In the news

PHYSICS UNLOCKED

With most scientists stuck at home owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, physics conferences and seminars have never been livelier. Communities are coming together to share the latest results in online events that anyone can attend from home, for free. If an urgent deadline or a kid's tantrum clashes with a talk's timing, there is the option of catching up on the recordings. Week-long conferences, focused workshops, seminars: there is a bit of everything. Although virtual events lack the networking opportunities offered by in-person meetings, for those who normally have to deal with limited travel budgets and time, environmental concerns or family commitments, this is a great opportunity to stay in touch with their community.

Seminar series are perhaps the best way to quickly dip into a topic: the time commitment is small, and they add to the agenda something to look forward to on a regular basis. An impressive breadth of topics and speakers are at the viewers' fingertips. The excitement is palpable: sign-ups for online seminars are high, easily in the few hundreds per talk. Some of the recordings on YouTube have thousands of views.

Topics range from [quantum science](#) and [quantum information](#) to [atomic, molecular and optical physics](#). In the condensed matter space, seminar series cover topics in [condensed matter and quantum information](#), [spintronics](#), [atomic-scale quantum materials](#) and [quantum matter](#). A series on [machine learning for science](#) is bound to be popular. More on the biological side, there are series on [biophysics](#) and one on [complexity in biological systems](#).

Theory-oriented series cover [quantum gravity and information](#) and [quantum theory, thermodynamics and non-equilibrium systems](#). Those passionate about cosmology, astrophysics and high-energy physics should not worry: there are seminar series on the theoretical aspects of [cosmology and astrophysics](#), on [holography](#), and on [astroparticles, high energy physics and astrophysics](#). Nuclear physics is also part of the mixture, with one series on [nuclear reactions](#) and one on [nuclear physics](#). And the list could go on.

For those who have a dream speaker in mind, many seminar series accept nominations for future presenters. If you are bolder, and want to organize your own online series, it might be easier than you think. The [Virtual Science Forum](#) offers technical support and advice for aspiring organizers. And for those browsing for inspiration, a new [list of seminars and conferences](#) in mathematics and physics makes it easier than ever to find interesting events.

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