and learn about a new program!

Video Conferencing + Event Hosting

All video conferencing programs should have high quality video and audio calls, a chat box, and screen sharing. Some have additional features such as breakout rooms, phone dial-in, captioning, and differing numbers of participants.

Jitsi

Free, streamlined video conferencing alternative to Zoom.



Features

- Set custom url and password
- Maximum 75 participants
- Control audio of individual participants
- Share Youtube videos simultaneously
- Stream your meeting live
- Integrates with Google calendar
- Optional recording
- Self hosted option with additional features

Google Meet

Video conferencing platform through Google accounts. Works online or as an app on mobile devices. Free for up to 100 participants for 60 minute meetings.



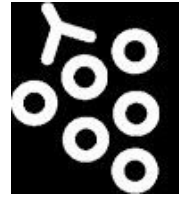
Features

- Max 100 users
- Max 60 minute meeting
- Google Calendar integration + scheduling
- Screen sharing
- Live captions
- Screen readers
- Pull people out of meetings
- Paid level has additional features

Pro Tip: Use [Tactiq chrome extension](#) to record captions for auto transcription

Gather Town

Virtual event maps that users move through. Video calls trigger when users are in proximity, and certain spaces, or “objects” allow for group work on shared documents, white boards, and video broadcasting for lectures. Although the graphics might not be for everyone, this platform is a unique way to conference or teach.



Features

- Free for 25 users
- Combines video calling with a 2D map
- Unlimited “objects”
- Basic moderation controls
- Lets attendees “walk around” and interact with others
- Work spaces where users can talk to each other, work on shared docs, whiteboard, etc.
- More features on paid versions

Streamyard

Free livestreaming platform, great for low powered computers and large conferences or lectures.



Features

- Unlimited viewers: stream anywhere (ex: Youtube)
- 20 hours of streaming per month
- Max 6 on-screen participants
- Link pre-recorded videos
- Newscast like banners and brand colors
- On-screen comments
- Streamyard branding in your streams
- Email code instead of passwords
- Additional features on Paid versions

Unhangout

This free video conferencing service runs on a browser and features a lobby for introductory videos or prompts, and unlimited breakout rooms for small group discussion or work. Make sure users have google+ and hangouts activated on a chrome browser.



Features

- Open Source
- Unlimited participants
- Moderators can't remove people
- Easy login through link
- Lobby landing page with video streaming
- Breakout rooms can be premade or by participants
- Max 10 people per breakout
- Share video, work on shared doc in breakouts
- Contact info of participants can be shared after sessions

[Run the World](#) For orgs with a bigger budget

Online events platform for organizations needing multiple session rooms for a conference. We ran NYCMER's Meet and Greet on this platform.



Features

- Ticketing + Registration
- Grab the Mic
- Parallel Sessions
- Private Sessions
- Virtual "Groupfies"
- Interactive Polling
- Screen Sharing
- Virtual Networking

Costs

- Starter - \$99/month
 - 100 free registrations per month (+\$2 per additional reg/month)
 - Event recording
 - Downloadable attendee email list
 - Paid ticket fees
 - Unlimited paid tickets
- More features in Pro - \$499/month

[Hopin](#) For orgs with a bigger budget

Online events platform for organizations that need multiple sessions and networking. We ran NYCMER's annual conference in May 2020 on this platform. You can set up a free plan with 5 users to test it out.



Costs

- Monthly Early Access Plan - \$99/organizer/month
 - Includes 100 tickets per organizer

- 100+ costs \$0.50 per registration
- If you charge for tickets, fee of 7% (not including Stripe fees)

Features

- Participants must create accounts to attend
- Breakout sessions
- Live networking
- Virtual business cards
- Chat
- Keynote presentations on “stage”
- Polls
- Parallel sessions
- Interactive Expo Booths
- Private virtual “backstage” for speakers and hosts
- Recordings + Analytics

[8x8](#) For orgs with a bigger budget

Cloud communication service. Might work well for low powered computers, as it runs off the cloud.



Features

- All-in-one Communication
- Business Phone
- Video Conferencing
- Team Chat
- Contact Center

Costs

- Small Business Phone - \$12/user/month
 - Voice, video, and messaging
 - Unlimited calling in US and Canada
 - Auto-attendant, intelligent call routing, music on hold + voicemail
- More features at higher prices

Virtual Tour Platforms

Skype in the Classroom



Schedule free video calls and connect to classrooms all over the world with Skype. Basic video calls allow you to broadcast your video to a classroom.

Features

- List your services as a virtual field trip, guest speaker, and more
- Registration through the SitC portal
- Link resources on the program page
- Easy way to get content in front of broader audience
- You can determine how frequently you host SitC sessions

Google Expeditions

Free AR + VR app that accesses pre-made Tours and Expeditions. Requires some form of VR viewers to use.

Features

- VR + AR tours
- 360 photo Tour Creator function (students + teachers become creators)
- Teachers can lead group through tour
- Solo expeditions

Cost - Free app, professional kits can be in the thousands

Video Editing + Production

All video editing requires extra storage space and high speed processors. Most video editors include transitions, filters, special effects, green screens, and title options. More advanced editors will have more variety and better quality features. Check specific requirements for your device and the video editing software you want to download. If you just need to do basic trims, there are even apps on your phone.

[Open Shot](#)

Open Shot is a minimalist video editor great for basic cuts, transitions, and special effects. If you are just getting started with video editing or have a slow computer, this is a perfect place to start.



Features

- Open source, free for windows, mac, linux.
- Very basic features
- Intuitive to learn

[KDEnlive](#)

KDEnlive is a step above iMovie and Openshot in terms of features. If you are using a video editor frequently and want particular effects, KDEnlive is worth a try. Like many video editors, this is prone to crashing on some systems so check system requirements before downloading.



Features

- Open source, Free for Mac, Windows, and Linux
- Color correction
- Intuitive to learn
- More transitions and special effects than Openshot

Blender

Blender is often used for 3D animated short films but can be used for basic video editing as well. With comparable editing capabilities to KDENlive, it is a good choice for the adventurous video editor.



Features

- Open source, Free for Mac, windows, and linux
- 3D modeling, animation, and video editing
- Can edit different video types in same timeline

Davinci Resolve

If you want professional level editing, have a high powered computer, and are willing to watch a few YouTube tutorials, Davinci Resolve is a great upgrade. It has more features than many other editors and is supported by its Blackmagic design special effects, high level color editing, and a library of color grade LUTs.



Features

- Free and paid versions for Mac, Windows, and Linux
- Exceptional color correcting
- Professional grade editing
- Blackmagic Design Special effects + transitions
- Can process 8K resolution video
- Eye tracking
- Color grade LUT library
- Can link with YouTube to auto-upload when rendered

Image Editing + Graphic Design

Computer screen color calibration is important for good image editing and graphic design. [Datacolor](#) and [xrite](#) provide some color sensors under \$200 that can be mounted on a monitor to calibrate colors displayed by the screen. This will allow you to get the most accurate results when using video or image editing software.

[Canva](#)

Canva is a great tool for quickly adding branding, titles, and sizing png exports of a great image. This is great for slide decks and social media.



Features

- Free and paid accounts
- Web-based and app formats
- Pre-measured templates for social media posts, business cards, etc.
- Beautiful free backgrounds, fonts, and elements for intuitive design
- Option to upload images
- Very easy and fast to use

[Creative Market](#) For orgs with a bigger budget

Imagine a digital scrapbook, and you will get pretty close to Creative Market. Premade graphics in various themes can be purchased then downloaded for many types of projects.



Features

- Variable cost per graphics set
- Website based platforms means anyone can use it
- Templates, fonts, graphics, and presets available for purchase

[GIMP \(GNU Image Manipulation program\)](#)

GIMP was designed with 3D modeling in mind, but you can use it just as easily to cut, edit, paint on, and layer a variety of images. This is a great tool for manipulating images, cutting out and moving parts, blurring or smudging out dust marks, or cloning textures to use in other areas of an image. Export in multiple file formats.



Features

- Free for Linux, Mac, and windows
- Crop, rotate, re-align images
- Cut, mask, paste and layer
- Paint, draw, and clone textures
- Design logos
- Learning curve

Darktable

Darktable is an excellent tool for color correcting and getting over- or under-exposed images to just the right level. It is a free alternative to Adobe Photoshop or Lightroom, and has many of the same features, including complex masks, white balance, filters, cropping and exporting in multiple formats. You don't need to use all the features to produce professional grade images in this program.



Features

- Free for Linux, Mac OS X / macports, BSD, Windows and Solaris 11 / GNOME
- Non-destructive image editing
- Works in sRGB, Adobe RGB, XYZ and linear RGB color spaces
- Standard, raw, and high dynamic range image formats
- Exports to Facebook, Flickr, disk storage, email attachments and can generate html web gallery
- Learning curve

Krita

Krita is a free, professional grade painting program for artists and aspiring creatives. Whether you are working on illustration and comics, concept art, or just playing around, Krita is a great tool.



Features

- Free for windows, mac, and linux
- Variety of brushes
- Vector and text for speech bubbles and captions
- Multiple textures to give matte or watercolor effect
- Training resources
- Possible to export to video

Audio Editing

Audacity

Audacity can be a great tool to record high quality podcasts, mix and balance music, and clean up suboptimal quality recordings for better video content. Many video editors recommend Audacity over the built-in audio tools in video editing software. Need to reduce that background hiss? Balance the boom and high pitch of two voices? Tweak and finesse your audio easily with this program.

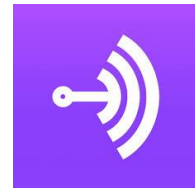


Features

- Free for mac, windows, linux
- Background noise reduction
- Filter Curve
- Audio effects
- Multi-track editing
- Export as .wav, mp4, .ogg

Anchor

Podcast creation, management, and exporting tool designed for both the seasoned pro and the podcasting or audio creation newcomer.



Features

- Record on phone, iPad, or desktop
- Import existing audio or video
- Special effects and background music
- Free hosting, no other fees
- Built-in analytics
- Tools to monetize your podcast

Public Domain + Creative Commons Content

[Youtube Audio Library](#)

Free music to use in youtube videos. Sign into YouTube and browse the audio library. Songs will list download link and licensing terms.

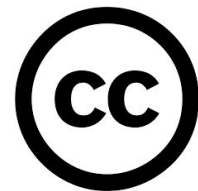


Features

- Free and legal
- Easy to search YouTube audio library lists
- Easy to save songs to a YouTube list
- Once downloaded, songs can be edited in video editor or Audacity

[Creative Commons](#)

This site answers all your questions about creative commons licenses and provides links to sites that have free music you can use in videos. It may take a bit of searching, but once you find your jam, you can download and use in videos with confidence.



[Public Domain Music](#)

This website has a long library of sheet music and some royalty free recordings of music you can use for projects.



[Pond5](#) For orgs with a bigger budget

Royalty-free marketplace for stock footage, images, and audio. Content is available for purchase, and prices range depending on what you want.

POND5

Workspaces

Padlet

“Padlet can function like a virtual exhibit hall, and offers autonomy to users.” - Emilie Lygren, BEETLES



Padlet is like a virtual post-it wall, with flexibility for users to curate, arrange, share, and archive their content. Both Emilie Lygren and Shay Saleem use Padlet in teen programs and enjoy the customization and user engagement it offers.

Features

- Curate content in a flow of columns of images or text
- Stream option
- Gallery view allows you to see and copy other formats
- Custom url
- Adjustable privacy settings
- Adjustable commenting features, curse filtering, and voting
- Great tool for formative assessment of student collaboration
- Can be used for professional development resource hub
- Long term collaboration space

Nearpod

Online learning hub for teachers and students.



Features

- Collaborate tool (an alternative to Padlet) is accessible for screen readers
- Gameified review quizzes
- Timed writing prompts
- Google slides or “lesson” slide deck options

Google Classroom

Many students will already be familiar with this google app and can access its features through their gmail account. Some schools may request programs coordinate with Google Classroom.



Features

- Streaming
- Create assignments and grades
- Add materials to assignments like YouTube videos or Google Forms
- Integrates only with school Gmail accounts

Flipgrid

Flipgrid is a free website that allows teachers to create prompts to facilitate video discussions. This tool also features a message board where teachers can pose questions, called "topics," and their students can post timed responses.



Features

- Teachers can integrate videos and images to provide context to prompts
- Students do not need account- just a link
- Option to prompt students to share video
- Students can pre-record videos to upload to flipgrid in their own time

WBO

Open source basic whiteboard that allows users to collaborate in real time.



Features

- Public and private boards
- Create custom links for private boards
- Simple, clean interface with basic drawing, text and zoom

Communication

[Discord](#)

Developed for gamers, this free platform is perfect for a group chat with integrated video and audio calls. Just like slack, discord helps you organize communication by channels instead of email threads. Runs on windows, browser, and mobile app.



Features

- Free for mac, windows, linux
- Video streaming
- Notify users with “@” function
- Direct messages
- Integrate with spotify
- Mute channels
- A single server can have 500 channels and 25,000 members online simultaneously
- More features in paid version

[Mailchimp](#)

Create, review performance, and organize audiences for email and social media campaigns.



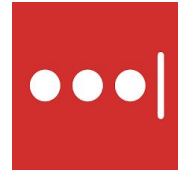
Features

- Manage email and social media campaigns
- Schedule and trigger campaigns (ex. welcome email)
- Save and edit templates
- Forms builder
- Website builder
- View reports to analyze click rate and audiences
- Tag audiences to target campaigns
- More features in paid version

Organization + Project Management

LastPass

Use one master password to keep all other passwords secure. Runs on browser or mobile device to automatically and securely log you in to sites with stored passwords.

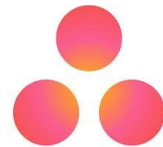


Features

- Free version for windows, Mac, Linux, and mobile
- Store passwords for autofill
- Securely send passwords and documents
- Store bank information, passport, and drivers licenses
- Option to auto generate new password
- Premium \$3/month gets 15 G encrypted storage
- Family \$4/month gets 6 premium licenses for easy sharing

Asana

Assign tasks to users, see workload across projects with shared calendar, and collaborate on projects. Use on mobile or browser.



Features

- Free for teams up to 15
- Integrates with other apps like Slack, Microsoft Teams, and Salesforce
- Templates, to do lists, boards, timelines
- More features in paid versions

Trello

Collaborate with others using “cards” you can edit and move around. You can add due dates, comments, attachments, and use the butler feature to send automatic reminders. Runs on mobile device or browser.



Features

- Free account has up to 10 boards and limited automation
- Templates get your projects organized easily
- More features in paid versions

Wrike

Manage teamwork with this template-based project organizing tool. Like many of these systems, there are customizable dashboards, shared calendars, and multiple app integrations.



Features

- Free for 5 users
- Reschedule tasks
- Use request forms
- Proofing and approval
- More features in Paid version

Scheduling

Calendly



Calendar booking app that books events into a variety of calendar systems including google, outlook and icloud. Send a link to a page listing your availability for a meeting or event and allow others to select a specific time.

Features

- Connects to calendar
- Books directly to calendar
- Personalized link
- Automated event notifications
- More features in paid version

Doodle



Classic Doodle is still free without an account, but if you want an upgrade, Doodle premium has some interesting features like enforcing deadlines, automatic reminders, and asking for contact information. This basic scheduling app allows you to create and send forms that let others choose the best time for a meeting.

Features

- Create schedule openings for others to respond to with availability
- Yes, No, If Need Be response options
- Limit number of votes per option
- Limit participants to one vote
- Hidden poll
- More features on paid version

When 2 Meet



If you want something super simple and clean, try When2Meet. This consists of a fillable form with a calendar. Set possible dates, use email or facebook to share a unique url with others, and get planning.

Features

- Free web-based program with no paid levels
- Sign in to protect your schedule with a password
- See your availability next to group's availability

Website Building

Many website builders utilize templates you can drag and drop to organize a site. All will feature a desktop and mobile view. If you have a lot of data for your website, look into building it yourself, or hiring an expert to build it for you. Also build accessibility into your design from the beginning- it is very difficult to “tack it on” later. Domain names need to be purchased separately.

[WordPress.com](https://www.wordpress.com/)

Template-based website design program. Quickly make a blog or website.



Features

- Free version for Microsoft, Linux, Mac, and mobile
- Preset themes
- Embed video and media (up to 3 GB)
- Easily add alt text to images
- Data on user behavior
- Built in SEO tools like sitemaps

[WordPress.org](https://www.wordpress.org/)

For a more customized website you truly build yourself, use this open source program. You'll need to pay a separate organization to [host your website](#), if you don't have a server to do that. All the features of Wordpress.com without the cost and limitations.



Features

- Open source
- Free for Window, Mac, and Linux
- Themes
- Plugins
- Optional Monetization

Have comments, or something more to add? Please contact web@nycmer.org so we can continue to update this resource.