SIO URGE POD Guidelines

Minimum Expectations of All POD Members

All POD members are expected to:

- Complete every reading before each bi-weekly Monday interview hosted by the URGE team.
- Watch (but preferably attend) bi-weekly interviews hosted by the URGE team on Mondays from 2:30 to 3:30 pm PST before the POD's Friday discussion meeting.
- Have the intention of fully participating in every 2-hour bi-weekly POD discussion meeting on Fridays from 1 to 3 pm via Zoom, in their entirety.
    - If a POD member cannot attend, will be late or needs to leave early for any reason, they are expected to inform the POD leaders by the Wednesday before the POD's Friday discussion meeting (when possible).
    - If a POD member misses any part of the POD's Friday discussion meeting, they will be required to catch up on the material they missed with another member of the POD. It is their responsibility to read the meeting notes, read the deliverables, review the PowerPoint slides, etc. to be properly informed for the next meeting.
- Contribute to deliverables every session.
- Fill each of the following roles at least once during the 16-week program:
    - Take meeting minutes of discussions
    - Lead discussion (e.g., summarizing reading, supplementary material, etc.) and draft deliverables
    - Lead finalizing edits of deliverables

Roles and Responsibilities for Each Session

Each session, the following roles will be filled by a POD member. As stated above, each POD member will fill each of the roles (except for moderator) at least once during the 16-week program. Roles will be pre-assigned to POD members by the POD leaders at the beginning of the program.

Role	Responsibilities	Number of Individuals
Moderator	Ensure that all members are adhering to the POD's guidelines.	2 (will be filled by POD leaders or with volunteers)
Secretary	Take detailed meeting notes to be shared with the POD.	2 will be assigned for full POD discussions Each breakout room will need to designate someone to add a summary of their discussion to meeting notes.
Discussion Leader & Drafting Deliverables	Lead Friday POD discussion meeting. Draft deliverables for the session.	3 to 4
Finalizing Deliverables	Incorporate POD's feedback from the discussion meeting into deliverables. Send to POD leaders by agreed upon deadline.	3

POD Leaders have the following responsibilities throughout the program:

- Be main points of contact between URGE and POD.
- Schedule POD meetings & meetings with SIO leadership.
- Assign weekly roles and responsibilities to members.
- Take attendance.
- Upload deliverables to URGE official website.

Ground Rules for Discussions

1. Listen actively -- respect others when they are talking.
2. Speak from your own experience instead of generalizing ("I" instead of "they," "we," "you").
3. Do not be afraid to respectfully challenge one another by asking questions, but refrain from personal attacks -- focus on ideas and problems rather than people.
4. Participate to the fullest of your ability -- community growth depends on the inclusion of every individual voice.

5. Instead of invalidating somebody else's story with your own spin on their experience, share your own story and experience.
6. The goal is not to always agree -- it is to gain a deeper understanding.
7. Be conscious of body language and nonverbal responses -- they can be as disrespectful as words (even over Zoom!). Please keep your camera on as much as possible.
8. Assume everyone's good intentions but also acknowledge the impact of saying something that hurts someone else, even if it is unintended.
9. 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.
10. If you feel that someone is not following these ground rules and/or being disrespectful, and you are unable to or uncomfortable with addressing the situation yourself, please contact the POD leaders or the moderator during the session via direct message on Zoom.
11. Information disclosed by any POD member should not be shared with others beyond this POD or used against them in the future. Note that the deliverables are meant to be public and may be discussed with people outside of the POD.

How Decisions Will Be Made by the SIO POD

The SIO POD Leaders will propose a consensus-based decision making process similar to what is described by Seeds For Change. The process, summarized below, will be proposed for adoption using the approach itself at the pod's initial meeting on 29-January, 2021. This decision making process will be kept on the working agenda for each meeting so that the group can revisit the success of this process as we get to know each other better.

Advantages of a Consensus-Based Approach to Group Decisions:

- Provide and protect space for **all voices** to contribute to the decision-making process.
- Maximize community/group **buy-in**.
- Improve decisions through **group learning**.
- By definition, no decisions are made against the will of group members.

Disadvantages:

- There is a learning curve to the process; it is typically not intuitive for new members.
- Consensus to use the system is critical for it to function properly.
- May appear inefficient; however, typically (especially for difficult issues) the investment of the group's time results in better decisions in shorter times (less trial and error).

Special Notes:

- **Group engagement** is critical to stabilizing the process; from time to time it is necessary to gently remind members that there is procedure to the process.

- *No explicit facilitator is required* once the group is comfortable with the system.
- *All members* have the duty to maintain the process:
    a. Assigned Moderators should not be the only individuals protecting the system, please back them up; and
    b. Moderators may need to be gently reminded themselves about where the group is in the process, all members are empowered to do this.
    c. Good humor is key; check egos at the door!

An option for a SIO POD consensus-based decision making process:

Step 1: Build the Meeting Agenda:

- ***Issues Related to URGE Deliverables*** *will be identified by assigned Discussion Leaders at the start of each meeting, forming the core of the* **Working Agenda***.*
- ***Other New Issues*** will then be raised by any member of the POD and added to the *Working Agenda*.
- ***Urgency*** of each issue in the Pod Agenda is assigned through a star system (e.g. ✶ ✶ ✶ issues must be addressed today, ✶ ✶ can wait until next meeting, etc.). All Pod members are free to assign urgency levels.
- ***Prioritization*** of today's issues is achieved through the option process described below.

Step 2: Clarify and review the current issue:

- **Agreement** on the explicit issue being discussed is the first step in the review process; is this just a single issue? If actually a set of related issues, should they be broken up?
- **Open review** of the issue is conducted, everyone is allowed/encouraged to share their perspective, opinions, and feelings on the issue in a protected space.
- **Actively avoid** jumping right into the problem solving (*options*) process; everyone is responsible for ensuring that the open review process is protected.
- **As the review closes**, it should become clear that the group is ready for options; anyone may ask "are we ready for options"?

Step 3: Gather options:

- All group members are encouraged to nominate options.
- ***No discussion of options is permitted while gathering options.*** It is incumbent on the group to ***respectfully*** regulate this process; e.g. if someone addresses/attacks an option, it is useful to ask: "Do you have a different option?"
- Options should only address the issue at hand (no "Trojan Horse" options).
- ***Group learning:*** Options will build on each other; e.g. "Let's start with option 2 but take the first part of option 3 and add this other new piece"; these are "*synthesis options*".
- It should become clear that the group is ready to discuss; anyone may ask "does anyone have any other options?"; the transition to discussion should be intentional.

Step 4: Discussion, testing for agreement, and reaching consensus:

- Similar to Step 2, the gathered options are discussed in an open format. Do any of the options resolve the issue? What are the pros and cons of each option?
- Healthy discussion often identifies new *synthesis options*.
- ***Testing for agreement:*** Upon perceived convergence on an option, the option should be clearly stated and everyone is asked to signal their agreement or disagreement. If disagreement, return to earlier stages of the process until **consensus** is reached. Consensus means that there are no reservations or abstentions in the group.

Step 6: Implementation of the option: Assigning responsibilities and timetables

- "Action items" or "Do's" are assigned to named individuals with timetables for each.
- **Avoid vague plans**; everyone in the group should have notes with a specific name associated with an explicit task; e.g. do not assume someone knows it was their task.
- If a task is not completed in the timetable, the open task is raised at the next meeting as a ***New Issue*** and prioritized accordingly.