Using Skype for Standing Council Meetings

Preliminary Notes on Using Skype

Standing Council meetings conducted using Skype will be done solely through voice and instant messaging. Video conferencing will not be used during this time for Standing Council meetings.

To participate in the discussion through voice, one will need a microphone and speaker system enabled on their computer. Participants may also utilize a VoIP (voice over internet protocol) headset device to participate in discussions. These are available at most electronics retailers (Futureshop, BestBuy, The Source, Wal-Mart etc.). You should be able to purchase a decent one for around $30.

If you do not wish to use a mic or a VoIP headset, Skype's instant message box (featured in the lower half of your Skype window) allows participants to key in responses during the group call (similar to using Facebook chat or Windows Messenger). If you don't see a message box, click the thought bubble icon to enable instant messaging.

Currently, group calls on Skype can only support up to 25 participants at a time. In most cases, this won't be an issue, but be aware that participation in group calls is on a *first-come, first-serve* basis.

Getting Started – Downloading Skype

First things first, if you don't have Skype, then you will need to download it on to your computer. Click here to get started→ http://www.skype.com/intl/en-us/get-skype/

Find the "Get Skype…" Blue Button and click it (right side of the screen). A new window will open. Click the "Download Now" Blue Button.

Once that's done, you'll be brought to this window → http://www.skype.com/intl/en-us/get-skype/on-your-computer/windows/downloading/ *Note that a yellow bar may pop up near the top of your window. Depending on your browser, you should be able to click it and select "Download the File".

Follow the on-screen prompts. Once your installation is complete, you should have a shortcut for PC users or an alias created on your desktop for MAC users.

Getting Started – Creating a Skype Account
Once you've installed Skype, you will need to create an account for yourself.

Double-click the Skype icon on your desktop and a "Welcome to Skype" window will open. Under the "Skype Name" box, click "Don't have a Skype name?".

You'll be brought to the "Create a new Skype account" window. Fill out all the details. Keep in mind, keep it simple when creating a Skype name. Something that is relatively easy to remember. It's always a good idea to keep a copy of your Skype name and Password somewhere safe in case you forget.

Once you've filled out all of the fields, select the grey "I agree – create account" button in the bottom right corner.

If all your information is correct, you'll be brought to the main Skype window of your account.

Adding CDA's Main Skype Account to Your Contacts

Now that you've created and logged into your account, you'll have to send a contact request to CDA's Main Skype Account so that we can add you to your standing council contact group. This account will manage the technical aspects of your call, but your standing council chair will lead the discussion.

Select "Contacts" from the top horizontal menu, and click "Add a Contact". Another window will open that will have several fields for you to fill out. The only field you need to fill out is "Skype Name". Key in Skype Name, **cdaacd-main** and click the green "Add" button below.

The next window will prompt you to send a message with your request. You can leave the standardized text as it. Click the grey "Send Request" button below. That's it. Your request will be accepted once your request has been reviewed.

Participating in the Group Call (Standing Council Meeting)

It is recommended that all meeting participants log onto their Skype accounts at least 5 minutes prior to the meeting time.

When your standing council chair is ready to start the meeting, **cdaacd-main** will call the group which will include your contact. A small Skype box will appear on your screen that indicates **cdaacd-main** is calling you. Here you will have to click the green "Accept" button to pick up the call. Once that's done, you will be brought into the group call window.

Your standing council chair will start the conversation as soon as all or most of the group contacts online accept the call. Meetings will officially start once the standing council chair has initiated it. For your information, your standing council chair's Skype name will appear as such:

cdaacd_standing council name. For instance, the chair of the dance companies standing council will appear as: **cdaacd_dance_companies**.

If you are using a VoIP headset or a mic and speaker combination, you can simply start speaking to join the conversation. Your group will always know who's talking because Skype visually indicates which member is speaking when. For Windows, a yellow halo appears around the member's icon, and for MACs, audio levels fluctuate on the member's icon.

If you are participating through instant messaging, a box will appear near the bottom of the window where you can key in your message. If you don't see this, click on the small thought bubble icon near the bottom of the window to activate instant messaging.

Once your meeting reaches its end and you're finished with Skype, simply click on "Skype" on the horizontal title bar and select "Sign out". That's it! You've participated in your first standing council meeting over Skype.

Final Notes

If you would like to familiarize yourself with Skype beyond what has been covered here, please visit https://support.skype.com/en-us/;jsessionid=7D25AB6882505121F19087C41C7B2BC8. This is Skype's support and help page and can be very useful.

For questions regarding meeting agendas etc., please contact your standing council chair.

For questions regarding technical aspects of Skype, please contact Michael Freethy (CDA Staff) at 416.515.8445 or by emailing michael@dancecanada.net.