

Best practice for inclusive meetings





1

Before the meeting

This includes

- Engagement papers
- Agendas and minutes
- Other meeting papers and key discussion points
- Technology

Ask participants about their communication needs.

They may need meeting materials in different formats such as Plain English, easier to read, Easy Read or another preferred format. Knowing your audience and their support needs is really important.

Provide meeting papers in advance. This gives people time to prepare for the meeting and seek clarification if needed. Ask people how much time they need.

Consider the accessibility of any forms you need members to fill out as part of the engagement process.

Check whether people are able to access any technology to be used during the meeting. Allow time to troubleshoot issues during preparation.



2

During the meeting

Start the meeting with introductions: even if you have met before, names and roles can be forgotten.

Speak in everyday, conversational language.

Speak at a moderate pace and use pauses so everyone can take in what you have said. Check a few times during the meeting that you haven't accidentally sped up again.

Avoid jargon, acronyms, and technical terms. If it is important for the person to become familiar with these terms, provide a list with explanations.

If you have to say something complicated or need to use specific words, make sure you then explain what it means, leaving time to process the information and encouraging questions.

Stick to the meeting agenda as meeting members have prepared according to the agenda.

Discuss one topic at a time. Ask for questions or comments before leaving an agenda item.

Make it clear when you are moving from one topic to another. Signpost with visuals like a PowerPoint slide or with words "we have finished talking about agenda Item 2 COVID restrictions and are now moving to Item 3 COVID vaccinations".

Make an agreement at the beginning of the meeting about when there will be breaks. Breaks of 10 minutes give people time to refresh.





3

Participation Support

Participation support is a way to ensure a person with intellectual disability is able to participate in a meaningful way. It is a right and a reasonable accommodation. Participation support is vital to the success of an inclusive meeting.

Why do we have participation support?

To make sure people with intellectual disability are actively participating in meetings, speaking up, being heard and offering expertise through their lived experience.

What does a participation support person do?

- Provides preparation support prior to a meeting
- Supports people to understand and follow the process of a formal meeting
- Ensures people get to have their say at meetings
- Offers consistent, accessible and impartial information, explanation and guidance
- Provides support to process difficult or sensitive information
- Supports people to manage their time and competing tasks
- Supports people to develop skills to actively participate in the advisory groups
- Liaises with the meeting organisers around dates/times/agenda items/locations etc.
- Works with the Chair person to create an inclusive meeting
- Ensures people have the dates for all meetings and are reminded for upcoming meetings
- Provides support after the meeting to debrief and write additional notes if required.



Participation support people should only provide as much support as needed with the aim of reducing support as skills and confidence of the member and the advisory group increases.





4

Other considerations

Pay people for their time and expertise.

Provide or pay for the participation support.

