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## 1. What is BigBlueButton?

BigBlueButton is an open source video conferencing system that runs on the servers of the University of Freiburg and offers the usual features of a video conferencing tool: Presentations can be uploaded and annotated via a whiteboard function, the screen or specific windows can be shared, and breakout rooms can be created. Participants can connect via camera, sound, and chat and participate in the meetings.

## 2. What can BigBlueButton be used for?

BigBlueButton can be used by all members of the University for online seminars, live sessions, office hours and for hybrid teaching scenarios where part of the students are present in class and part of them are participating online. For [oral exams](#) at the University of Freiburg, BBB is the preferred system for data protection reasons.

Online seminars with a group size of up to 25 participants can be conducted with video/audio interaction of all participants. Larger groups with up to 150 participants are also possible. In the latter case, however, it is recommended to only connect a small number of video cameras at the same time and to ask the participants to ask questions mainly in the chat or to activate the microphone/video only after a student used the hand-raising feature.

Recordings of BBB meetings are currently not possible at the University of Freiburg.

### 3. Creating rooms

BigBlueButton rooms can be created in two different ways:

#### 3.1 Creating a BBB room directly in an ILIAS course or group

With the help of the green button "Add item", you can select the ILIAS object "BigBlueButton meeting room" and embed it directly in your course/group. This has the advantage that the course members have direct access to the room and no link has to be sent, anymore.



To allow students to independently use BigBlueButton meeting rooms in a course room, your course must contain at least one group. There, students must be upgraded to group admins, so that they can create and launch BigBlueButton rooms on their own.

In the learning groups area on ILIAS, students can also use this option independently ( → [Instructions Use of BBB Rooms by Students on ILIAS, in german](#)).

It is possible to invite external participants to the video sessions via a link. To participate, the room must already have been started. Therefore, please arrange a fixed time at which the external person should join.



Figure 1 Inviting external participants

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#### 3.2 Using the BigBlueButton server directly: <https://bbb.uni-freiburg.de>

All members of the University of Freiburg can create and start as many BBB rooms as they like via <https://bbb.uni-freiburg.de>, after logging in with their university account. A link and an access code (if necessary) is sent to the participants. This is especially useful for video conferences without course context or with external participants. Participants can freely choose their display name and enter it before entering the room.

When creating the rooms, you have similar options as with other systems, how the room can be entered: by access code or via a waiting room, and you can define which rights the meeting participants should have. For example, you can create a room with an access code and set all meeting participants to have moderation rights. With this setting, a group can use a shared room without the meeting organizer having to be present at a meeting. Microphone and camera.

#### 3.3 Activating the microphone

When you start or enter a BBB room, you will first be asked if you would like to participate with a microphone or just listening:

Provided you have selected "With microphone", a message from the browser will usually appear, with which permission must now still be given to enable the microphone:

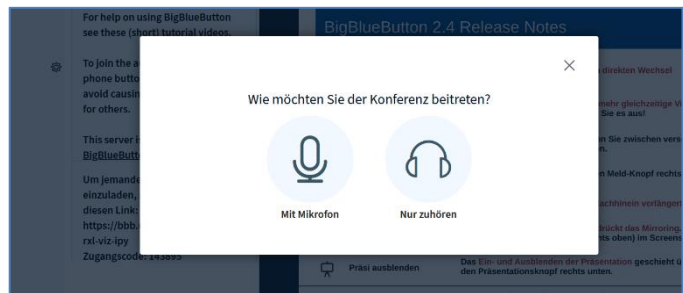


Figure 2: Activating the microphone before entering the room

Please click on the "Allow" button. The microphone is now activated, but initially muted. Use the "Microphone" button (see chapter 5, number 3) to unmute the microphone.

### 3.4 Activating the camera

By clicking on the camera icon (see number 3 in the overview), you activate your webcam.

Here, too, a message from your browser appears first, asking you to allow access to the camera. If you have two cameras connected, please select the correct camera in the upper selection field. Afterwards, you will get a preview of your camera image, you can adjust the quality, if necessary, and select a virtual background (Fig. 3):

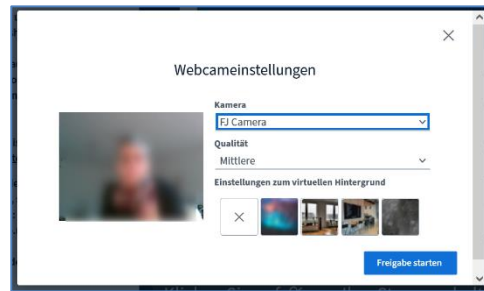


Figure 3 Webcam settings and virtual background

## 4. Roles

In BBB, there are three roles:

**Participants:** round participant icon

Rights: chatting, de/activating one's own camera and sound, answering polls, setting a status, participating in breakout sessions, using annotation tools, if enabled.

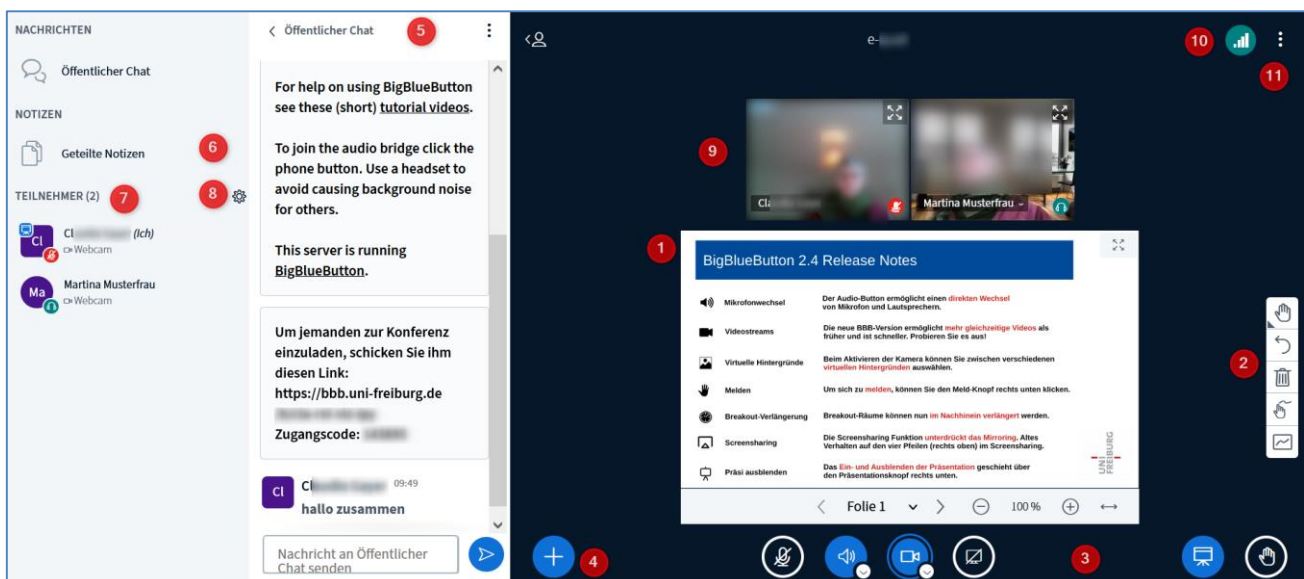
**Moderator:** square participant icon

Beyond managing the participant's rights, moderators can also make administrative settings (such as muting, upgrading...), make themselves or others presenter, create group rooms and end the session. There can be multiple moderators per session.

**Presenter:** blue presentation icon

The person currently holding the presentation function leads the session and can upload slides, start polls, use the whiteboard function, share his or her screen and external videos. There is only one presenter per session. The role can be assigned and changed by the moderator(s).

## 5. Overview



## 1 Information slide

After entering the room, you will see the information slide in the main window, where we provide important notes and changes after version updates. The navigation arrows at the bottom will take you to the next slide. We have provided rules for successful BBB meetings there, which you may use for your online meeting. From slide 3, you will find several white pages that you can use as a digital whiteboard with the annotation tools (see chapter 2).

## 2 Annotation tools

Provided that you actively hold the "presenter" role, you will see the annotation tools on the right, with which you can enter text, lines, shapes and freehand drawings on the slides. White slides (e.g. slide 3ff of the information slide set) can be used as a whiteboard. The button at the very bottom can be used to activate the multi-user mode to share the whiteboard function with the participants, so that they can also use the annotation tools. Alternatively, you can click on the names of persons in the list of participants to give only individual participants or other moderators the rights to use the whiteboard together with the presenter (see chapter 7b).

## 3 Micro/speaker/camera activation, screen sharing, presentation minimization, and raise hand function

Below the slide, there are three buttons for enabling and selecting the microphone, speaker, and camera, as well as for screen sharing. To the right, you can find buttons for minimizing the presentation and the "raise hand" function. If a participant activates the raise hand function, this is displayed to the presenter.

## 4 Actions

Via the „Actions“ button, you can manage your presentation (upload office and pdf documents, allow download), start a poll (see chapter 7), share an external video (YouTube, Vimeo, Instructure Media, Twitch, Dailymotion and media file URLs) or select a random participant (after a short countdown, everyone will see who was selected).

## 5 Chat

The chat can be shown and hidden individually. It is only possible to send messages to all participants here. The chat can be copied or saved by all participants. You can also send private messages to individual persons via the list of participants on the left side.

## 6 Shared notes

They are editable and visible for all participants at the same time, unless the option has been restricted via the participant rights (see chapter 8 ).

## 7 Participants

The participants are listed here. An icon shows whether the microphone is activated (green) or deactivated (red). The camera status can be seen below the name in gray. The presentation status is shown with a blue icon.

By clicking on your own name, you can set a status and - depending on the global setting - make yourself the presenter. By clicking on a participant name, individual settings can be made:

- a. Start a private chat
- b. Allow access to whiteboard
- c. Make presenter
- d. Downgrade to participant
- e. Remove participants

## 8 Managing participants

Via the gear button "Manage participants", you can make general settings for all participants:

- f. Mute / unmute all participants

- g. Restrict participant rights: Various functions such as webcam, microphone, chat, notes, and the display of the list of participants can be de/activated here.
- h. Control guest access: Here, you can define whether the moderator must be asked or guests are always accepted/denied.
- i. Save participant names: export names as txt
- j. Delete status icons
- k. Create group rooms (breakout rooms) (see chapter 6)
- l. Write subtitles

### 9 Other viewers webcams

The videos of the participants can be moved below or next to the presentation (individual setting). To do so, please right-click on the active video bar and, while holding down the mouse button, and drag it to the position that seems appropriate for the meeting. The arrangement has no effect on other meeting participants (individual setting).

### 10 Connection status

Here, your own as well as the connection status of the participants are displayed. In case of connection problems, you can deactivate your webcam/screen sharing.

### 11 Settings / Ending a conference

The three dots lead to a context menu. Here, you can display BBB in full screen, access the settings (e.g. language, font size, notifications, data saving mode) and you can end or leave the conference.

## 6. Group rooms / Breakout rooms

The gear icon next to the list of participants takes you to the „Create Breakout Rooms“ function. In BBB, you can divide the meeting participants into up to 16 breakout groups. Participants can be randomly assigned to a room, be assigned to a group room by drag-and-drop, or choose a room themselves. A time limit for the rooms can be set and subsequently extended. The remaining time is displayed to the group participants with a banner. In the group rooms, the participants are automatically all equal moderators, i.e. they can manage the rooms themselves, select a presenter, upload presentations, start polls, etc.

As soon as the group rooms are created, the moderator (not the participants) will see the entry „group rooms“ above the list of participants. This entry can be used to enter the group rooms or to set up an audio connection to individual rooms. The duration of the rooms can be extended here and the group rooms can be ended.

## 7. Polls

### 7.1 Creating polls directly in BBB

You can create quick polls using the plus icon below the presentation →“Start a poll“. Response types include true/false; A/B/C/D; Yes/No/Abstention; and participant response (free text). After selecting the response type, you can add additional response elements, if necessary, and specify whether the poll should be conducted anonymously (presenter cannot view individual responses), or not. When the results are published, they are displayed to the participants on the presentation slide (if a presentation is currently shown) and in the chat, or only in the chat, if a screen is currently transferred.

## 7.2 Polls from presentations

Questions and answers can be saved directly in a presentation according to the scheme mentioned in chapter 7.1. When uploading a presentation, BBB checks whether the slides contain questions and answers. If this is the case, a button is displayed to directly start a poll based on the identified questions/answers.

## 8. Support and contact

On ILIAS, you will find the "Support" section in the repository with detailed instructions and support materials and a forum for questions about ILIAS.

Please feel free to contact us: [ilias@rz.uni-freiburg.de](mailto:ilias@rz.uni-freiburg.de).

### License notice



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