10 Tips for Inclusive Meetings at Work

# What is an inclusive meeting?

A meeting is inclusive when a diversity of participants (e.g. genders, races/ethnicities,

sexual orientations):

* can access the meeting
* are respected and connected during the meeting
* can contribute their perspectives.

# Why are inclusive meetings important?

Making your meetings inclusive ensures everyone can participate on an equal basis. When meetings are not inclusive, they lock out the contributions and perspectives of a diversity of people.

# Tips for inclusive meetings:

1. **Understand who you might be excluding.** How we plan, invite, and run meetings can unintentionally exclude a diversity of team members from attending and contributing. Review your meeting practices to see if you may be accidentally excluding any team members.
2. **Check meeting times.** When scheduling meetings, consider school hours, significant cultural and religious practices and/or holidays so you’re not excluding a diversity of members from attending.
3. **Check your invitation list for diversity.** Review the list of participants you plan to invite – are you missing people who represent diverse or dissenting points of view, or who are directly affected by the discussion?
4. **Plan for accessibility.** Look for physically and neuro-accessible meeting spaces and facilities for in-person meetings. Check your platforms have accessibility features like close captioning, screen reader compatibility, and automatic transcripts for online meetings.
5. **Be proactive about accessibility requirements.** Ask attendees if they have any accessibility, translation or interpretation requirements and share accessibility information with attendees ahead of time.
6. **Create and share an agenda.** Do this ahead of time to enable meetings to hear from a diversity of people and to allow participants time to prepare for the meeting.
7. **Acknowledgement of Country.** Acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander land from which you are joining – either verbally (in person and online) or in the chat (online).
8. **Share pronouns.** For online or hybrid meetings, when introducing yourself, you can state the pronouns you would like other meeting participants to use for you and/or include this in your chat name (e.g. she/her, he/him, they/them, she/they etc.)
9. **Use structured turn-taking to ensure “airtime” is shared and no one dominates the discussion.** Take a structured approach to turn-taking so attendees take turns speaking and speak one at a time – have a predetermined order of speaking, encourage “raising hands”, and keep track of who hasn’t spoken.
10. **Respect different communications styles.** Remember that not everyone communicates the same way – some participants may prefer to share their perspectives using the chat function while others prefer raising their hand to speak.[[1]](#footnote-1)

# Want more practical guidance on how to hold inclusive meetings?

See DCA’s [Inclusive Meetings at Work Guide](https://www.dca.org.au/wp-content/uploads/_pda/2024/11/DCA_Inclusive_Meetings_Guide_Member_Only.docx) and [Checklist](https://www.dca.org.au/wp-content/uploads/_pda/2024/11/DCA_Inclusive_Meetings_Checklist_Member_Only.docx).

1. R.A. Ravishankar, “[A Guide to Building Psychological Safety on Your Team](https://hbr.org/2022/12/a-guide-to-building-psychological-safety-on-your-team)”, Harvard Business Review, 1 December 2022. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)