DFNconf - the web conference service of the Deutschen Forschungsnetz (German Research Network)

How-to

TECHNISCHE UNIVERSITÄT DARMSTADT

HRZ
Hochschulrechenzentrum

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2. Introduction

DFNconf offers you the possibility to organize a web conference by setting up conference rooms and inviting participants. Different variations of the web conference are available:

- Audio only
- Audio and video
- Conducting presentations

You can take part in a web conference with a wide variety of devices:

- Via web browser
- Via smartphone or tablet with an app (Android, iOS)
- By phone (landline, mobile; audio only)
- With a softphone (telephone software) on the computer (audio only)
- With Skype for Business
- With a permanently installed video conference system

The following is a summary of the necessary requirements, as well as instructions on how to organize and hold such web conferences.

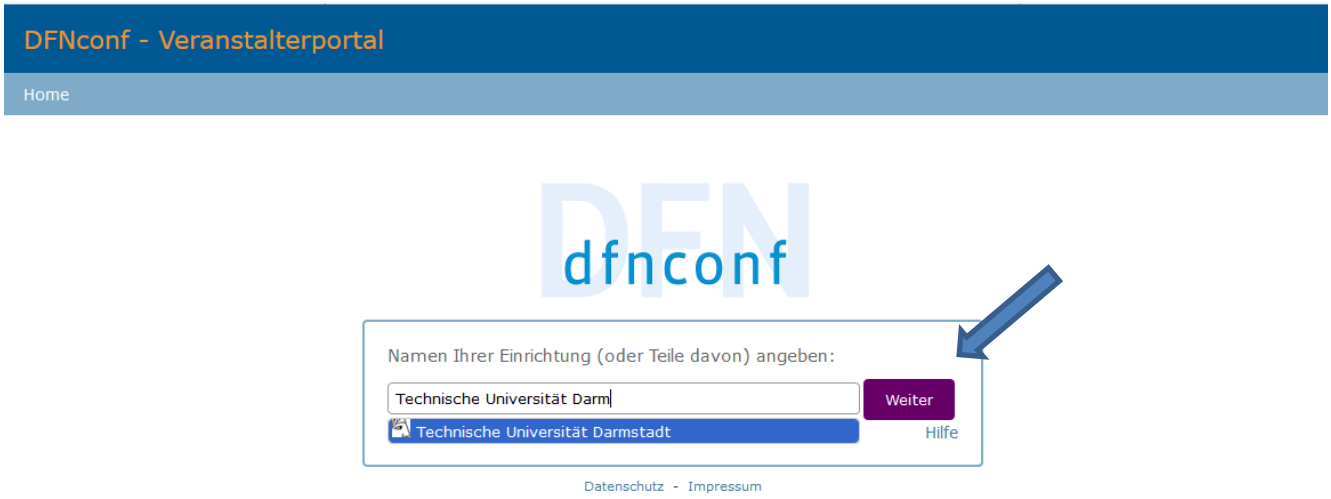
3. Setting up a conference room

To organize a conference, you first have to set up a conference room. You can subsequently invite the participants to this conference room. Such a room is not time-limited, i.e. once it has been configured, you can use it again and again - even with different participants.

1. Access the DFN page to set up the conference room at: https://www.conf.dfn.de/

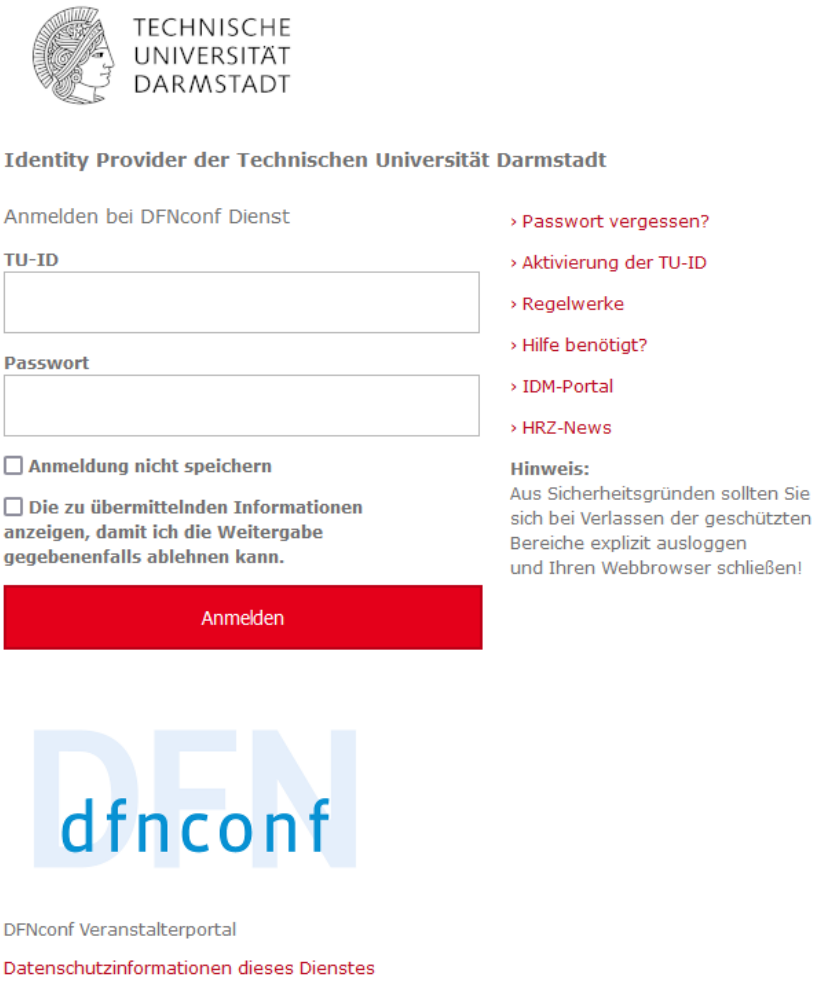
2. From here you will be redirected to a central login page:

3. Enter "Technische Universität Darmstadt" and click on "Weiter":



4. Alternatively (e.g. if you were recently active on this page) you may see the logo of the TU Darmstadt. This is a link that you can use instead:

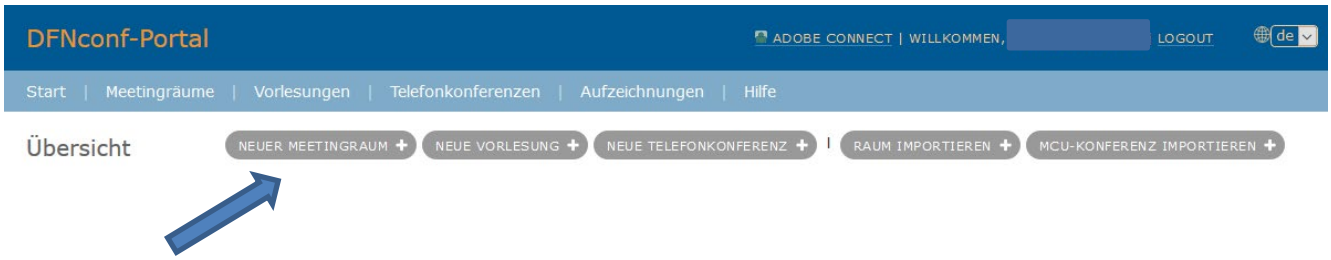
5. You will now be redirected to the actual login. Please use your TU-ID to log in there.



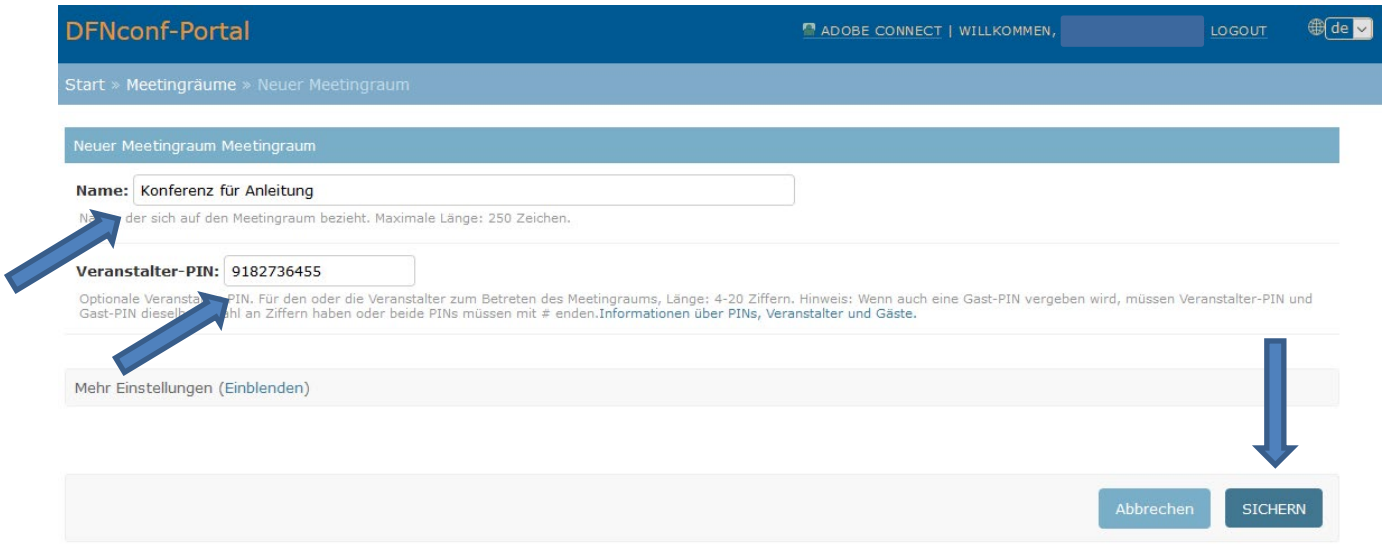
Login with your TU-ID:

Please note: When you log in for the first time, you will be asked whether you agree to the data listed there being transmitted to DFN. Please confirm this.

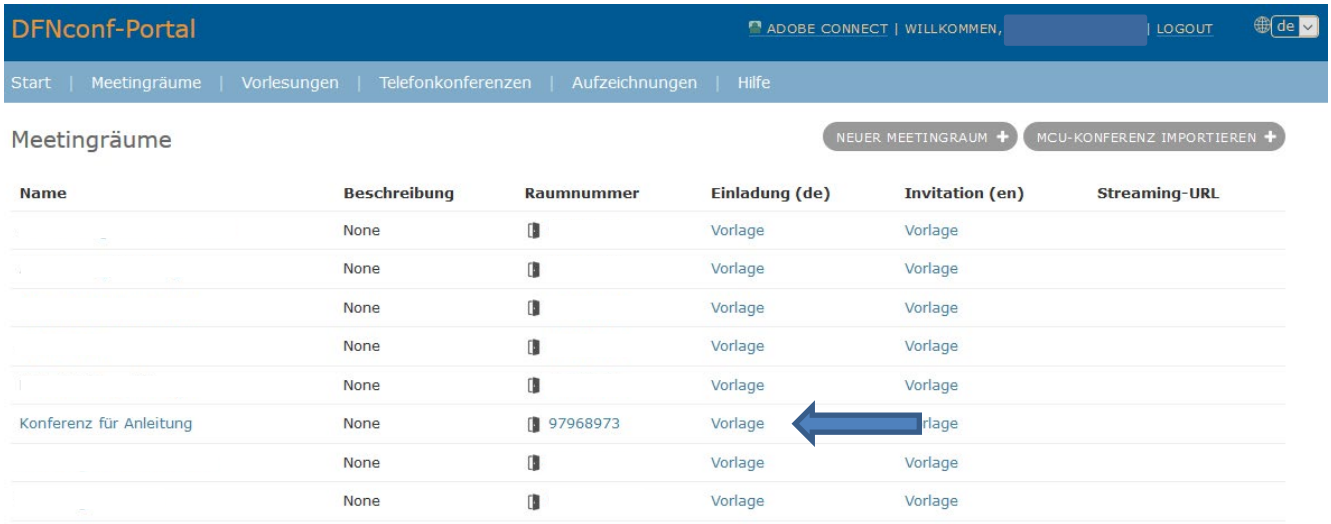
6. On the next page, you can now add a new conference room. To do so, click on the button "Neuer Meetingraum":



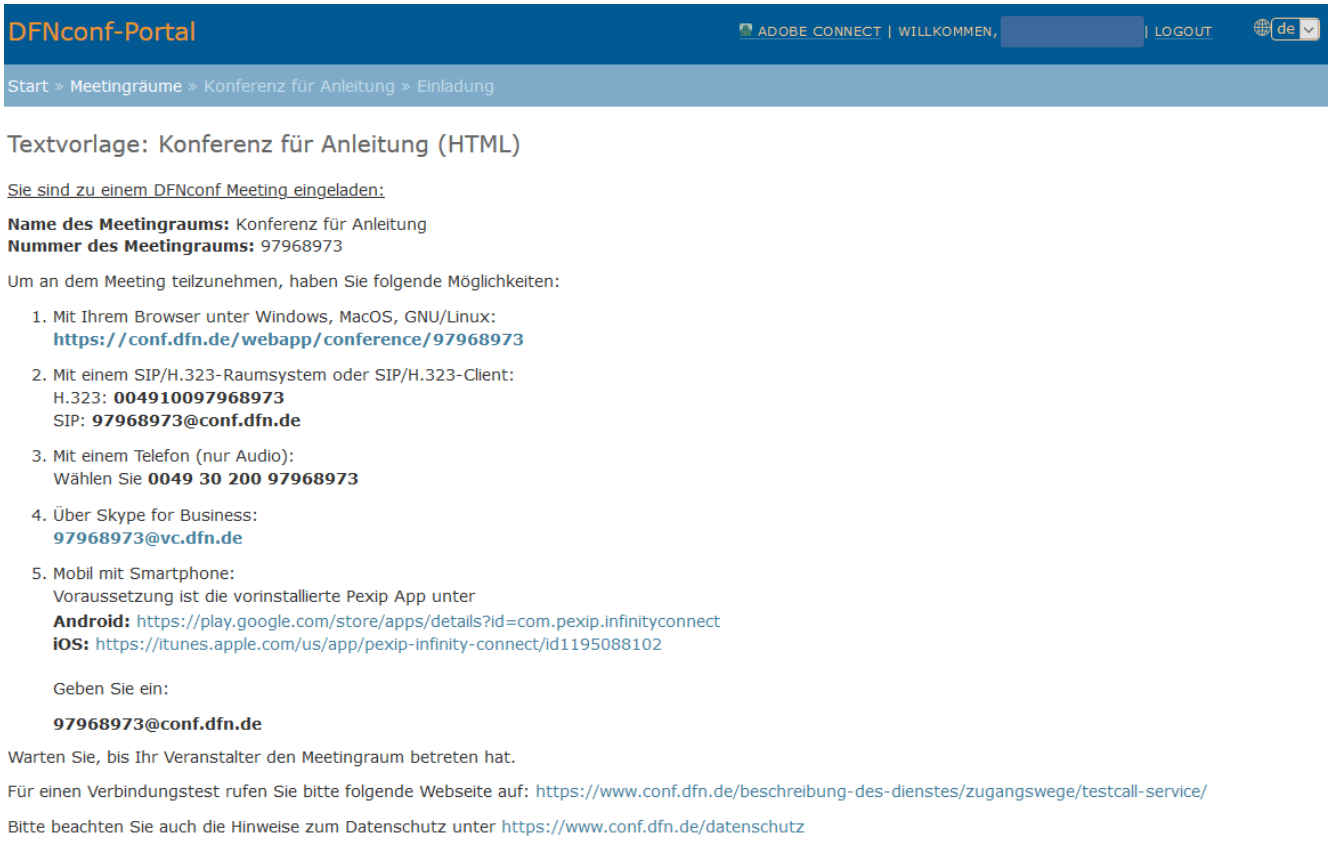
7. Next, define a name for the conference and an organizer PIN (as organizer, you will require this PIN later to open the telco) and confirm this by clicking the "Sichern" button:



8. An overview of the conference rooms you have set up so far will then appear:



If you now click on the "Vorlage" link, you will receive a text suggestion for inviting participants, which contains important information for them:

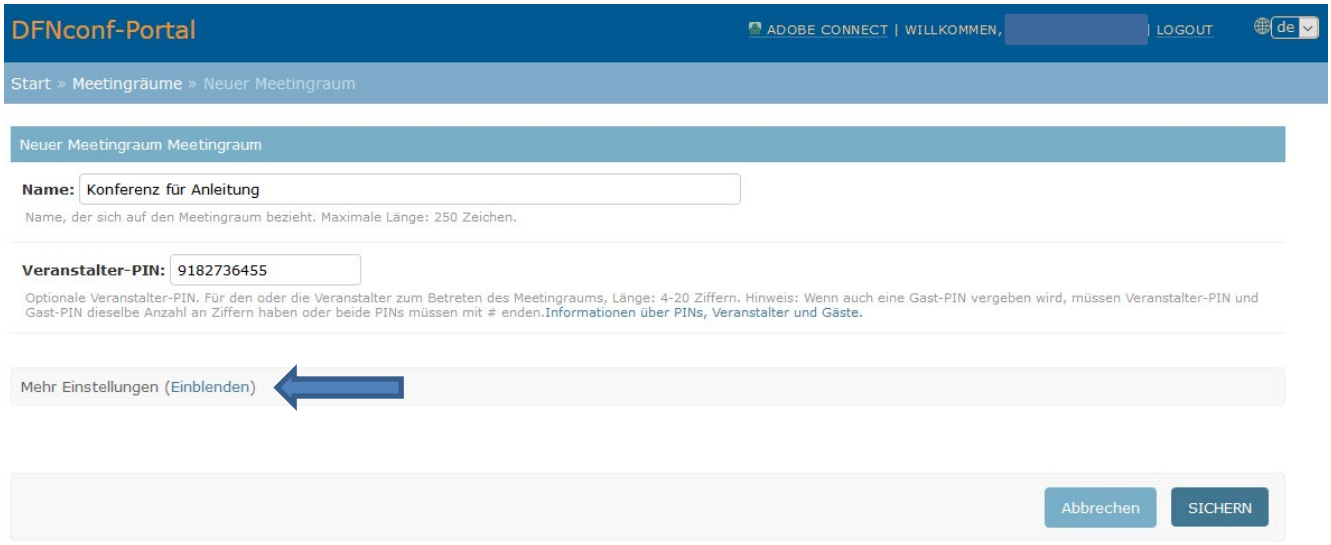


This invitation template is available both as an HTML and as a text-only version (simply scroll down a bit).

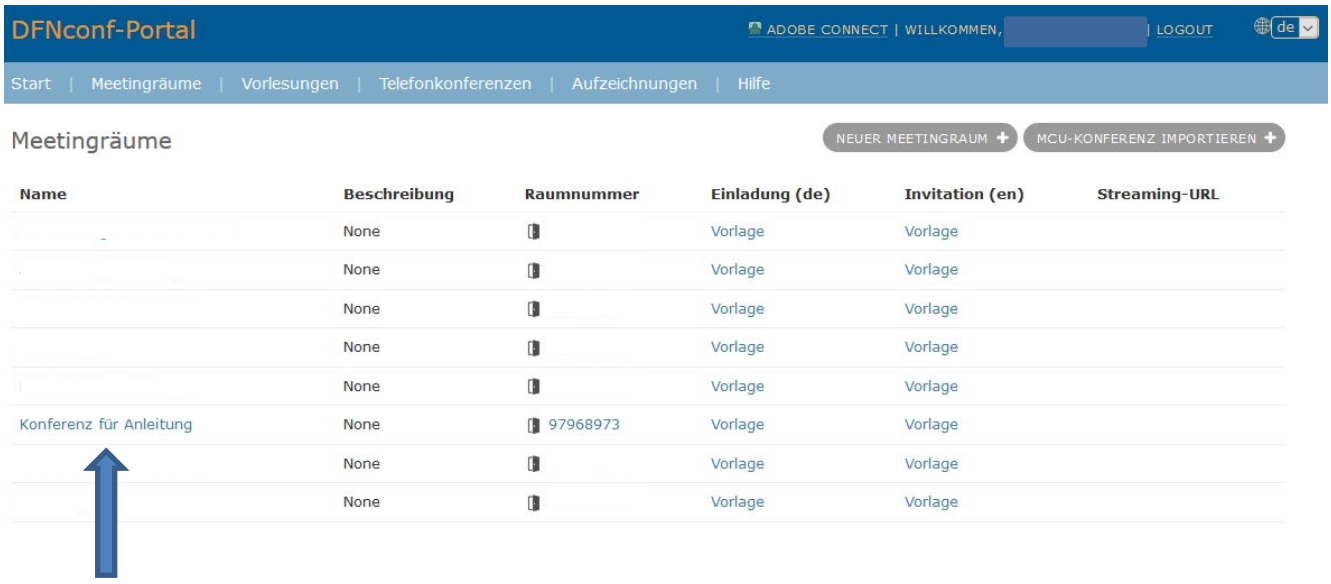
4. Further options when setting up a conference room

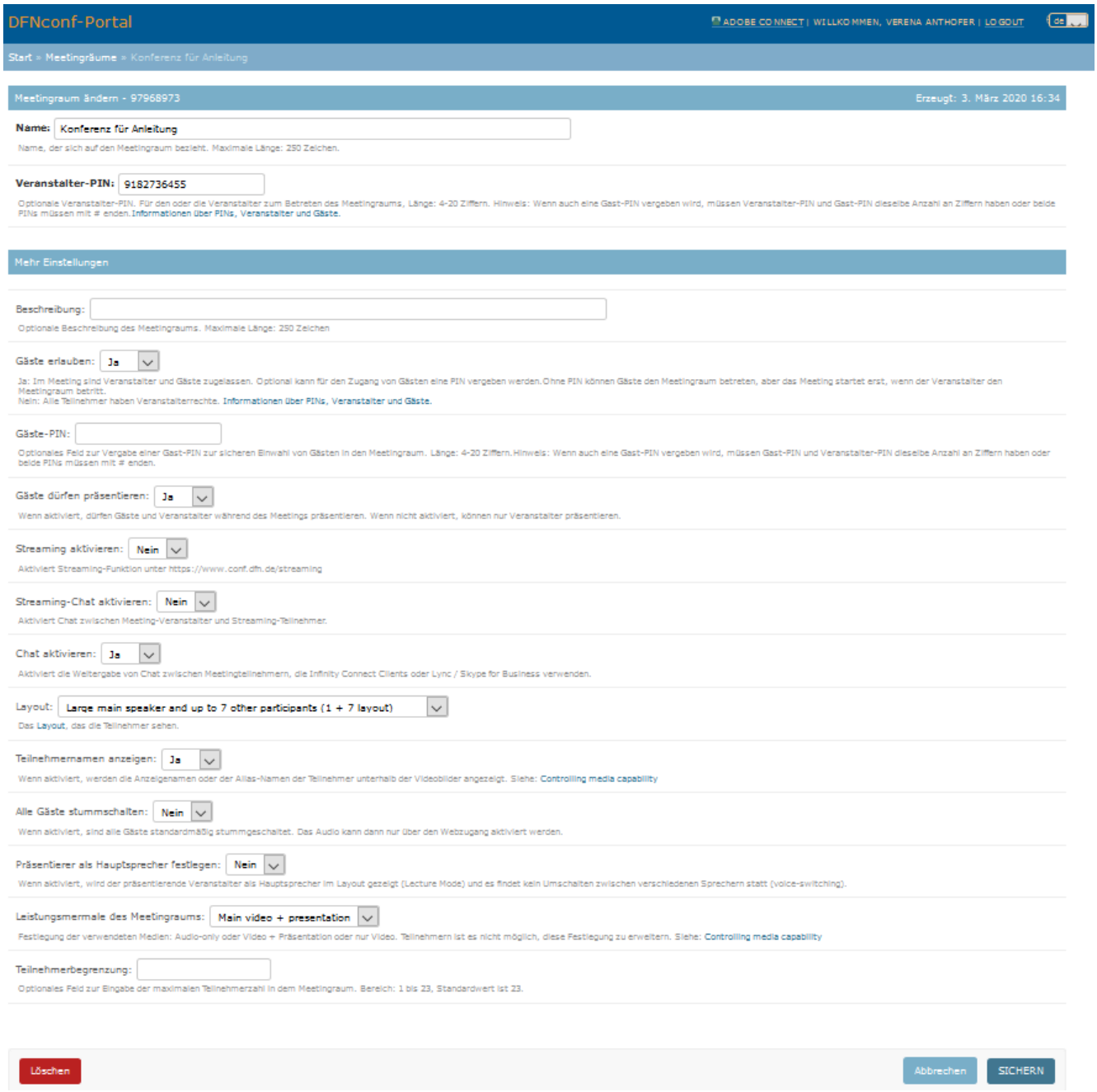
There are two ways to specify additional options for a conference room.

1. Either use the corresponding link on the page to set up the new conference room:



2. Or use the conference room link in the overview of your conference rooms:





Description
You can write a short description in this field with a maximum of 250 characters.

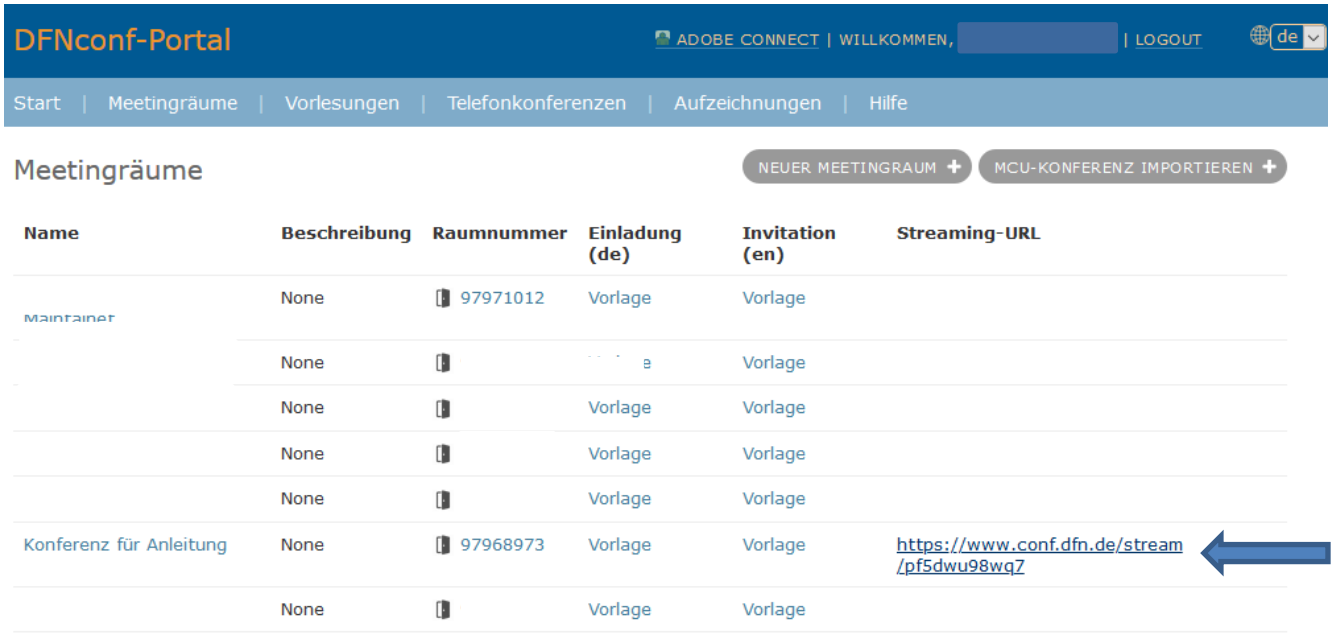
Allowing guests
Yes - guests are permitted, the organizer needs to open the conference with the previously defined PIN. Any person with the link or other dial-in data can participate in the conference.
No - all participants can act as organizers. They need the dial-in data and the PIN for this purpose.

Guest PIN
It is possible to assign an additional guest PIN. The guest and organizer PIN must either contain the same number of digits **or** both PINs must end with #.

If you have created a guest PIN, it will also appear in the invitation template, so it will automatically be sent with the invitation if you use the text template.

Guests may present
The default value here is "yes", i.e. guests may present. If you only want the organizer to be allowed to hold a presentation, you must select "no" here

Enable streaming
It is always possible to stream a conference. For this purpose, the corresponding field must be set to "yes". At this point a URL is generated which can be made available to the potential streaming viewers. The URL can be found in the overview of your conference rooms.



Up to now, we have had very little practical experience with this streaming function, so we would appreciate any feedback and/or additional information.

Enable streaming chat
Enables chat between the streaming participants and the organizer.

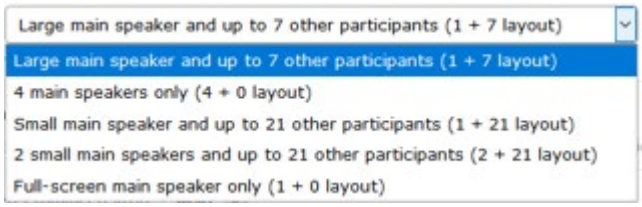
Enable chat
Activates the forwarding of chat between conference participants using Infinity Connect Clients or Lync/Skype for Business.

This is not currently supported by the university computing center. Consequently, we are unfortunately unable to provide any advice on this point.

Layout
Different layouts for the video conference can be selected.

The default setting is that the participant who is speaking always appears as a large image, while the other participants (maximum 7 + the speaking participant) are displayed as small images.

The following alternatives can also be selected:



Display names of participants
The default setting here is that the participants' names are displayed. The name shown is always the name the user provided when registering.

Muting all guests
By default, this is set to "no". If set to "yes", only the organizer can speak. However, this can be changed via web access even in the course of the conference.

Show presenting person as main speaker
Only the presenting person is displayed in the main window. No change takes place.

Features of the meeting room
Here it is possible to choose between audio conference only, video conference only or video+presentation. The default setting is video+presentation.

Limiting the number of participants
A maximum of 23 people can participate in a conference, this is also the default setting. This option also allows you to further limit the number of participants.

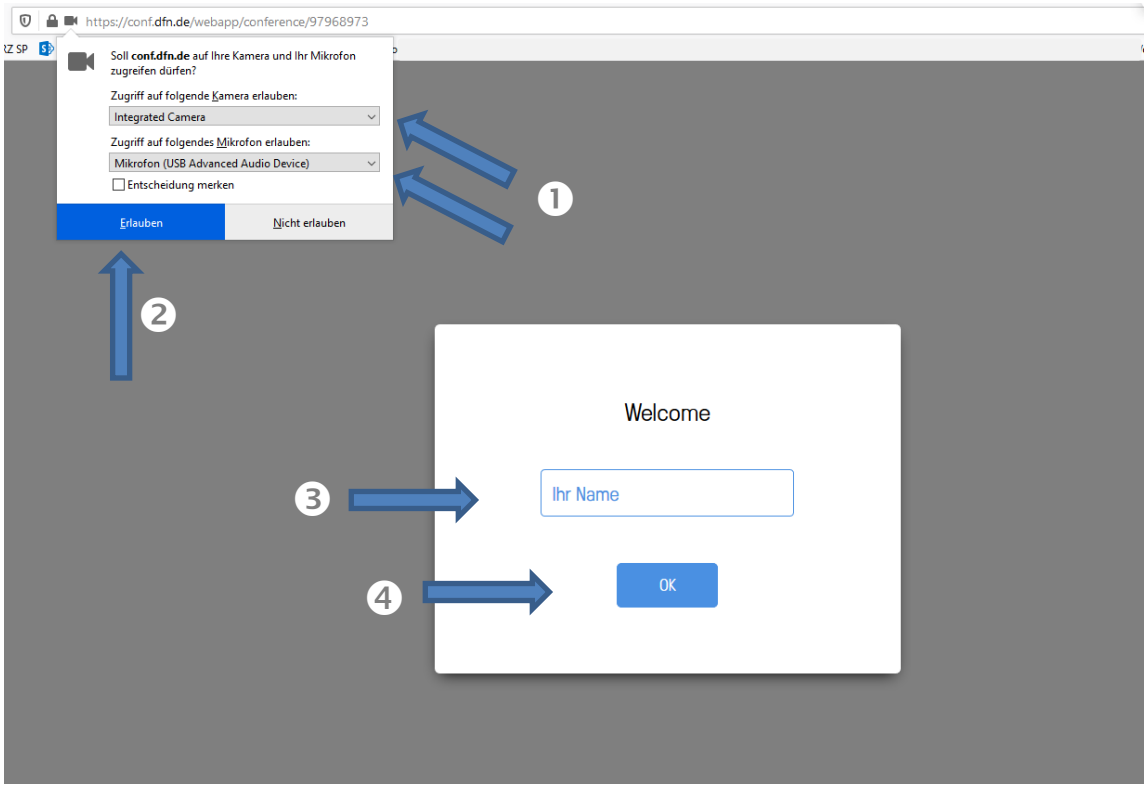
5. Conducting the conference

5.1. As organizer

Open the conference by also using the preferred method of dial-in from the invitation, for example, participation via the browser-based web app. To do this, click on the link from the invitation:

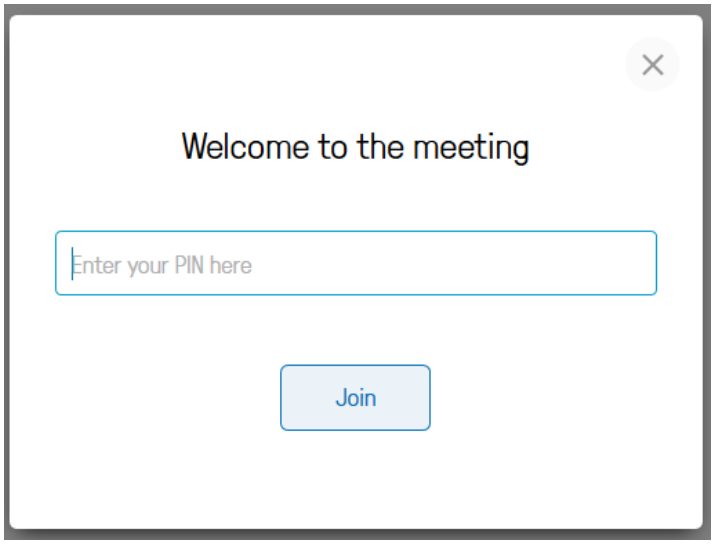
1. Mit Ihrem Browser unter Windows, MacOS, GNU/Linux:
   https://conf.dfn.de/webapp/conference/97968973

5.1.1. Firefox

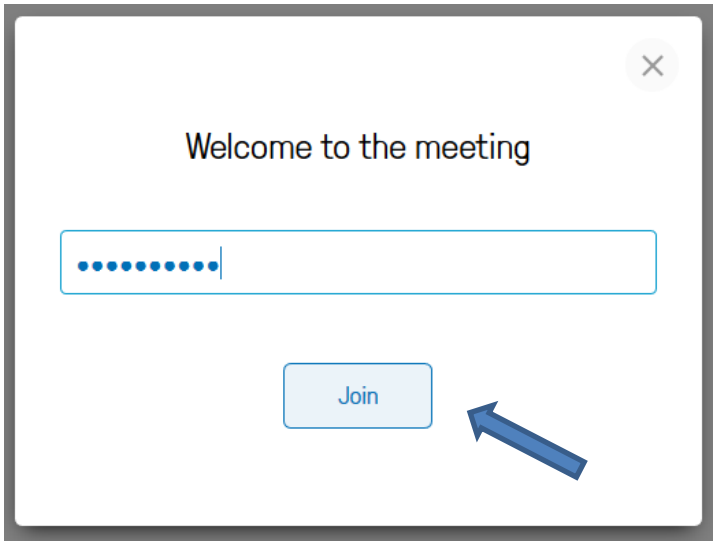


1. Select the correct camera and microphone/loudspeaker hardware to be used.
2. Confirm that these may be used by clicking "Allow".
3. Enter your name in the "Ihr Name" field. This will be displayed to all participants for the duration of the conference.
4. Confirm with "OK".

5. The following window will then appear:

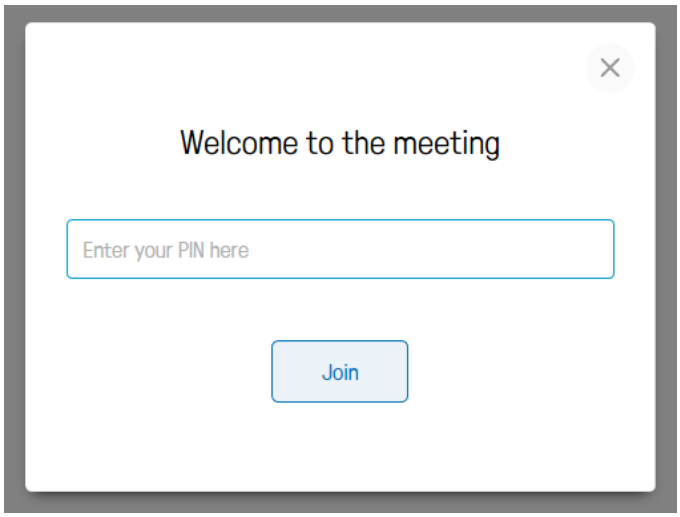


6. Enter the organizer PIN that you used to set up the conference room and click on "Join". Further information can be found in the chapter “Setting up a conference room”.

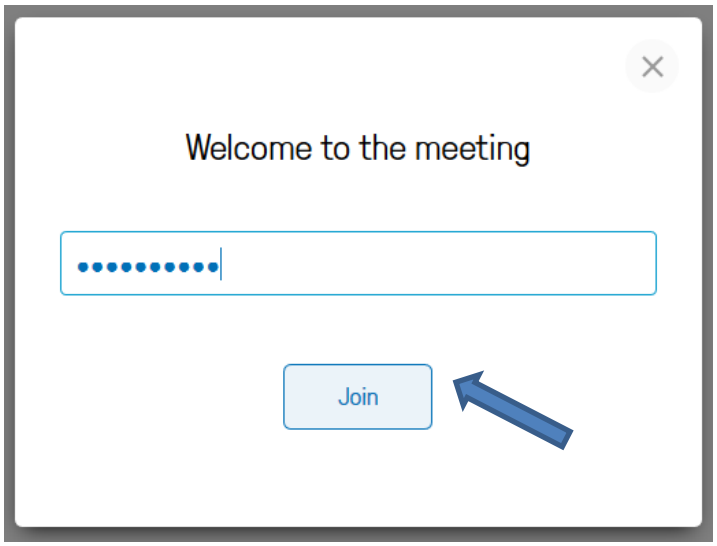


5.1.2. Microsoft Edge

In contrast to Firefox, a web conference using the Microsoft Edge Browser starts directly with the PIN request or the possibility to join the web conference. Settings, such as a different microphone or camera, must be set correctly **before** the web conference. If you have already opened the conference and changes are still required, leave the conference, change the settings (see chapter: "Changing your name, the camera, microphone or other settings“) and then restart the conference.



Please enter the organizer PIN that you used to set up the conference room and click on "Join". Further information on this can be found in the chapter "Setting up a conference room".



5.2. As a participant

You have received an invitation as a participant, which provides the following dial-in data:

Sie sind zu einem DFNconf Meeting eingeladen:

Name des Meetingraums: Konferenz für Anleitung
Nummer des Meetingraums: 97968973
Gast-PIN: 5546372819

Um an dem Meeting teilzunehmen, haben Sie folgende Möglichkeiten:

1. Mit Ihrem Browser unter Windows, MacOS, GNU/Linux:
   https://conf.dfn.de/webapp/conference/97968973
2. Mit einem SIP/H.323-Raumsystem oder SIP/H.323-Client:
   H.323: **004910097968973**
   SIP: **97968973@conf.dfn.de**
3. Mit einem Telefon (nur Audio):
   Wählen Sie **0049 30 200 97968973**
4. Über Skype for Business:
   97968973@vc.dfn.de
5. Mobil mit Smartphone:
   Voraussetzung ist die vorinstallierte Pexip App unter
   Android: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.pexip.infinityconnect
   iOS: https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/pexip-infinity-connect/id1195088102

   Geben Sie ein:

   97968973@conf.dfn.de

Warten Sie, bis Ihr Veranstalter den Meetingraum betreten hat.

Für einen Verbindungstest rufen Sie bitte folgende Webseite auf: https://www.conf.dfn.de/beschreibung-des-dienstes/zugangswege/testcall-service/

Bitte beachten Sie auch die Hinweise zum Datenschutz unter https://www.conf.dfn.de/datenschutz

You can use the dial-in data specified above as an alternative, i.e. you can also dial in to a video conference using the telephone only if the organizer has allowed this.

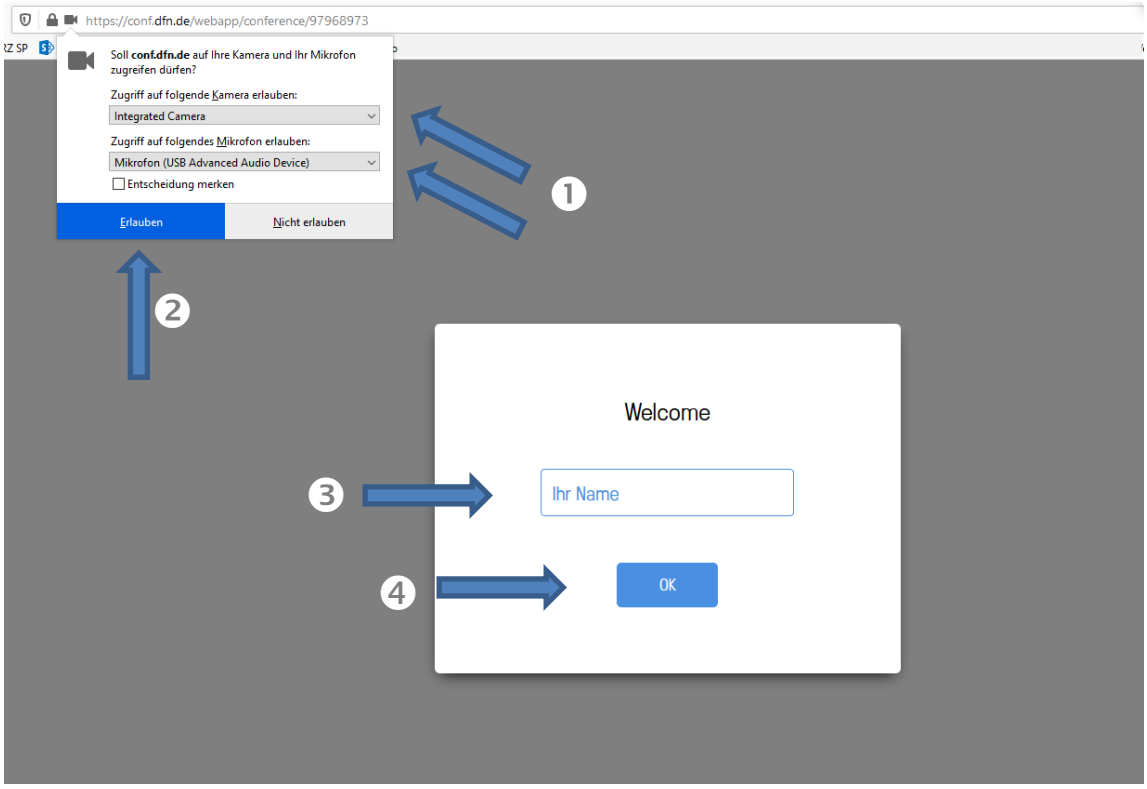
If the organizer has assigned a guest PIN, you will receive this with the invitation (see above) and must enter it when logging in.

Below is an example description of how to log in using the web link from the invitation for Firefox or the Microsoft Edge Browser:

1. Mit Ihrem Browser unter Windows, MacOS, GNU/Linux:
   https://conf.dfn.de/webapp/conference/97968973

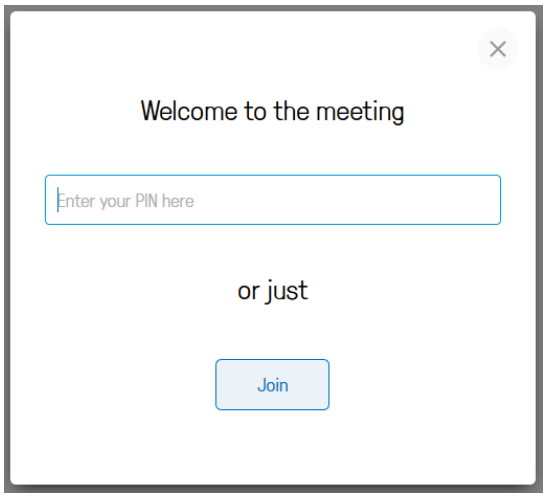
5.2.1. Firefox

Click on the link from the invitation or copy the link into the URL line of the browser.
In Firefox, the application then starts as follows:



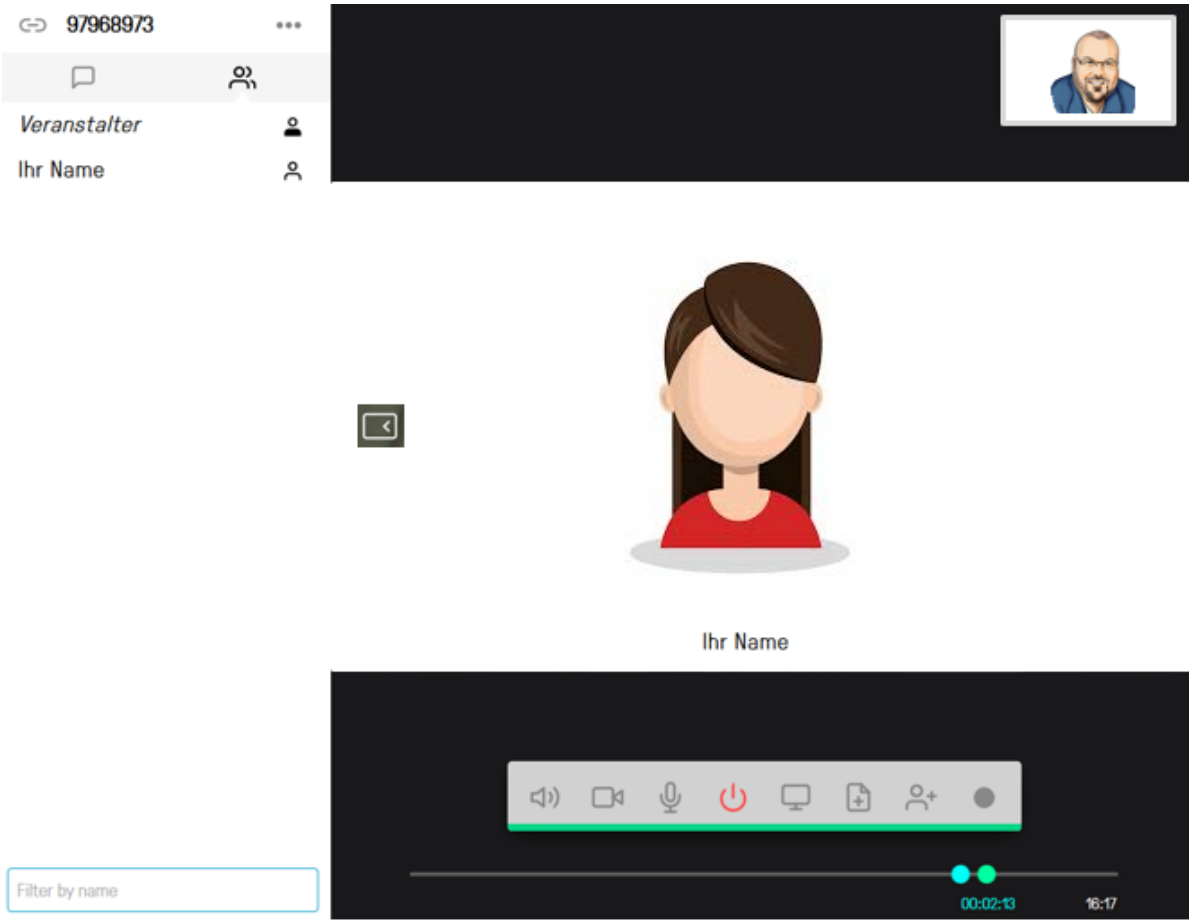
1 Select the correct camera and microphone/loudspeaker hardware to be used.
2. Confirm that these may be used by clicking "Erlauben".
3. Enter your name in the "Ihr Name" field. This name will be displayed to all other participants during the conference.
4. Confirm with "OK".

The following window will then appear:



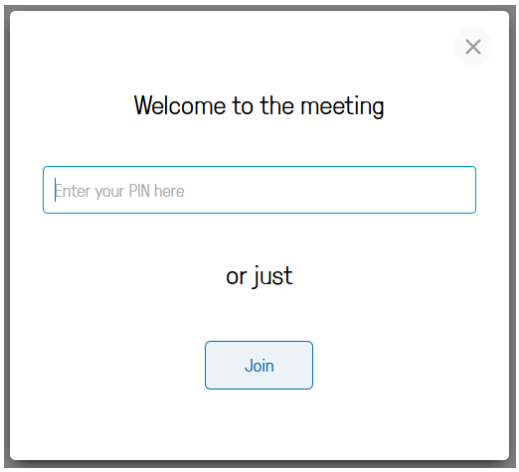
If you have received a guest PIN, please enter it here. If you have not received a PIN, leave the PIN field empty and simply click on "Join".

You will then automatically be redirected to the web conference:



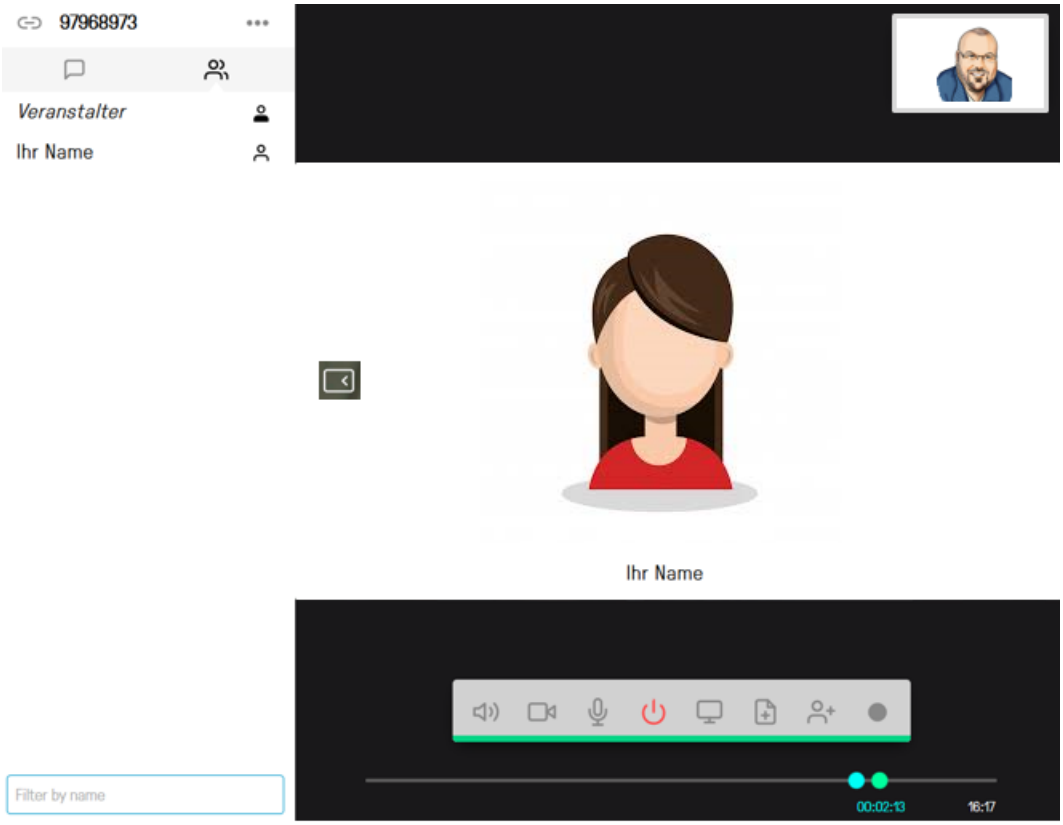
5.2.2. Microsoft Edge

In contrast to Firefox, a web conference using the Microsoft Edge Browser starts directly with the PIN request or the possibility to join the web conference. Settings, such as a different microphone or camera, must be set correctly **before** the web conference. If you have already joined the conference and changes are still required, leave the conference, change the settings (see chapter: "Changing your name, the camera, microphone or other settings“) and then rejoin the conference.



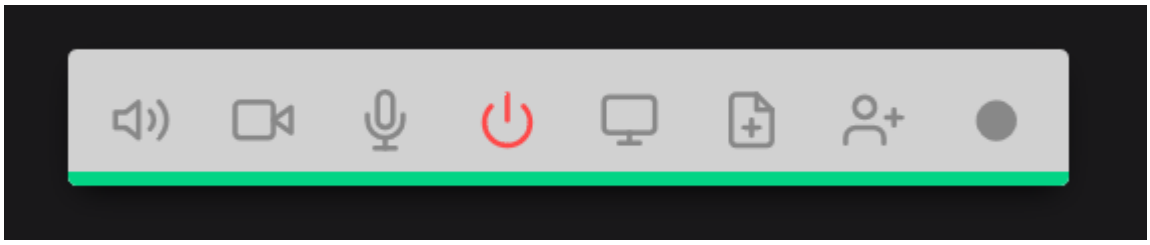
If you have received a guest PIN, please enter it here. If you have not received a PIN, leave the PIN field empty and simply click on "Join".

You will then automatically be redirected to the web conference.



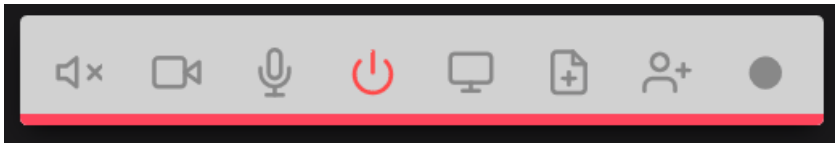
5.2.3. During the conference

In the lower area you will find a menu bar with the following options (these depend in part on the conference settings, see also chapter: "Further options for setting up a conference room").

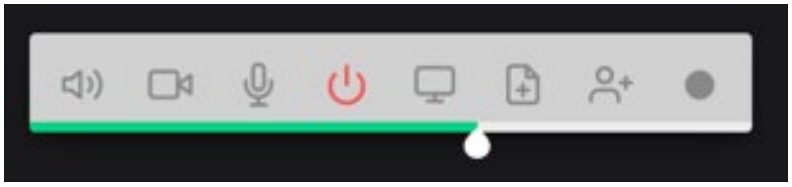


You can leave the web conference by clicking the "Start/Stop button". If you wish to rejoin the conference, you have to go through the registration process again.

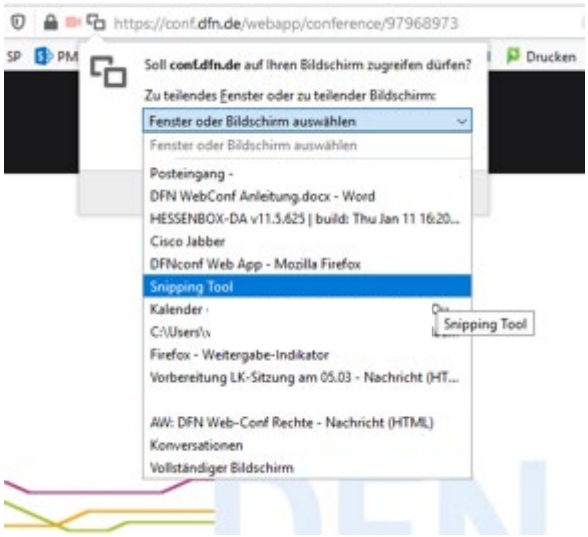
If the sound is deactivated, you can see this not only by the icon but also by the red bar below the menu bar:



This bar is also used to control the volume. If you click on the colored bar with the mouse, a "slider" appears, with which you can regulate the volume.



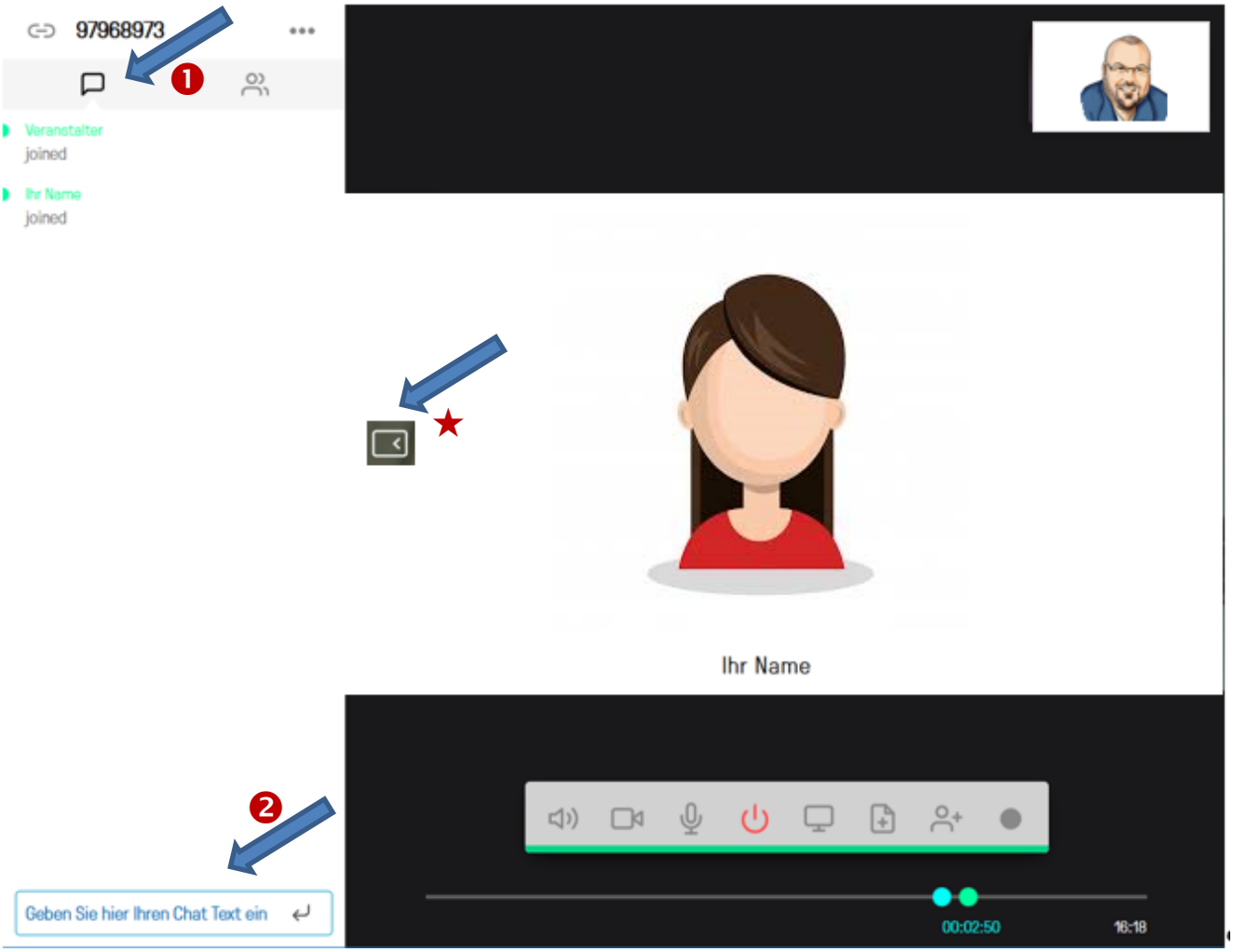
If you select this icon, you will be asked in the next step which application you want to share.



5.2.4. Chat during the conference

You have the opportunity to chat with all other participants during the conference. This is useful, for example, if you want to quickly forward a link to all participants or if you are experiencing problems with the audio channel.

To do so, click on the chat icon (1) and then enter your message in the text field below (2). If you do not see these fields, first click on the icon marked with a ★ to open the sidebar with the list of all participants or the chat function.

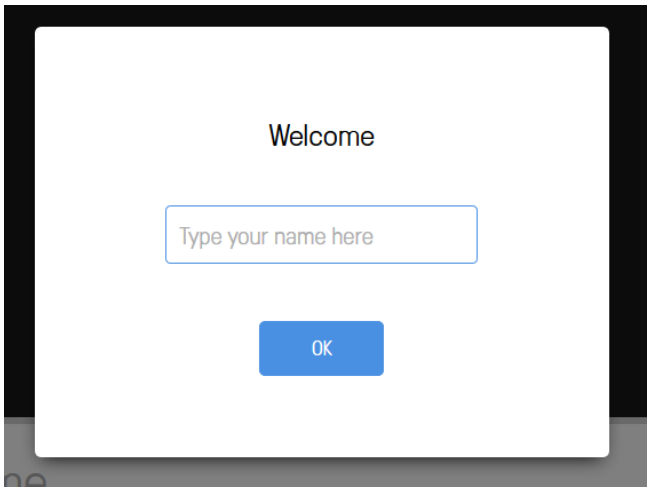


6. Changing your name, the camera, microphone or other settings

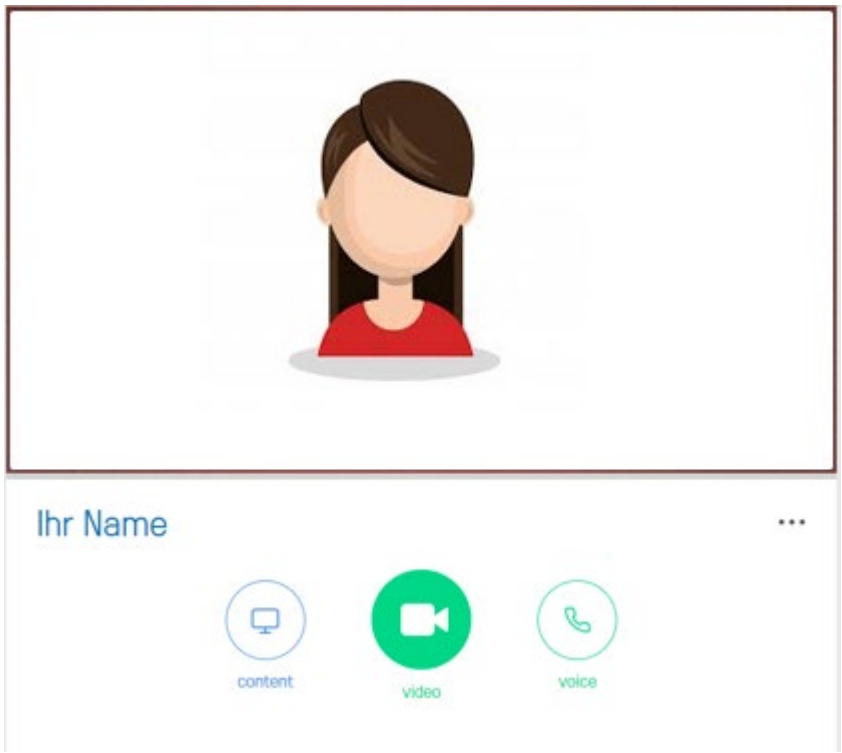
Depending on the browser used, the basic settings are changed in different ways. These are not all described below, but rather just one general method that works with every browser. Important to know: Any changes you make apply only to the browser currently in use. If you use multiple browsers, you may have to change the settings in the other browsers, too.

Use the following URL: https://conf.dfn.de/webapp/home

Here you will first be asked for your name, please enter it and confirm with "OK".

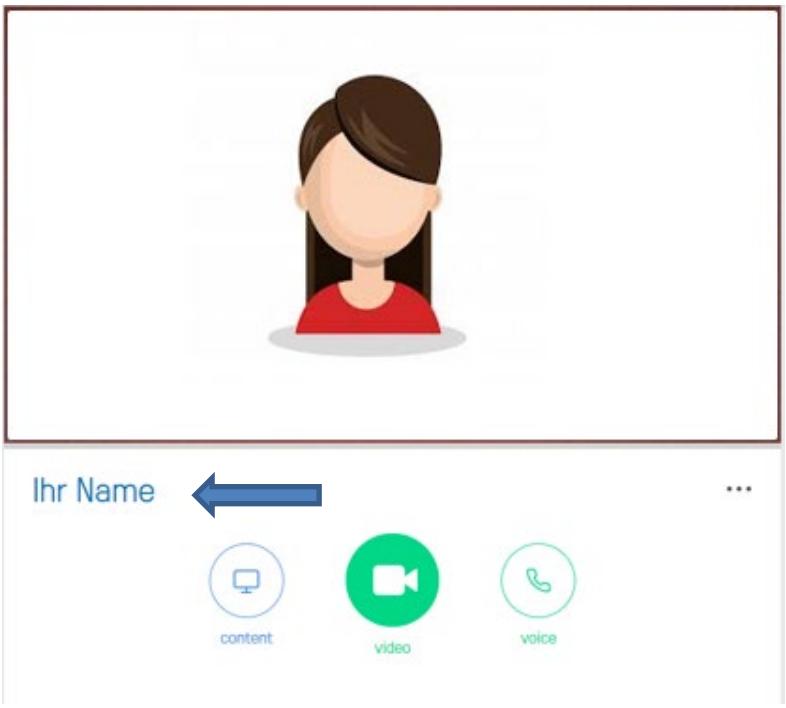


The following picture will then appear (as long as your camera is already active, otherwise you will be shown that your camera has not yet been activated).



6.1. Name

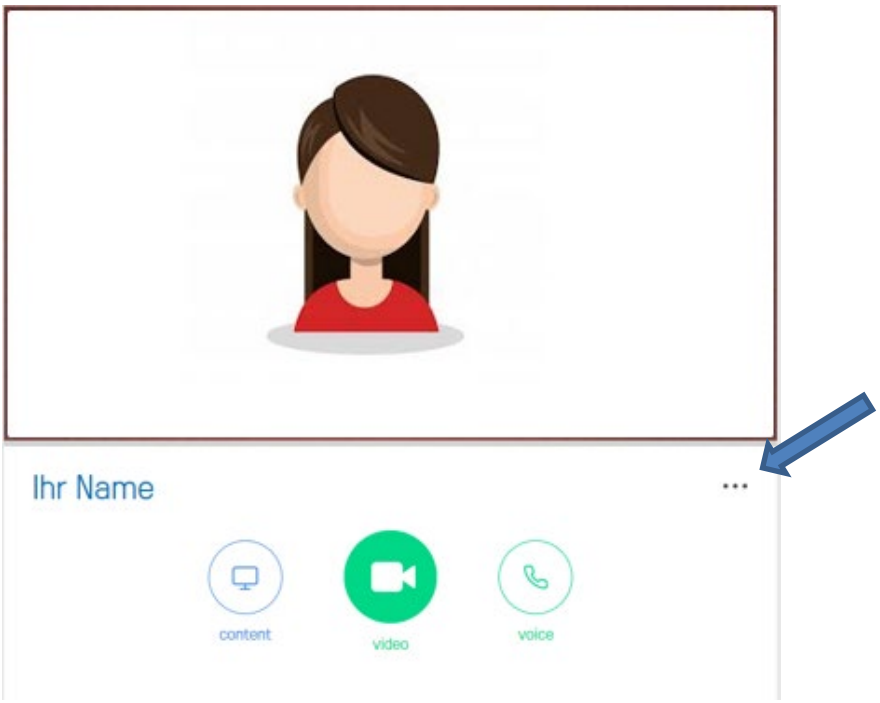
You can change your display name by clicking on the name currently in use:

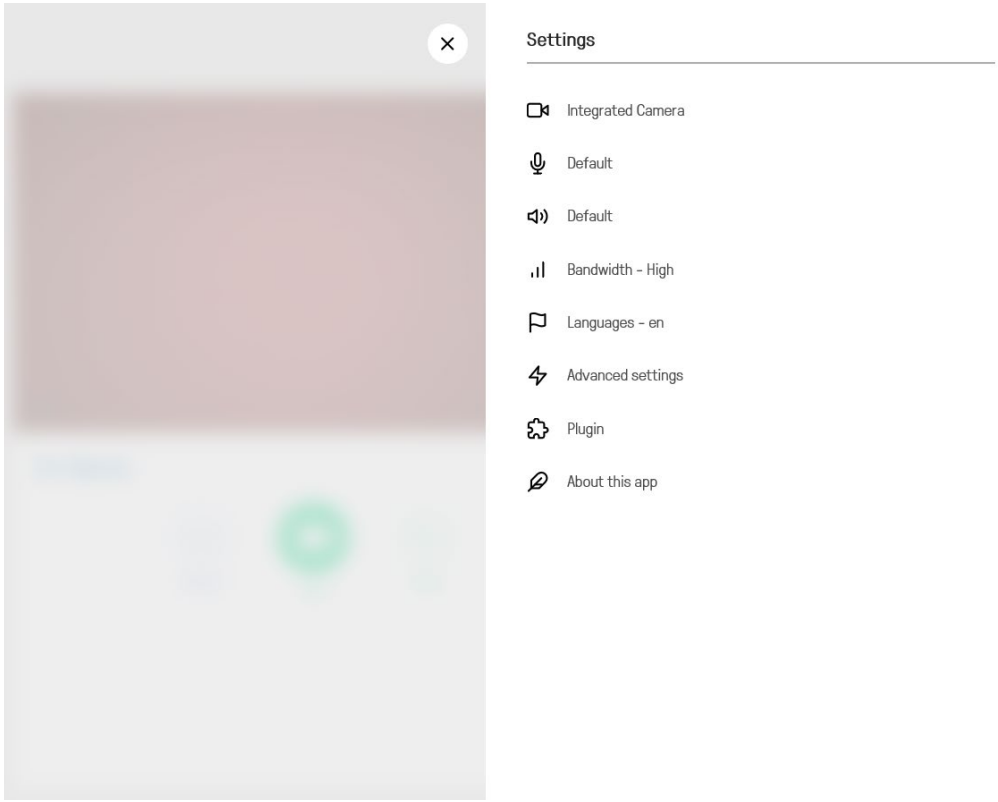


It can then easily be edited. This may be useful if you hold conferences with different groups of participants and wish to have a different display name for each, as the system remembers the last setting.

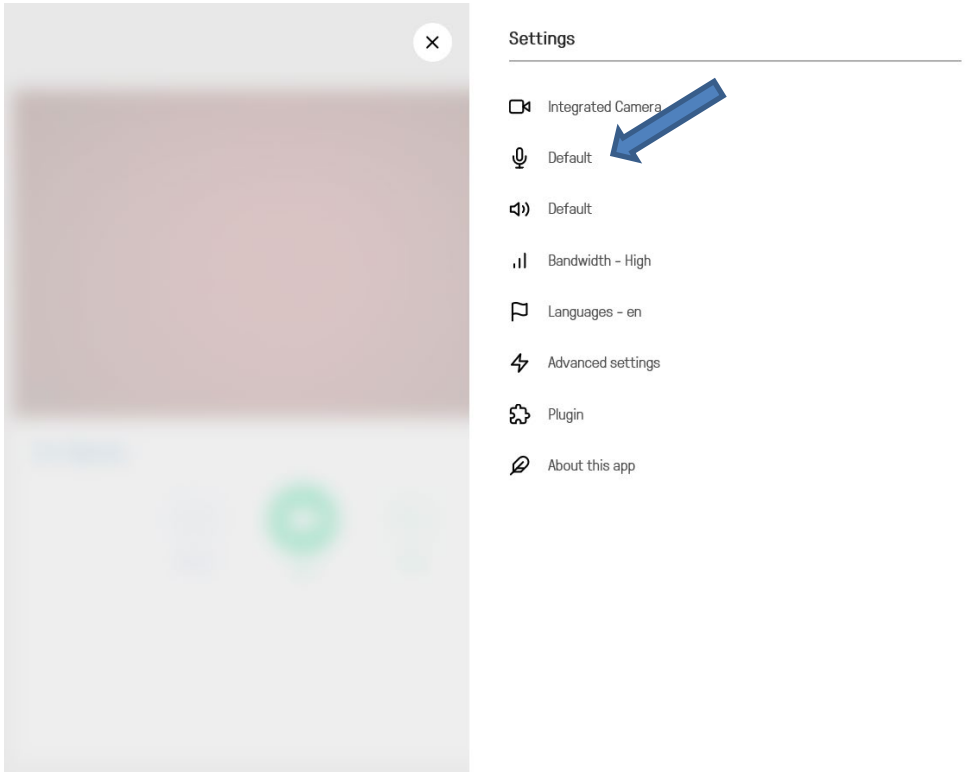
6.2. Settings such as microphone and camera

You can now change your settings by clicking on the 3 dots:



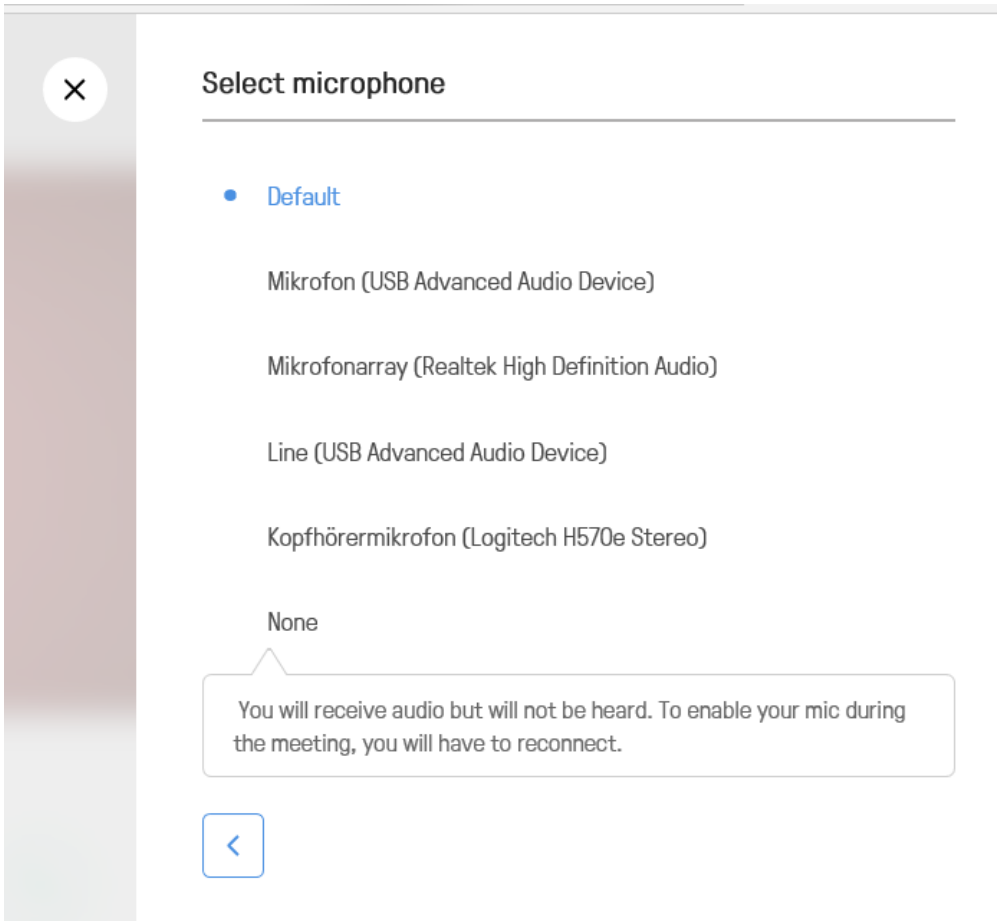


You can change the respective configurations by clicking on the different dots, for example that of the microphone.



In the next window you can select the microphone you are using. If you are using a Logitech headset and want to use that headset's microphone, select the headset microphone from the list. You will only see the

microphones that are currently connected to the hardware you are using.

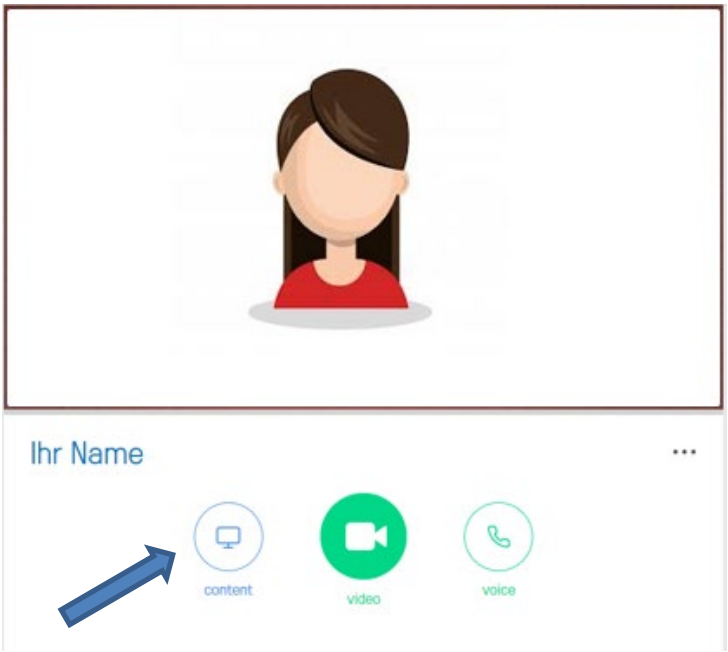


You can modify the other available settings in the same way.

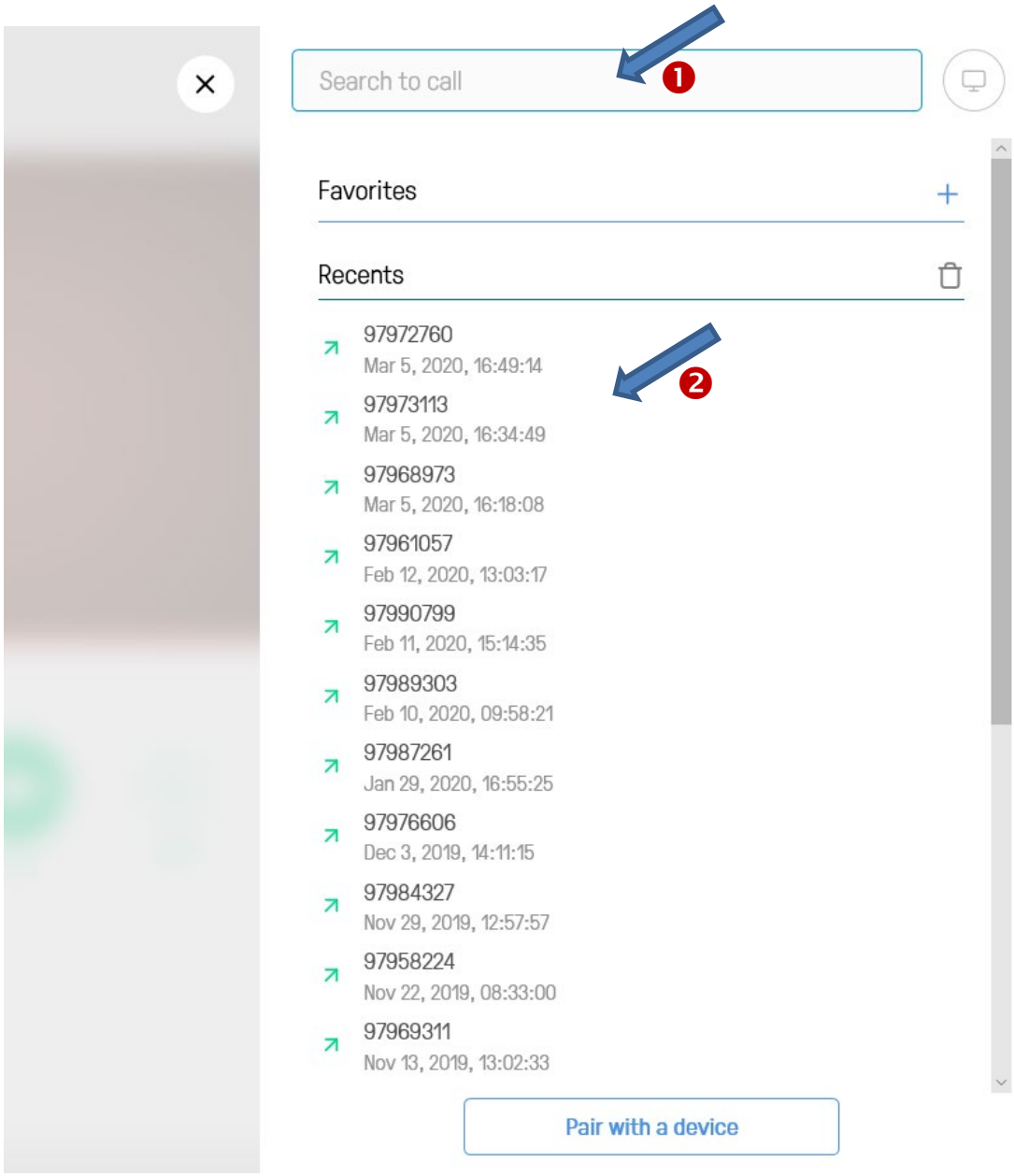
6.3. Accessing known conferences without a URL or dial-in data

It is possible to dial directly into conferences via the start page. This is possible for conferences in which you have already participated and/or which you have saved as a favorite. Alternatively, you can enter the room number and join the conference in this way.

To do this, click the "Content" icon:

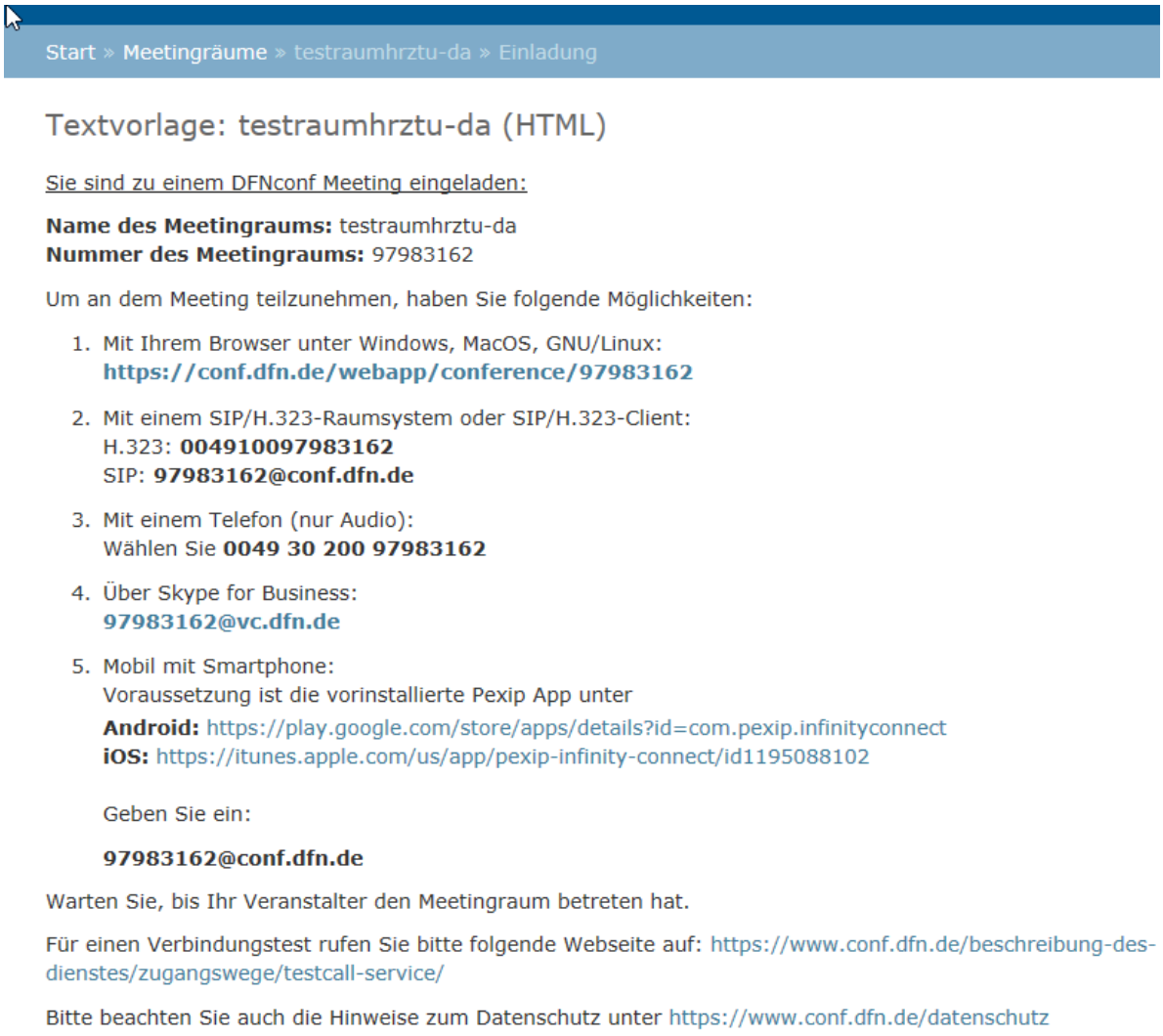


Now you can either (1) enter a room number directly or (2) select one of the listed rooms.



7. Taking part in a conference with other devices

It is also possible to participate in conferences using devices other than the browser. All the necessary data is available in the invitation template, which the host can find in the organizer portal. Here is a sample once again (the template is also available in English):



Start » Meetingräume » testraumhrztu-da » Einladung

Textvorlage: testraumhrztu-da (HTML)

Sie sind zu einem DFNconf Meeting eingeladen:

Name des Meetingraums: testraumhrztu-da
Nummer des Meetingraums: 97983162

Um an dem Meeting teilzunehmen, haben Sie folgende Möglichkeiten:

1. Mit Ihrem Browser unter Windows, MacOS, GNU/Linux:
   https://conf.dfn.de/webapp/conference/97983162
2. Mit einem SIP/H.323-Raumsystem oder SIP/H.323-Client:
   H.323: **004910097983162**
   SIP: **97983162@conf.dfn.de**
3. Mit einem Telefon (nur Audio):
   Wählen Sie **0049 30 200 97983162**
4. Über Skype for Business:
   97983162@vc.dfn.de
5. Mobil mit Smartphone:
   Voraussetzung ist die vorinstallierte Pexip App unter
   Android: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.pexip.infinityconnect
   iOS: https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/pexip-infinity-connect/id1195088102

   Geben Sie ein:

   97983162@conf.dfn.de

Warten Sie, bis Ihr Veranstalter den Meetingraum betreten hat.

Für einen Verbindungstest rufen Sie bitte folgende Webseite auf: https://www.conf.dfn.de/beschreibung-des-dienstes/zugangswege/testcall-service/

Bitte beachten Sie auch die Hinweise zum Datenschutz unter https://www.conf.dfn.de/datenschutz

If necessary, ask the organizer to send you this template again.

For the following options, replace ROOM NUMBER with the corresponding room number of the conference,

7.1. Dial-in by phone

You can dial into a conference by calling 0049 30 200 ROOM NUMBER. In this case you only have audio access. In this case you only have audio access.

7.2. Participating via app on smartphone or tablet

You need a corresponding app when using suitable mobile devices:

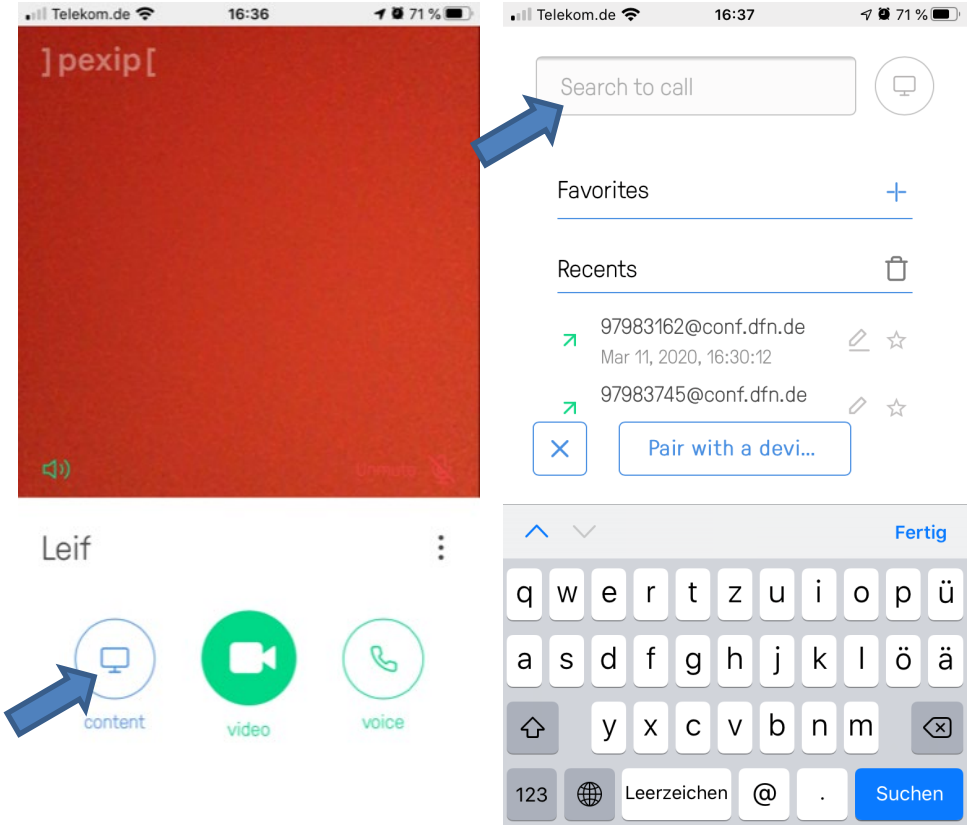
Android: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.pexip.infinityconnect
iOS: https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/pexip-infinity-connect/id1195088102

To dial into the conference, enter the following, as described in the invitation:

ROOM NUMBER@conf.dfn.de

Dialing takes place - here using the example of the iOS app - analogous to the browser app as described in 7.3:

Click on “Content” and then either enter the number or select a previously dialed number.



7.3. Dial-in with a video conference system

With a video conference system based on the SIP or H.323 protocols, dial in as follows:

H.323: 0049 100 ROOM NUMBER
SIP: ROOM NUMBER@conf.dfn.de

7.3.1. For users of the Cisco Jabber client

ROOM NUMBER@conf.dfn.de

In this case, you only have access to audio.

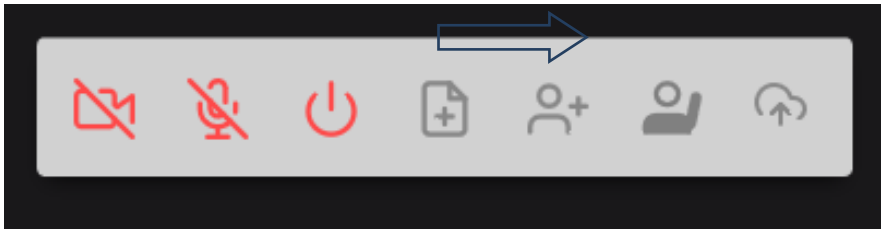
7.4. Dial-in with Skype for Business

ROOM NUMBER@vc.dfn.de

8. Presentation of content and screen sharing

8.1. Presentation

You have the possibility to present a PDF file or images (JPEG, BMP, PNG or GIF).



To do so, please use the document icon and in the next window select one or more files you wish to present.

After a few seconds you will see a thumbnail preview of the pages and can select the pages to be used for the presentation.

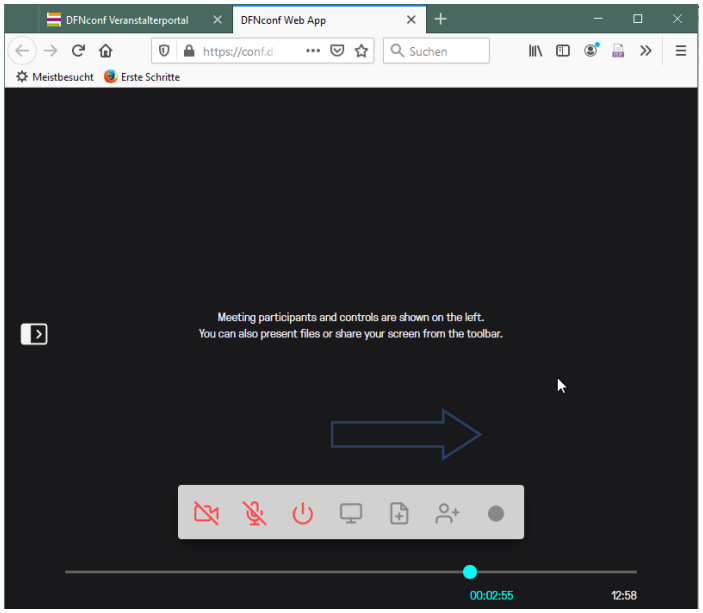
For easier handling, we recommend the screen sharing feature described below. This also allows you to use PowerPoint presentations and other documents.

8.2. Screen sharing

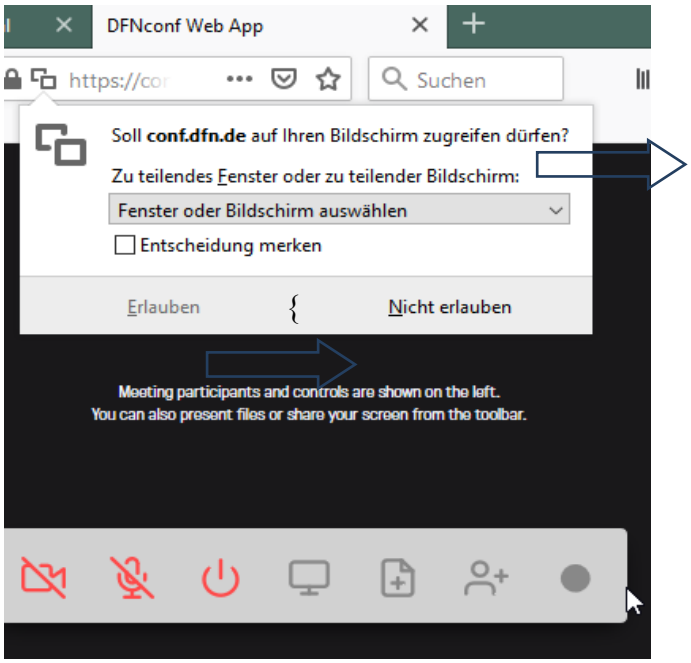
Please note: Screen sharing does not work with Microsoft Edge

Screen sharing enables you to show other participants the contents of your screen or an open program window. If you only want to show a program window (and not the entire screen), the window must already be open.

Click on the screen icon in the menu bar:

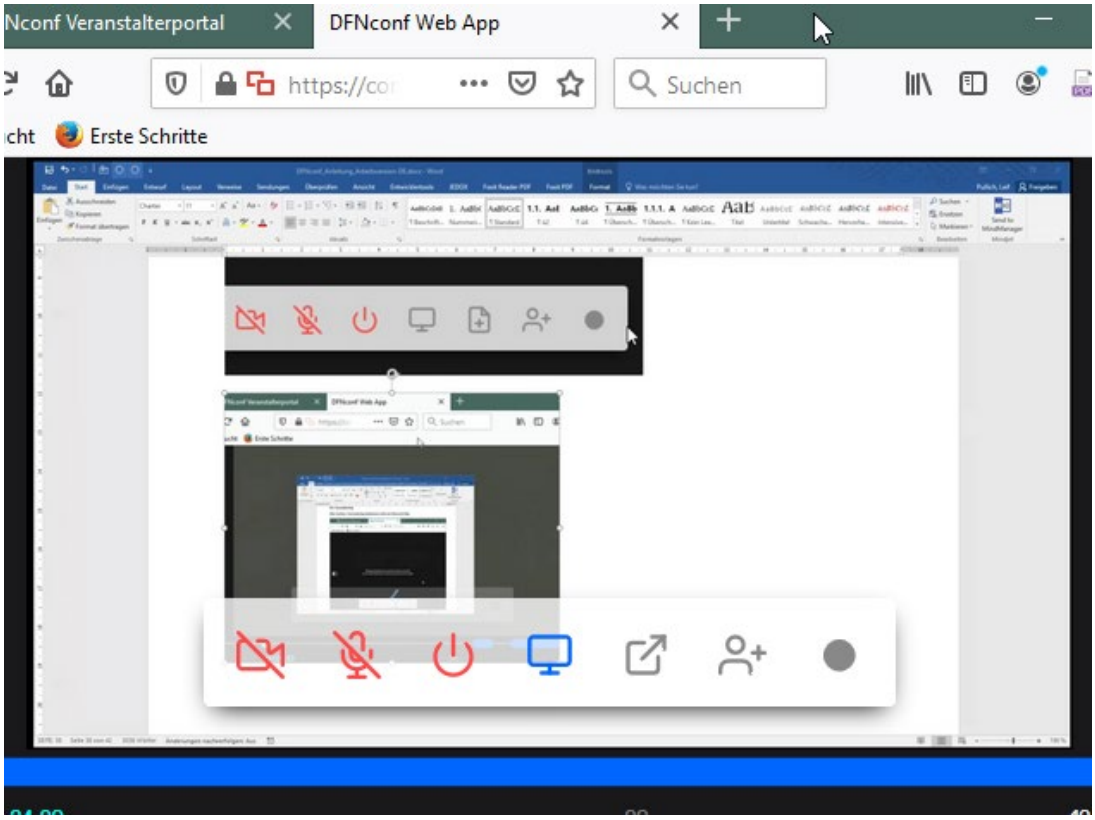


A pop-up menu appears in the address bar of the browser, in which you can select the screen or program window you wish to share with other users. Expand the list and select a window or an entire screen from the list (1). Then click on "Allow" (2). It takes about 10 seconds before the window appears in the meeting room where other participants can then see the contents.



The following screenshot shows a Word document in the meeting room.
The screen icon in the menu bar turns blue during screen sharing.

The other participants can now follow every change in the program window.



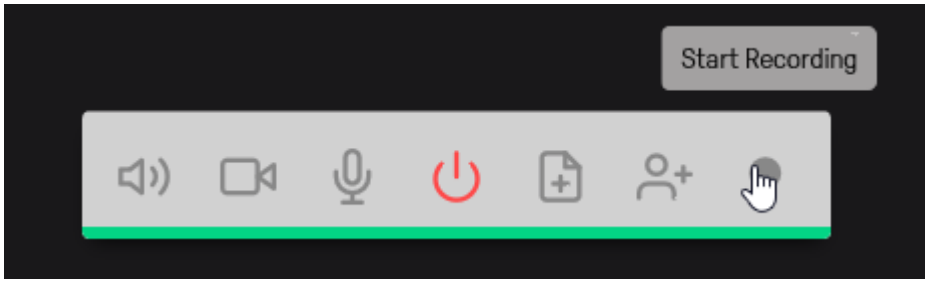
To end the screen sharing, press the blue screen icon.

Best practice tip: When sharing a screen, just as with a projector presentation, take care not to inadvertently transfer sensitive material (e.g. an open email client in the background), especially if you are streaming or recording the meeting.

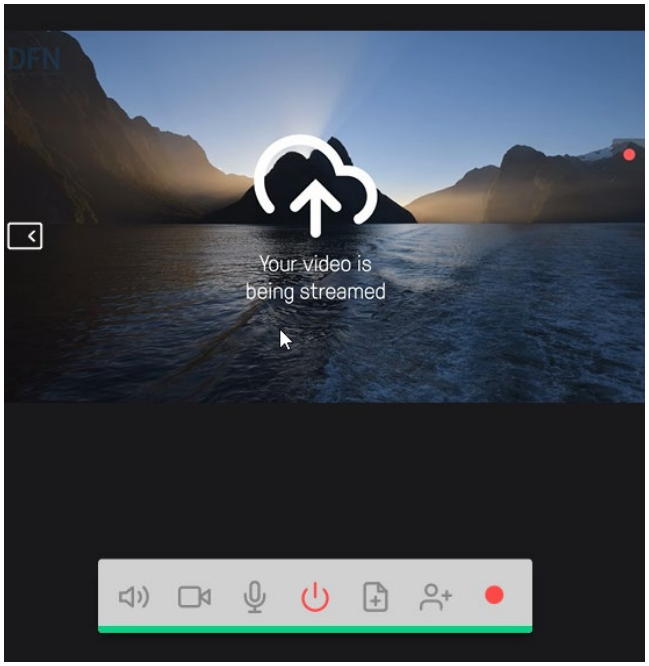
9. Recording and streaming

9.1. Recording

Commence recording by clicking the round button on the right side of the menu bar.



Then confirm the start of recording in the next window.



This screen shows you that recording is active. To stop recording, press the red button again. During recording, "DFNconf Recorder" is displayed in the participant list.

Your recording is automatically stored under Recordings in the organizer portal and retained for 14 days. After this period, the recording is deleted.

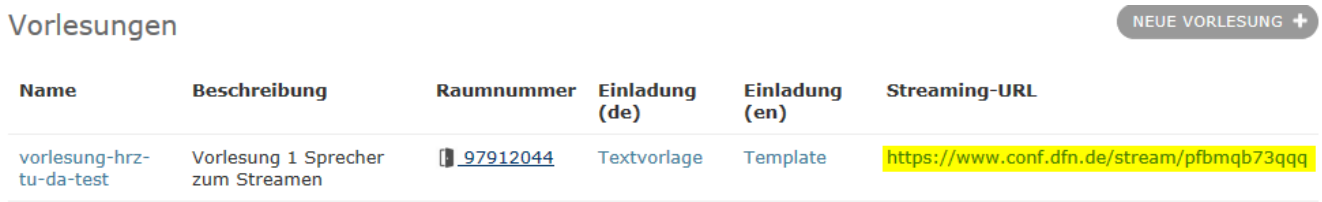
9.2. Streaming lectures

To present a lecture to more than 23 participants, for example, we recommend streaming the event in a meeting room. In this case, the audience does not require access to the conference room but receives an address where they can follow the presentation via a web browser. In this case there is no video/audio feedback channel.

9.2.1. Configuring a conference room for streaming

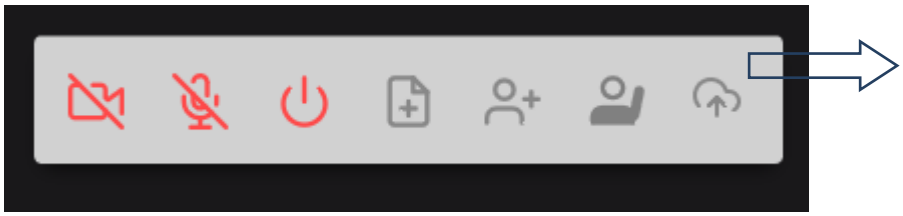
To stream the activities in a conference room, the room must first be configured accordingly. This is done in the host portal in the room settings. See the section "**Enable streaming**" above.

If streaming is enabled, the link for listeners is displayed in the organizer portal:

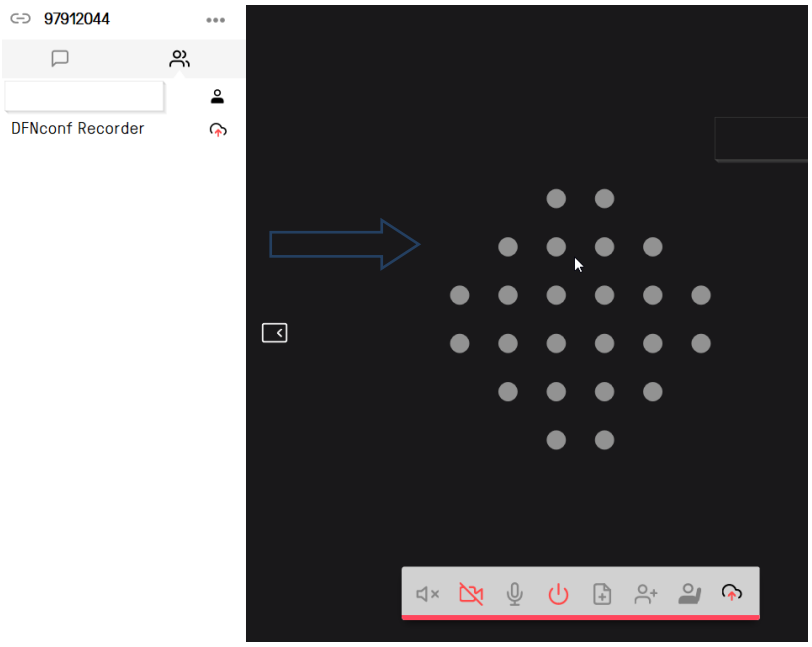


9.2.2. Implementing streaming

To start streaming, click the icon on the far right and confirm in the next window.



To exit, press the icon highlighted in color during streaming.



During streaming, the DFNconf Recorder is active just like with a user recording, because the event is simultaneously recorded automatically. The finished recording can be found in the organizer portal (see p. 38).

9.2.3. Link for listeners

Inform the planned attendants of your lecture about the streaming link that is displayed in the organizer portal.

9.2.4. Feedback channel via text chat

Please note the following restriction: Streaming text chat does not work with the Microsoft Edge browser.

If you have configured a feedback channel via chat in the room settings, the participants can provide responses here.

Important: Chat for the streaming participants is fully independent of chat in the meeting room. As host, you must therefore initiate this chat in a separate browser window. You will find the corresponding link on the streaming page.

10. Best practices

In this chapter you will find some (hopefully) helpful tips and tricks for using the application and conducting web conferences.

10.1. Browser

According to DFN, the following browsers are generally supported.

- Google Chrome >61 (64-bit version)
- Mozilla Firefox >60 ESR
- Microsoft Edge >41
- Opera >53
- Apple Safari >11.1 (macOS)
- Apple Safari >11.2 (iOS)

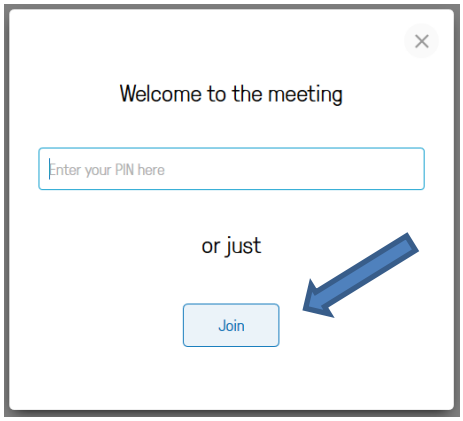
Microsoft Explorer is expressly not supported according to DFN.

10.2. Number of conference rooms

To save resources, please only set up a conference room that you intend to use for a longer period. If you only require additional rooms temporarily, please delete them again after use.

10.3. Invitation

If you are organizing a conference with a new group of participants and you have not assigned a guest PIN, it is advisable to explicitly inform those invited in the invitation that no PIN is required, and that it is sufficient to simply click on "Join" in the window that requests a PIN. The "**or just**" is unfortunately often not noticed.



10.4. Implementation

10.4.1. All participants should select "mute" unless they are currently speaking.

It is recommended that all conference participants who are not currently actively speaking mute their microphone. Ambient noise in the rooms of the different participants can typically be very disturbing in the conference.

10.4.2. Several participants in a conference in one physical room

In this case, we recommend the use of an external camera and microphone/loudspeaker. This makes it easier to create a picture with all participants from the room and improve the sound quality in both directions.

10.4.3. Headset

Sound quality is significantly better if both organizer and participant wear a headset during the conference. In this case, however, it is important to select the right hardware in the personal settings.

10.4.4. Video participation via browser, sound by telephone

If, for example, you only have the built-in loudspeakers and microphone on your laptop when you are on the go, it is possible to log into the conference with a browser and dial in at the same time using the telephone number of the room for the sound. To do this, use the number provided in the invitation. This procedure can also improve sound quality. **In this case, make sure to mute the loudspeaker and microphone on your computer**, otherwise you will experience feedback.

10.4.5. Collaborating on documents with the Hessenbox in a conference

If you need to work on documents collaboratively, use Hessenbox alongside the conference, and edit Office documents on the web with OnlyOffice. This makes it possible to open and edit a document with several people at the same time. Every participant can see the document and any changes in their browser, and communicate via the DFNconf meeting room at the same time. This is also possible via conference call if no video channel is required.

Information about the Hessenbox and instructions

10.4.6. Use of chat during streaming

If chat is to required when streaming to a larger auditorium, it is recommended that in addition to the person giving the lecture, a second person moderates the chat.

11. Other sources of help

11.1. Tutorials and instructions in English at pexip.com:

- Infinity Connect Web App User Guide
- Infinity Connect Mobile App User Guide
- Using Skype for Business / Lync with Pexip Infinity Quick Guide

11.2. Instructions at DFN

- DFNConf-Portal
- Web access via browser
- Recording and streaming

11.3. Test room for audio and video tests

- Test call service