

# Guidelines for interactions

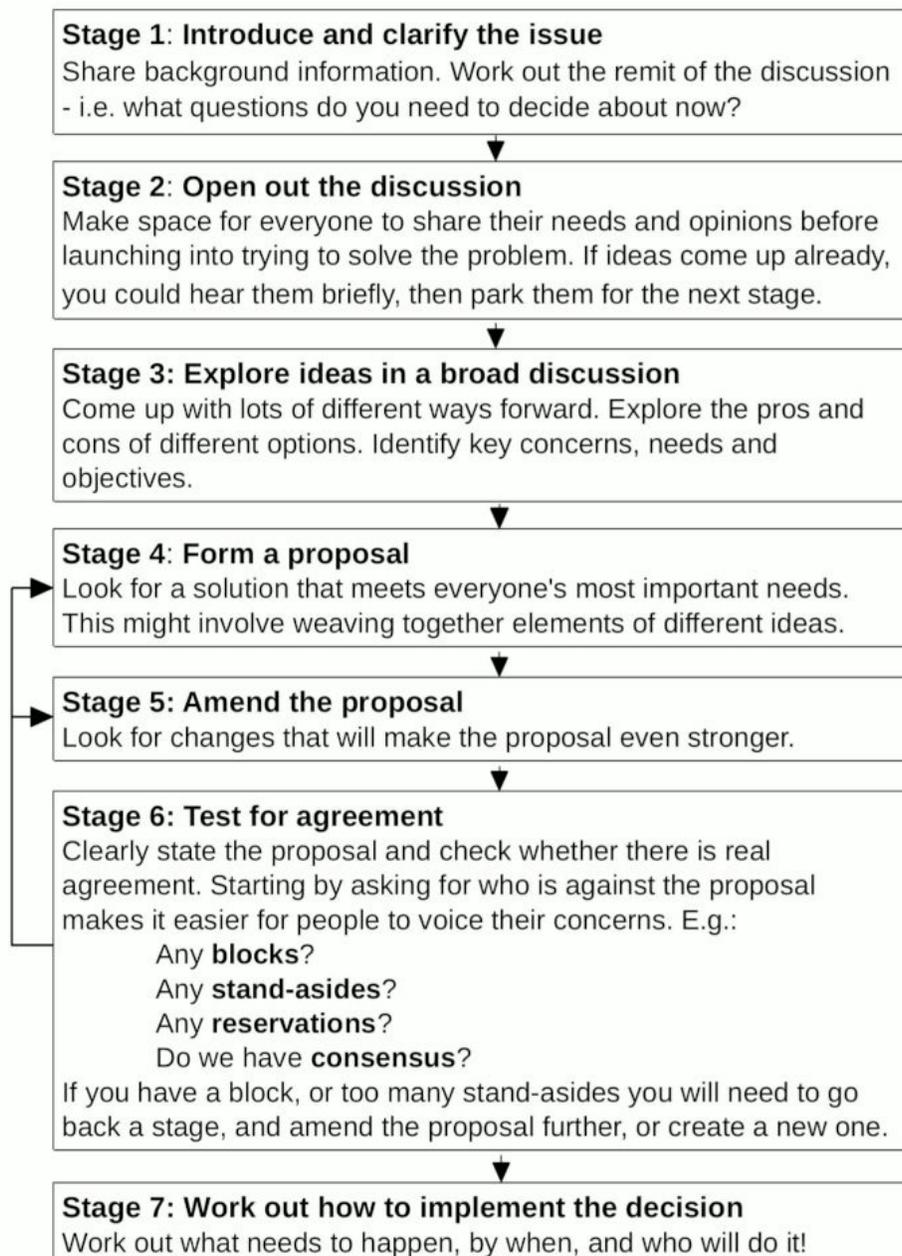
One of the goals of this pod is to challenge ourselves and each other concerning sensitive topics. Doing this at any time is difficult, and doing it in an online format offers additional challenges. Therefore, we outline some guidelines for our interactions as a pod. These have been adapted from [examples provided by URGE leadership](#).

1. Listen Actively, respect others when they are talking. Be conscious of body language and nonverbal responses -- they can be as disrespectful as words (even over Zoom!)
2. Speak from your own experience instead of generalizing ("I" instead of "they," "we," "you"). Instead of invalidating somebody else's story with your own spin on their experience, share your own story and experience. We are all learners in this environment.
3. Do not be afraid to respectfully challenge one another but refrain from personal attacks - focus on ideas and problems rather than people. The goal is not to always agree -- it is to gain a deeper understanding.
4. Assume everyone's good intentions but also acknowledge the impact of saying something that hurts someone else, even if it is unintended.
5. Participate to the fullest of your ability -- community growth depends on the inclusion of every individual voice. We understand that speaking out in this type of setting may be more challenging and difficult for some members for a variety of reasons.
6. We all spend lots of time on Zoom, so if things become overwhelming, members will respect the need of others to turn off cameras to take a break, especially during intense discussions. Our pod will also encourage the use of chat as an alternative space for expression in our meetings. We will also encourage leaving space for silence to allow for serious reflection, processing, and internalization of discussion points.
7. We encourage our members to try to enter a "Brave space" in our meetings, but also encourage our members to practice self-care when issues or discussions may approach a "Trigger space."
8. Maintain confidentiality. All stories shared in this space stay in this space unless explicit permission is given by the person sharing the story that it can be shared in another setting. We will leave the stories in the meetings but take the lessons learned from those stories with us out into the community and world we are trying to change. However, keep in mind that members of our Pod may also be [mandatory reporters based on their positions within the University](#), so please keep this in mind when deciding things to share. This expectation is based on mutual trust and respect within our pod and should not be mistaken to convey any legal requirement imposed on other pod members by those choosing to share sensitive information. [If you need help](#), Cornell has a multiplicity of consultation and support services available to meet the emotional, physical, social, and spiritual needs of the university community.

# Decision making process

We are adopting a consensus-based process for making decisions in this pod. Much of the text and graphics below are adapted or taken directly from <https://www.seedsforchange.org.uk/shortconsensus> and from the IDEEAS draft working agreement.

By definition, in consensus no decision is made against the will of an individual or a minority. If significant concerns remain unresolved, a proposal can be blocked and prevented from going ahead. This means that the whole group has to work hard to find win-win solutions that address everyone's needs.

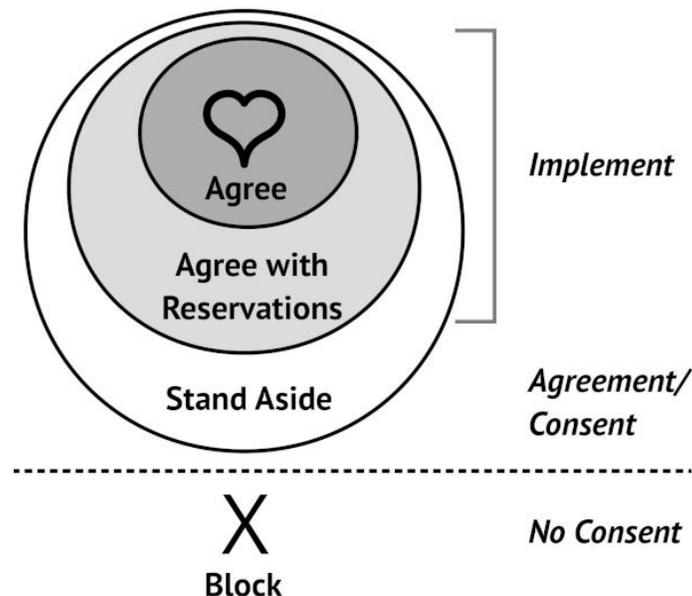


In order to adopt or implement any proposed document, deliverable, or action, we will seek consensus across the pod. These proposals should be clearly identified and discussed with the whole pod at the business meetings, or through other communication channels (e.g. email, Slack channel) if time constraints require.

The flow chart above indicates how coming to consensus on a proposal might work in principal.

There are four options for agreement or disagreement with any proposed action or document. These are summarized below

1. **Agreement with the proposal:** Indicates you support the proposal and are willing to help implement it.
2. **Reservations:** You are willing to let the proposal move forward, but there are aspects you are not happy with. You may still put energy into implementing it once your concerns have been acknowledged.
3. **Stand Aside:** You want to object, but not block the proposal. You might stand aside because you disagree with the proposal, or you might like the decision but be unable to support it because you don't have the time or energy.
4. **Block:** You fundamentally disagree or object to the proposal. This will block the proposal from moving forward. The group can either start work on a new proposal, or look for amendments to overcome the objection. Ideally such disagreements should be addressed before the decision stage. However, sometimes people aren't able to express their concerns clearly enough, or aren't heard by the group. In such situations the block acts as a safeguard to ensure that decisions are supported by everyone.



It is important that we have a mechanism for signaling agreement or disagreement with any proposal both within meetings (Zoom) and in an offline/asynchronous way. Within Zoom we can use the response buttons:

- Yes = Agreement
- Move faster = Reservation
- Move slower = Stand aside
- No = Block

One possible mechanism for checking in formally in an asynchronous way is to use the Slack channel.

A lack of response to a given proposal will be interpreted as 'Stand aside.'

## Roles and Responsibilities

Many of the roles and responsibilities as part of this pod will rotate with each session and meeting. For each of the eight sessions, we will have (at least) two leaders who are ultimately responsible for the overall organization of meetings and completion of deliverables for that session. These have been tentatively decided on in the organizational spreadsheet, but can change as long as there are at least two leaders for each session. There are also tasks/roles that will be assigned for each meeting to ensure we use our time effectively.

There will be two regular meetings each session to discuss the deliverable of the session and any organizational questions that arise. Suggested days: Tuesdays or Wednesdays. For the first two sessions that have begun prior to the start of classes these will be scheduled as needed; after that we will settle on a fixed day and time within the two-week session schedule.

All pod members are expected to contribute to each session and to attend these regular meetings.

The session leaders are responsible for

- Looking ahead to the deliverable for their session to identify any ground work that may be needed in advance of the session
- Scheduling any meetings for that session, including the fixed regular meetings and any additional meetings as needed
- Uploading deliverables to the URGE website

They are also responsible for delegating and coordinating the following

- Drafting deliverable documents and sharing these with pod for review/commenting/discussion at the pod meetings
- Reading supplemental articles / materials for deliverables as needed (for example, the asset mapping deliverable will be accompanied by a short paper about the purpose of creating community asset maps and how to generate your own.)
- Working to obtain institutional statistics and information as needed
- Identifying meeting-specific responsibilities

- Coordinating with the JEDI journal club to ensure a reminder email gets sent out to the department and then ensuring that at least one representative from the pod is able to attend.

Each Meeting, someone will be assigned the following roles (these should rotate as much as possible)

1. A Facilitator to ensure we keep to the agenda and allotted time
2. A Notetaker to take attendance and produce meeting minutes

Finally, there are a number of department actors and initiatives that are relevant to our activities or have closely aligned goals. We will need to communicate with them. These are listed below with pod members who can serve as liaisons, though communication need not flow through these identified pod members. Actors beyond EAS may also be added as we move forward with the curriculum.

1. **IDEEDS (Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity in Earth and Atmospheric Sciences):** We have agreed to give regular updates on the activities of the pods at the biweekly IDEEDS general meetings. Many of us participate regularly in these meetings. They have many initiatives that are related to URGE deliverables.
2. **JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion) journal club:** Our discussions of the readings will be held jointly with the IDEEDS JEDI reading group. Kyle will coordinate with Kelly as needed.
3. **DEIAR:** Nicole is a member of the faculty DEIAR committee (chaired by Toby Ault; Natalie Mahowald and Matt Pritchard are also members (?)).
4. **Department Chair:** We have identified Geoff as the person we will form the institutional agreement with. Megan, Nicole, Flavio, and Peter are natural liaisons.
5. **DGS/DGS:** The current directors of graduate and undergraduate studies are Esteban Gazel (DUS, EAS), Matt Pritchard (DGS, Geological sciences field), Art DeGaetano (DUS, Atmospheric Science), and Toby Ault (DGS, Atmospheric sciences field). Again the faculty members Megan, Nicole, Flavio, and Peter are natural liaisons.