

Tip Sheet: Running an Inclusive Meeting

Inclusion Advisors shared these top tips for making sure meetings are inclusive for people with an intellectual disability.

We know many of these processes and ideas might be new, and some of them you might be doing already. This list is not intended to be prescriptive; instead, we want you to think about the processes you currently use, where they might work well for people with an intellectual disability, and what you might be able to implement.



At the start of a meeting

- Put up signs to let people know they are in the right place and how to get to the right room.
- Arrange for someone to greet visitors.
- Make refreshments available and ask people if they need support to get a drink.
- Print spare copies of papers for anyone that needs them.
- Use co-chairing where possible and share the duties between both chairs.
- Agree on who will take the minutes at the meeting. (not the chairperson.)
- Highlight bathrooms, emergency exits, where drinks and meals are served, and any other information so people can find their way around safely. Be clear that people can leave the meeting if they need to for personal reasons.
- Explain the meeting rules to make sure everyone can have a say. This includes Traffic Light Cards or other systems that give everyone an equal say.
- Include a 10-minute comfort break for meetings that go over 1 hour. Check in with participants to see if more breaks are required.



Including Everyone

- Ask everyone in the meeting to introduce themselves and their role.
- Include an ice breaker or fun question to help people feel more comfortable.
- Ask everyone not to use jargon, acronyms, or complicated words.
- If there are complicated words, explain what they mean and check everyone understands.
- Make sure people are given time to think and have their say.
- Keep the meeting on topic. Say when you are moving to the next topic.
- Check everyone understands and has their say before moving on.



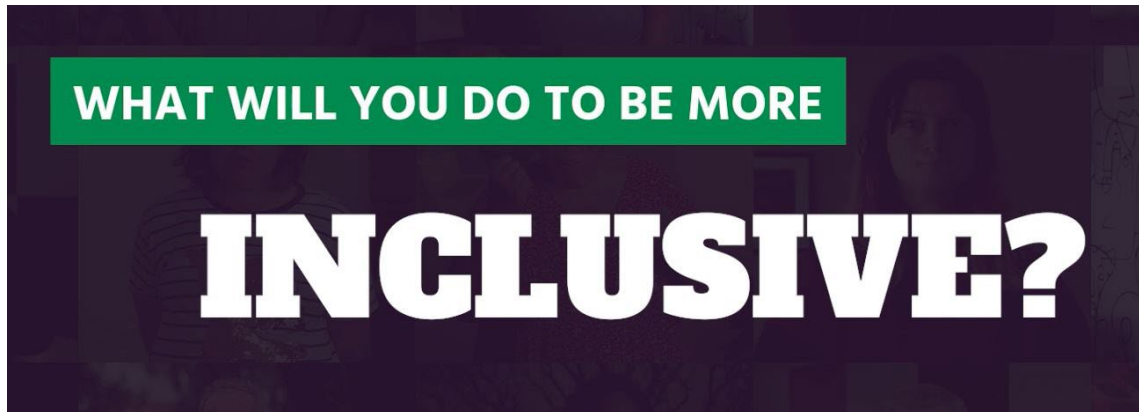
Ending the meeting

- Remind everyone what we talked about and the decisions that were made.
- Ask everyone for feedback on how the meeting went and if there was anything that would make the next meeting better.
- Explain what needs to happen next, including the actions and who will do them.
- Share dates of future meetings and other details.
- Ask everyone these three questions:
 1. Did we talk about all the important issues?
 2. Did everyone get to have their say?
 3. Did people listen to each other?



After the meeting

- Reflect on any issues of concern that might have happened at the meeting.
- Write up the minutes and any notes in Easy Read.
- Send the minutes and any notes within 1-2 weeks of the meeting.



Reflective practice – running an inclusive meeting

- Create a list of simple and interesting questions that you can ask as icebreakers.
- What are some ways you can ask if someone understands the information before moving on? Avoiding “do you understand” directly is a good idea.
- When you close an inclusive meeting, you should ask whether the group talked about all the important issues. How could you follow up if the answer is no? What other options to contribute will you offer?