

## Center for Quantum Network Inclusive Meeting Guide

---

This Inclusive Meeting Guide is designed to help Center for Quantum Networks community members host meetings that are welcoming and inclusive and create a space for all individuals to engage and do their best work. The practices outlined below are grounded in research related to learning and work styles, organizational leadership, and DEI. Practices are provided for in-person, virtual, and hybrid meetings. This is a living document and will be updated as additional best practices are identified and to meet the needs of the CQN community.

### Preparing for the Meeting

- If using an RSVP form to register, ensure it is accessible, especially for those who might not be using a mouse, or will be accessing on a mobile device. Platforms such as qualtrics will do an accessibility check for you.
- If providing food during the meeting, ask all attendees for dietary restrictions.
- Consider how diversity and power dynamics might affect attendee engagement (i.e. academic hierarchies, social identities, etc.).
  - If placing people into discussion groups or breakout rooms, consider the power dynamics when assigning attendees to groups
- When scheduling the meeting, consider the time zone of all attendees. Try to select a meeting time that doesn't exclude certain attendees.
- Avoid scheduling during religious and cultural holidays.
- Avoid scheduling during school holidays as this may make it hard for individuals with care responsibilities to attend.
- For hybrid meetings, determine who will be assigned to following roles:
  - Facilitator: Leads the meeting
  - Notetaker: Captures the key takeaways, questions, decisions, or action items.. If this is not a part of someone's job description, this role should be given to the same person at each meeting.
  - Virtual participant facilitator: Monitors the virtual space for raised hands or questions, including chat comments. Communicates to the facilitator when someone online would like to speak if the facilitator did not notice.
  - Technical support: Helps virtual attendees with any technical issues
- For hybrid meetings, practice your set up and explore ways to keep the meeting engaging for both in person and virtual attendees
  - If available, select a venue that has hybrid meeting technology

## **Before the Meeting**

- When using name tags, include space for participants to have the option to add their pronouns.
- When setting up the meeting room, provide seating for all attendees and avoid placing seats along the wall or in the back of the room. The set up should allow for equal engagement by all attendees.
- Share the meeting agenda with attendees prior to the meeting. This recognizes varying learning and preparation styles and can be very helpful for those who need additional time to prepare their thoughts, ideas, and questions.
- Ask if attendees would like to add any additional items to the agenda.
- If there are any pre-reads for the meeting, share with attendees 3-7 days in advance to allow time for participants to review prior to the meeting.
- If the meeting is hybrid, provide information on how participants can join both virtually and in-person.
- Provide an accommodations statement in the invite with information on how to make accommodations requests.
- For in-person meetings, provide directions to the venue, parking information, and information on the accessible entrance to the building.
- For presenters, provide guidelines for making content accessible, including videos, PowerPoints, and handouts. See [Create accessible documents - UW–Madison Information Technology \(wisc.edu\)](#) for reference
- If the meeting is being recorded, note this to attendees prior to the meeting.
- Ensure your catering order has considered all dietary restrictions that were reported. Try to always offer a vegan/vegetarian, gluten free, healthy, and Kosher/Halal options. Label all food items.

## **During the Meeting**

### **Starting the Meeting**

- At the beginning of the meeting, provide norms for engagement and set the expectation that it is everyone's responsibility to create a welcoming and inclusive environment.
  - Examples of norms may include using I statements, not speaking when others are speaking, silence cell phones, and respecting everyone's contribution
- If the meeting is virtual or hybrid, provide guidelines for virtual engagement
  - Encourage the use of the chat to ask questions, agree with other attendees, like comments, etc.
  - Encourage the use of the raise hand feature to contribute

- Encourage in-person and virtual attendees to identify themselves by name before speaking. This helps those who cannot see all attendees to follow along and contribute.
- Exploring virtual engagement tools such as annotation, polls, jamboards, etc.
- Provide closed captioning and announce to attendees at the beginning of the meeting that this is available to them with instructions of how to access it. Place the instructions in the chat.
  - If the meeting is held over zoom, the platform does offer automatically generated closed captioning. This feature should be enabled on all meetings.
  - If an attendee has requested closed captioning as an accommodation, it is recommended to contract a captioning vendor. Live captioning vendors are more accurate than the zoom automatically generated captioning.
- Provide information on where to locate restrooms (including gender inclusive restrooms) and lactation rooms.
- If the meeting is being recorded, remind attendees before starting the meeting.

### **Facilitating the meeting**

- Microphones should be used by all speakers and attendees. Attendees should not avoid using a microphone because they believe they can speak loud enough.
- When posing points of discussion during a virtual or hybrid meeting, place the question or discussion topic in the chat for attendees that process better by reading the information.
- When placing links in the chat, keep in mind that anyone using assistive technology may not be able to copy or activate the links. Speak out the URL when posting it in chat and provide the link in the meeting notes
- Verbally describe visual materials to the audience such as slides, charts, etc for guests in the audience who may have low vision.
- Periodically check in with virtual attendees to ensure they can hear everyone, inquire if they have questions or comments they would like to add.
- The virtual participant facilitator should be monitoring the virtual chat and incorporating those comments into the discussion.
- For small scale meetings, go around the table to ensure everyone has been given an opportunity to contribute.
- If you observe someone being cut off or ignored during the meeting, be sure to give them time to contribute to the meeting.
  - Ex. “I believe Kim was about to say something” or “Kim, I saw you unmute yourself we would love to hear your thoughts on this”
- Monitor if specific people are dominating the conversation and provide air time for those that haven’t had the chance to contribute.
- Create a “parking lot” to keep track of topics that come up during the meeting but may not be on the agenda. If time allows, circle back to these topics at the end of the meeting.

If there isn't enough time, make note of the parking lot topics in the meeting notes and ask people to provide thoughts or ideas via email following the meeting. These are also topics you may consider for the next meeting's agenda.

- For each agenda item, summarize the group's consensus and provide opportunities for attendees to voice agreement or concerns
- Pay attention to the agenda and time. As best as possible, try to stay on schedule.

### **Ending the Meeting**

- Check in with the virtual participant facilitator to ask if there are any comments or questions in the chat
- Summarize meeting highlights
- Provide time for any additional thoughts or questions.
  - Rather than say “Does anyone have any additional thoughts or questions”, try “I would love to hear any additional thoughts or questions.”
  - Employ the seven second rule: Pause for seven seconds after saying this to give attendees ample time to process, think and formulate their thoughts. The silence may feel awkward but it provides a welcoming space for those that do want to share.
- Thank everyone for attending and noting the importance of everyone's contribution

### **After the Meeting**

- Send meeting notes to all attendees and encourage them to share any additional thoughts or ideas they may have following the meeting. Provide information on how they should submit after meeting thoughts (i.e via email, a feedback form, etc)
- Host a debrief with the planning team to reflect on what went well and what could be improved
  - What inclusive practices were used?
  - Did virtual attendees engage in the meeting?
  - Were power dynamics observed? If so, how can you mitigate that in the future?
- If posting a recording of the video, ensure the video has accurate captions.

### **Additional Resources**

[To Build an Inclusive Culture, Start with Inclusive Meetings \(hbr.org\)](https://hbr.org)

[How to host inclusive hybrid meetings - UW–Madison Information Technology \(wisc.edu\)](https://www.developmentguild.com/dei/how-to-lead-inclusive-meetings/)

<https://www.developmentguild.com/dei/how-to-lead-inclusive-meetings/>

Parker, P. (2020). The Art of Gathering: How We Meet and Why It Matters. Opens in new window. Riverhead Books.

<https://www.remotedei.org/strategies/meeting-design>