

## Dear Workshop Leaders, dear Speakers,

At *Bits & Bäume* 2022, people with different backgrounds, privileges and socio-economic positions come together. People, who are working on different topics and bring a diverse range of experiences with them.

We are excited about the learning space we are sharing here. However, it is also very important to us to address and make visible the power structures and social hierarchies that are at work in this space and to actively do something to counter them. Because this conference should be a space that is as free of discrimination as possible. We would be happy if you, as someone who is contributing to the conference, would help us to make sure that everyone feels comfortable at the conference!

You can shape the atmosphere of the conference through the methodological design of your workshop and in your role as a workshop leader or speaker. The following points can contribute to more sensitive and mindful interactions between people, which is why we would like to share them with you as suggestions. There are certainly many more points and we are sure that you will bring along your own ideas and strategies!

Your *Bits & Bäume* Awareness Team

## How can we facilitate mindful discussions?

- In order to interact mindfully with others, it is helpful to become aware of our own positions and privileges. You can find more information about this in our [Awareness Concept](#).
- At the beginning of your session, point out that we want to create space for respectful interactions and good conversations. This includes letting each other finish and giving everyone the space to express their opinion, as long as it is not aimed at hurting others.
- Support participants who want to make visible and name discrimination they have experienced (such as sexist and racist remarks or behaviour).
- Encourage participants to share their knowledge in a way that is understandable to all. This includes explaining abbreviations and technical terms.
- Encourage people who feel uncomfortable to communicate this feeling and refer to the shared responsibility for creating a space that is as hierarchy-free as possible. Explicitly addressing this topic at the start of the session creates sensibility.
- People may want to be addressed with specific pronouns. If you are doing a round of introductions, you can give participants the opportunity to state their pronouns in addition to their name.
- You can always refer to the *Bits & Bäume* Awareness concept, which can be found [here](#) on our website.
- Inform participants that they can get support from the Awareness Team during the conference if they feel uncomfortable with a situation. The Awareness Team can be contacted via the **Infopoint** of the conference or **directly by phone** at **+49 162 6614565**

***Are you encountering discrimination or observing an abusive situation? Or do you have a question for the Awareness Team?***

*At the conference (30.09.-02.10.) you can contact the Awareness Team directly by phone:  
+49 162 6614565*

*Here you can find our Awareness Strategy: <https://bits-und-baeume.org/konferenz-2022/awareness/>*

### **Which hand signals can be helpful for communication in groups?**

- You can introduce some hand signals at the beginning of the session to shape the discussion and to be able to respond directly to individual needs if necessary:
  - forming thumb and index finger into an "L": the "Language" sign can be used if a person does not know/understand a word that is being used
  - two index fingers: I would like to say something directly related to the question/issue that helps with understanding the topic
  - waving/shaking both hands: agreement with the argument being made

### **How can we use language to create awareness?**

- Make sure that all participants can follow your statements linguistically (explain foreign words and technical terms, avoid sentences that are too complex, etc.).
- Give participants the opportunity to ask comprehension questions at any time also enquire regularly if there are any questions.
- Discussion method:
  - In order for everyone to be able to follow the content and participate in discussions if they want to, it can be helpful to schedule reflection breaks and ask if there are any comprehension questions at different points during the discussion.
  - The format of an open discussion carries unequal risks for participants and we encourage you to use complementary or other sharing/discussion formats (e.g. "murmur rounds" with seat neighbours, small break-out groups on specific sub-topics, etc.).

### **What can you pay attention to during the facilitation of the session?**

- You can make people who dominate discussions aware of this and encourage the other participants to also share their questions and thoughts with the group.
- Make it clear that hurtful and discriminatory language have no place in the discussion. If this type of language is used, confront the person and explain to them why what they said is harmful.
- If people are negatively affected by a situation and would like support, the Awareness Team can be contacted.

### **What is important regarding interactive/reflective group exercises?**

- Emphasise that participation in the exercises is voluntary and that participants do not have to take part or can stop taking part at any time.
- Emphasise that it is up to the participants to decide what and how much they want to share with the group.

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