

Eastern Standard Pod Guidelines

Common Ground Rules:

1. Listen actively -- respect others when they are talking.
2. Speak from your own experience instead of generalizing ("I" instead of "they," "we," "you"), including during any discussions of grievances within the group.
3. If a pod member is unintentionally hurtful, maintain humility and use it as a learning experience.
4. 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.
5. Participate to the fullest of your ability -- community growth depends on the inclusion of every individual voice.
6. Instead of invalidating somebody else's story with your own spin on their experience, share your own story and experience.
7. The goal is not to always agree -- it is to gain a deeper understanding.
8. Be conscious of body language and nonverbal responses -- they can be as disrespectful as words (even over Zoom!)
9. Assume everyone's good intentions but also acknowledge the impact of saying something that hurts someone else, even if it is unintended.
10. 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. No document generated during pod meetings or by pod members will be made public unless and until it is submitted as an URGE deliverable.
11. During discussion raise one finger to indicate you have a comment/question to add to the current discussion and a hand to indicate that your comment/question is on a new topic. Or indicate a desire to add to the discussion or introduce a new discussion topic by adding "Stack" to the chat.
12. Before the discussion topic changes, the facilitator will ensure that all pod members are comfortable moving on from the previous topic.
13. Be conscious of your background noise during discussions. Mute when needed.
14. The meeting facilitator will end each meeting with a wrap-up of any deliverables and a preview of what will take place during the next meeting.

Making Decisions as a Group

The pod will follow the consensus model for decision making as outlined in Seeds of Change short guide to consensus decision making [consensus guidelines](#).

Stage 1: Introduce and clarify the issue

Share background information. Work out the remit of the discussion - i.e. what questions do you need to decide about now?



Stage 2: Open out the discussion

Make space for everyone to share their needs and opinions before launching into trying to solve the problem. If ideas come up already, you could hear them briefly, then park them for the next stage.



Stage 3: Explore ideas in a broad discussion

Come up with lots of different ways forward. Explore the pros and cons of different options. Identify key concerns, needs and objectives.



Stage 4: Form a proposal

Look for a solution that meets everyone's most important needs. This might involve weaving together elements of different ideas.



Stage 5: Amend the proposal

Look for changes that will make the proposal even stronger.



Stage 6: Test for agreement

Clearly state the proposal and check whether there is real agreement. Starting by asking for who is against the proposal makes it easier for people to voice their concerns. E.g.:

Any **blocks**?

Any **stand-asides**?

Any **reservations**?

Do we have **consensus**?

If you have a block, or too many stand-asides you will need to go back a stage, and amend the proposal further, or create a new one.



Stage 7: Work out how to implement the decision

Work out what needs to happen, by when, and who will do it!



Pod Member Roles and Responsibilities

Pod Leader

1. Schedule meetings
2. Check meeting roles. ([Link](#) to meeting schedule)
3. Upload deliverables to the URGE website

Session Leader

1. Take attendance (important for accountability)
2. Draft deliverables and share with pod for review/edits/discussion at the pod meetings

Session Chat Monitor

1. Monitor chat and attendees for the indicators to contribute to discussion mentioned in ground rule

Attendees

1. Take group notes as needed, especially in discussions using the OSF wiki
2. Schedule meetings with organization/institution leadership (Week X)
3. Read 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.)