

WHOI PO(d) Guidelines

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").
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!).
8. Assume everyone's good intentions but also acknowledge the impact of saying something that hurts you or someone else, even if it is unintended. Speak up verbally, type into the chat, or write it down in our [anonymous form](#).
9. What's said here stays here, but what's learned here leaves here. 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, but lessons learned from discussions should be carried out with you.
10. Take time to reflect. We will create space at the beginning of each session for reflections on the previous session. These could be lingering thoughts on the previous session's topic, or feedback on the pod's discussions and interactions, etc.
11. Equally value all voices regardless of title or rank.

Making decisions as a group

In the collaborative spirit of URGE, and to help ensure that everyone is engaged in the process, the WHOI PO(d) will seek to make decisions based on group consensus.

Following [specific guidance](#), this method of consensus is characterized by cooperation between *equals* (shared power), an exploration of our *differences* (building stronger community), and a standard of *clarity* in our ultimate decisions (so that we are more likely to follow through with implementation).

Pod member roles and responsibilities

Pod Leader

Throughout the URGE curriculum, our pod leader (Jing He) will be responsible for managing the flow of information to and from the pod, such as by sharing URGE email announcements and links, managing files in the shared drive, and uploading deliverables to the URGE website.

Facilitators

For each meeting, two people will preemptively volunteer to facilitate discussion and the allocation of tasks associated with that week's deliverables. The role of facilitating should be roughly equally spread across the pod and should not fall onto the same few people every time. The facilitators will also begin progress on the deliverables before the meeting session, which may include reading supplementary materials if necessary. During meetings, the role of the facilitators is to help the group reach consensus and work together creatively as well as efficiently. This includes reviewing any comments from the [anonymous form](#) prior to the session, preparing and sticking to an agenda (if necessary), maintaining the focus of the group, ensuring that space exists for everyone to express their thoughts, providing summaries of different points to help the group work out a fair decision, and helping address any conflict that may arise. Facilitators will not have any more power than anyone else in the group, and are not there to make decisions on behalf of anyone else. The facilitators can only do their job with the support and cooperation of everyone in the group.

Note taker

At the beginning of each meeting, the facilitators will assign a volunteer to take notes on the main points of the discussion as well as keep track of the allocation of tasks toward that week's deliverable. Additionally, the note taker will record attendance for the meeting.

All pod members

Everyone should come to the meeting having read or watched the material required to hold a productive discussion. If someone has not been able to prepare for the meeting, they should disclaim this to the group at the start of the meeting and consciously leave space for others to speak before they do (however, they should still ultimately strive to participate in the discussion). In this way, they may learn something from another speaker -- who has come prepared -- that would inform their own thoughts before they move to express them. Group members are also encouraged to bring thoughts and questions from the previous meeting to be shared at the start of the session.