

Virtual Study Groups, V-KEMS, and the fight against COVID-19

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For over fifty years Study Groups have proved to be a remarkably effective mechanism for engaging mathematicians with industry, generating a strong transfer of knowledge, training, and enthusiasm for collaborative working. Whilst lasting under a week, they have been the route to long term engagement and much new mathematics. Following the COVID-19 lockdown these have been transformed into Virtual Study Groups (VSGs), in which teams of mathematicians have worked on COVID-19 related problems ranging from reopening schools, HE and retail, to running trains, and conducting heart operations [2]. The results from these in the UK have fed directly into government policy. In this talk I will describe both the mechanism of the VSGs and also the creation of V-KEMS [1], the Virtual Forum for Knowledge Exchange in the Mathematical Sciences, which has acted to organise these events and to ensure that the work done in the VSGs gets to the right end users where it can make a real difference.

References

- [1] *V-KEMS* <https://www.vkemsuk.org/>
- [2] *V-KEMS Study Group Report, Modelling Solutions to the Impact of COVID-19 on Cardiovascular Waiting Lists* <https://gateway.newton.ac.uk/sites/default/files/asset/doc/2103/Modelling%20Solutions%20to%20the%20Impact%20of%20COVID-19%20on%20Cardiovascular%20Waiting%20Lists.pdf>