Big Water Consulting Zoom Focus Group Best Practices

In Advance of Meeting:

- Send out a Zoom "tip" sheet that includes information that may be helpful to Zoom novices
  - How to check internet speed prior to meeting
  - Tips for low bandwidth (disconnect other devices or ask family members/roommates to reduce internet use during meeting, calling in for audio rather than using computer audio, etc)
  - Encourage participants to mute themselves when not speaking to reduce distracting background noise
  - Encourage participants to keep camera on throughout duration of focus group to facilitate group trust and participation
  - Encourage participants to be in a quiet and (ideally private if possible) room so that confidential information can be shared comfortably by others without being overheard
- Send out agenda and any documents relevant to focus group or worksheets that will be used during the meeting
- Send out a reminder the day before the meeting with the Zoom link

Meeting Opening/Introductions:

- Have multiple note-takers and a backup facilitator who can help admit participants from the waiting room, answer questions in chat, and can take over presenting or screen sharing should the facilitator lose connection
- Allow for a few minutes after meeting start time for participants to join meeting, adjust cameras and microphones, etc.
- Remind participants of in-meeting best practices, including encouraging (but not requiring) cameras on and reminding participants to keep mics muted while not speaking
- Begin meeting by asking permission to record and go over how information will be kept confidential. Recording will be used for note-taking purposes, and permission will be obtained should facilitators want to use any direct quote. Remind participants that anything shared is confidential and is not to be shared outside of group.
- Depending on cultural context, offer space to begin meeting with a traditional prayer, blessing, pule, etc.
- Have an ice breaker activity for introductions. Ask name, pronouns, relevant affiliation (Tribe, organization, etc), and something more personal relevant to the

focus group, such as "What is your favorite way to connect to your culture or heritage during quarantine?"

During Meeting:

- If the group is larger than about 8 people, utilize breakout groups to encourage participation from attendees who may not be comfortable speaking in front of a large group
    - If using break out groups, have facilitators visit each group to check in and have each group assign a note-taker and a person who will report back to the larger group
- Have script of questions, but allow for conversation to flow naturally
- Do not require participants to share sensitive or triggering info
- If sensitive or triggering content is part of the conversation, allow for time at the end to decompress. This can be a few minutes at the end of the meeting, or have facilitators stay in the Zoom room after the meeting is over to address any questions or allow for debriefing
- Facilitators should use people-first language throughout, and should be patient with participants who are not used to Zoom meetings and may be having trouble with the technology (camera, muting, etc)
- Provide participants with structure to engage (specific questions, activities that require conversation, brainstorming, and sharing), but be open and flexible to the group's needs or preferences
- Depending on meeting length, offering a short break mid-session and encouraging participants to take bio-breaks as needed

After Meeting:

- Send out a thank you to all participants and ask for feedback if anyone wants to share (depending on context, a short feedback survey may be appropriate so that participants may share feedback confidentially)
- Send any follow-up documents or incentives that may be part of the project