

Tips for Inclusive Participation in Meetings

Here we will share some Listen Include Respect guideline tips to help to make sure your meetings more inclusive of people with intellectual disabilities.

Inclusive Meetings

There is a lot to think about when planning an inclusive and accessible meeting. Here are a few ideas to start with:

Before a meeting

When you invite people, make sure everyone understands what the meeting is about and their role.



Send short, easy-to-understand agendas beforehand. For a big meeting, this should be two weeks in advance.



Ask about accommodations people may need. For example, do support persons need to be invited?

If it is an online meeting, think about people who may not have access to data or technology. Do they need help using the meeting platform? If it is an in-person meeting, think about the venue. Is it accessible? Is it easy to find?

During a meeting

The chair of the meeting must understand how to run the meeting. It is everyone's responsibility to be inclusive, but the chair must role-model this.

The chair should make sure everyone speaks in an accessible way, and presentations are easy to follow. You can set some rules or give reminders at the start of your meeting.



Allow plenty of time for each agenda item. People with intellectual disabilities may need more time to understand, talk with support people, and ask questions.

Plan different ways of making decisions or sharing information, for example, small group work or other activities.

Meetings should not run for more than 2 hours without a break.

Involvement of people with intellectual disabilities

Include people with intellectual disabilities as speakers and chairs in your meeting. Make sure they have lots of time to prepare and good support.



After a meeting

Make sure everyone is clear on the actions and next steps. Always ask for feedback and ways to improve.

Accessible Communication and Information

Inaccessible information and communication are big barriers for people with intellectual disabilities in meetings. With easy, clear communication, many more people will be able to understand and participate.



Keep information short and clear. Give people ways to find out more information.

Think about your language.



Use everyday language we all use. Do not use jargon, long words, or technical words. Although it may sound clever, using jargon excludes many people. For example, instead of saying: “*The Institutional, legal, and normative landscape*”, you can say: “*The rules, laws, and ways of doing things*”.

Do not use acronyms. Use the whole words. For example, instead of PAF, say Protection Analysis Framework.

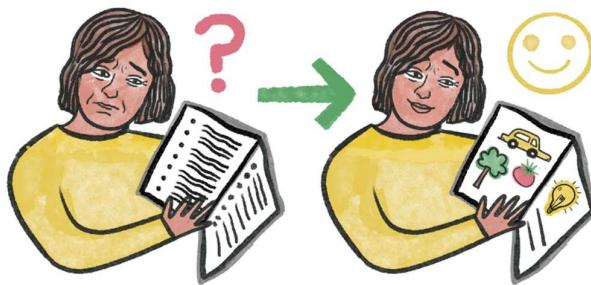
Make written information easy

In your agenda and any supporting information, use Arial font, at least 16 in size. Use black and dark colour fonts.



Break paragraphs down into sentences. Each sentence should be one idea.

Split up long documents using bullet points and headings. Make sure your document has a lot of white space, for example, spaces between lines.



Images and Illustrations

Images and illustrations help to explain the text.

But they must be relevant to the reader. Do not use clip art

or childish pictures. You can use symbols if they are well-known and clear.

Graphs and tables are often hard to understand. Think about how these are used.

Stories and Examples

Real examples and stories help information become relevant and real.

Think about how and where stories or examples might be useful.



Think outside the box

Think about using different formats for your information.



Not all information needs to be written. Videos are much easier to understand than long documents or PowerPoint presentations, and they are also easier to share quickly through social media.

Listen Include Respect

If you want more help, look at the Listen Include Respect guidelines. The networks of [Inclusion International](#) and [Down Syndrome International](#) created the guidelines.

They are available online at ListenIncludeRespect.com.