Advice on hosting a Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) ceremony

HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY TRUST

This guidance document accompanies the Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) ceremony Power Point presentation and script, but the advice is useful for all HMD activities being delivered online and in person.

An HMD ceremony can provide a meaningful opportunity for people to come together and learn from genocide, for a better future. Delivering your ceremony online or as hybrid means that people can still mark HMD no matter where they are.

Here are some tips for running an effective HMD Ceremony:

- **Host** - The presentation provided by Holocaust Memorial Day Trust (HMDT) works best with a host to lead the proceedings and read the suggested script. The best person for this role depends on your organisation. For example, if you are a local council, you may wish to have the civic mayor or Leader of the Council act as the host, or if you are a school, this might be the head teacher.

- **Interactive elements** - To make your ceremony more participatory, consider involving other members of your organisation in delivering the readings, such as the **Statement of Commitment**. We encourage you to ask audience members to join in the candle lighting, either online or as invited representatives in person. Make sure you let audience members know in advance so that they have necessary materials to hand. If online, you could also ask audience members to share photos of their lit candles on social media, or hold up their flames to the camera, as a powerful act of remembrance. We have a flickering candle GIF that you may wish to download here: **hmd.org.uk/flickeringcandle**.

- **Content** - The content used in the template presentation is there as guidance, and we encourage you to adapt the content and personalise it as you see fit. There might be particular poems, songs, readings or films that you want to include. Explore our **resources** for inspiration.

- **Contributions** - Inviting contributions from people and organisations in your local community is a great way to make your ceremony more powerful and more engaging. Make sure you contact potential contributors far enough in advance for them to practice and record (if applicable) their contribution.

- **Audience** - Decide in advance whether your event will be open to the public or by invitation only. If online, you will also need to provide joining instructions to attendees, including any links, passwords or log-in information. Explore our **social media graphics** and **poster template** to help you.

- **Length** - The prepared presentation is for a ceremony that lasts approximately 50 minutes. You can make your ceremony shorter or longer by adapting the content in the presentation as you see fit for your audience. We recommend keeping the ceremony to less than one hour to keep your audience engaged.

- **Preparation** - We strongly recommend preparing and testing the ceremony in advance and rehearsing it to ensure it runs smoothly.

- **Platforms and tech** - If you are delivering the ceremony online or as hybrid, it is best to use a video conferencing platform which allows you to share your computer screen, such as Zoom, Skype, Microsoft Teams or Google Hangouts. You will need to use a computer with a microphone.

- **Security** – Unfortunately some online events have been targeted by people wishing to cause disruption or offence. Although this is a rare occurrence, we recommend reading the **Community Security Trust's *Guidance for secure livestreaming***, particularly if your event is public. Use passwords and consider registering attendees in advance to make your event more secure.

- **Accessibility** - Please consider how you will make the ceremony as accessible as possible. This might include choosing subtitled film content, British Sign Language interpretation and providing a transcript of the ceremony. All videos provided in our template ceremony include optional subtitles which you can turn on or off through YouTube.

Let us know about your activity: don't forget to add your ceremony to our **online map** and let us know how you marked HMD! Every event, online or in person, makes up the national picture of how the UK marks HMD.

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Find out more...

Holocaust Memorial Day Trust: **hmd.org.uk**
Discover resources and materials for your activities: **hmd.org.uk/resources**

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Learning from genocide – for a better future