



2021 Virtual Advocacy Event

Frequently Asked Questions

1) What can I expect to get out of the event?

Participants learn how to effectively engage with policymakers, how science policy is formulated, and about trends in federal research spending.

Participants will likely take part in one to three meetings with members of Congress or their staff. Some of these meetings may be with your own congressional delegation, while others may be with congressional offices from other parts of the country.

The event is also an opportunity to meet other scientists with an interest in science policy and communications.

2) What is the cost to participate?

The Virtual Advocacy Event is free for participants. Should you wish to participate in the Communications Boot Camp for Scientists, there is a [cost for this two-day training program](#).

3) Where will the event take place?

Both the training program and congressional meetings will take place online via Zoom.

4) When will the congressional meetings take place?

Meetings will be scheduled for April 21-23. Each meeting will likely last about 15 minutes. We will do our best to work around participants' schedules, but due to the virtual nature of the event, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to avoid scheduling conflicts.

AIBS will schedule the congressional meetings for priority participants, including people who participated in the Communications Boot Camp for Scientists and for participants from select congressional districts. Other participants may be required to schedule their own meetings, with guidance from AIBS.

5) What are my responsibilities as a participant?

Participants are required to attend a half-day mandatory training session on April 20 from 1:00 PM EST to 5:00 PM EST. (These times may adjust slightly as the program agenda is finalized.)

Participants are responsible for ensuring access to a reliable internet connection and a computer with audio and visual capabilities to effectively participate in the training and congressional meetings.

Participants are encouraged to spend about an hour in advance of the event to research and prepare talking points on the benefits of federal investments in science, especially to their local region.

Additionally, some participants may be required to schedule their own congressional meeting, with guidance from AIBS.

6) What should I wear?

Participants should wear business attire for their online congressional meetings.

7) How can I prepare for the congressional meetings?

Participants should spend time in advance of the event to prepare talking points for the congressional meetings. Resources from the American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS) can be accessed at <https://www.aibs.org/policy/resources.html#top>. More guidance will be sent closer to the event.

8) Can I prepare handouts or a PowerPoint?

No PowerPoints please! But participants are welcome to have an infographic or picture ready to share via Zoom. AIBS policy staff can help you to select appropriate graphics.

9) When will the Communications Boot Camp for Scientists take place?

The communications and advocacy training program will take place on April 19 and 20 from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM Eastern. (These times may adjust slightly as the program agenda is finalized.)