

GOOD PRACTICE: CONFERENCES AND EVENTS¹

1. As a session chair, ensure that the discussion is welcoming and inclusive. Consider implementing the following policies:
 - a. Keep a question queue and stick to it.
 - b. Step in where needed to help avoid, e.g., interruptions of those speaking, lines of discussion that are stretching on for too long, or dialogue that has become aggressive and/or rude.
 - c. Allow for a break between talks and Q&A sessions in order for participants to gather their thoughts and/or to have time to attend to their different needs.
 - d. Carefully select the order in which you call on questioners. Beginning the Q&A session with student questions or a question from a member of an under-represented group can lead to a more inclusive discussion.
 - e. Encourage the participation of those who might be slower to raise their hand or less assertive about getting to the front of the queue.
 - f. Do not allow questioners to ask multiple questions or extensive follow up questions if others have not been given a chance to speak.
2. As an audience member, be respectful of the speaker and the other people in the room in some of the following ways:
 - a. Keep questions short. Avoid asking multiple questions or long follow-up questions if this risks crowding others out of the conversation.
 - b. Try to ask constructive questions that will help the presenter. Set a respectful tone.
 - c. Try to read the room and assess whether your question will benefit the discussion.
3. As an organizer, take every reasonable step to make the conference as inclusive as possible.
 - a. Organizers of recurring conferences should annually, or biennially, monitor the demographics of conference participants, and, if significant imbalances emerge in demographic representation, take steps to address the imbalance.

¹ Points in this section have been adapted from the APA's Good Practices Guide (available at: https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.apaonline.org/resource/resmgr/docs/Good_Practices_Guide_2019.pdf), the Oxford university faculty of law Good Practices Guide (available at: <https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/research-and-subject-groups/jurisprudence-oxford/good-practices-guidelines>), the Canadian Society for Women in Philosophy Guidelines for Conference Hosting (available at: http://cswip.ca/images/uploads/CSWIP_Accessibility_Working_Group_Document.pdf) and the BPA/SWIP Good Practice Policy General guidance (available at: <https://bpa.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/All-GP-docs.pdf>)

- b. When drawing up a list of potential invited speakers, take reasonable steps to ensure sufficient representation of speakers from under-represented groups.
- c. Where possible, consult invited speakers before fixing the date of the conference, to increase the likelihood that they are not just invited but will actually be able to accept the invitations.
- d. Organizers should ensure that members of all groups are treated equally as speakers on publicity material and the conference program (e.g., to avoid the situation where a White speaker is described as ‘Professor in philosophy at ...’ but a Black speaker, also a Professor, is described as ‘teaches philosophy at ...’; or where the male speaker’s title (Dr, Prof.) is included by the female speaker’s is not).
- e. Where possible try to include local scholars.
- f. Signal willingness to accommodate scholars with disabilities or other particularized needs.
 - i. Make an effort to provide information about the kinds of accommodations you can provide, in order to enable and encourage scholars to attend, in the invitations, call for papers, or conference announcement.
 - ii. Whenever possible, do not require participants to disclose their needs as that can make them feel that they are a burden on the conference organizers, but be prepared to offer commonly required accommodations.
 - iii. Ensure that participants are made to feel at ease to ask questions about specific accommodations.
- g. Ensure that the venue of the conference is accessible and that there are staff to assist people with disabilities (for guidance see: https://bpa.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/BPA_SWIP-Guidelines-for-Accessible-Conferences.pdf and for public lectures, in particular, see: https://bpa.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/BPA_SWIP-Guidelines-for-Accessible-Public-Lectures.pdf).
 - i. Consider offering opportunities for virtual participation, including opportunities for presenting and attending virtually. For suggestions on how to accomplish this see, for example, Helen Beebee’s post on Running Hybrid Events (<http://www.projects.socialsciences.manchester.ac.uk/lewis/running-hybrid-events/>).
- h. Ensure that all participants know whom to contact to address any questions or needs that may arise.
- i. Ensure that there are sufficient breaks within the day, and stick to the announced schedule for these breaks.
- j. Be aware of biases when identifying whom to invite.
 - i. Chances are that the first people that come to mind will be people without historical disadvantage.
 - ii. Consider invitations to junior and less well-established philosophers from under-represented groups to avoid holding these

philosophers to higher standards (e.g., disabled scholars must be famous to be included, but not so for non-disabled scholars). See the [UPDirectory](#) for possibilities.

- k. When possible, offer funding to people with additional needs (e.g., financial, accessibility or care-related needs). If you cannot fund all speakers, consider checking whether more renowned speakers can fund their own travel, freeing up resources for less well-resourced speakers.
 - l. Offer free registration for companions assisting an attendee with a disability and abide by all other ADA policies.
 - m. When possible, have a quiet room for rest. This is important for a range of disabilities and for participants who have medical needs or are breastfeeding, etc.
 - n. Be mindful of who is, and who is not, asked to care for children. Investigate whether the provision of childcare facilities for the duration of the conference is possible.
 - i. Many universities have day care facilities on or near campus, which may be able to offer a day rate for conference delegates.
 - ii. For larger conferences, if campus facilities are not available consider hosting the conference at a hotel that offers childcare and babysitting services.
 - iii. Consider setting aside funding to subsidize the use of childcare facilities by delegates.
 - iv. Be mindful of who is and who isn't asked to care for children
 - o. Encourage speakers to make their material accessible to all participants and make sure you know how to operate equipment in order to help speakers (again see the [BPA Accessibility Guidelines](#)).
 - p. If there is food served, be mindful of dietary restrictions of conference participants, collecting information in advance if feasible. Food to meet these dietary requirements should either be plentiful or clearly marked as reserved for the relevant people, to avoid it running out.
 - q. Consider including, at the event opening, an indigenous land statement or acknowledgement, which acknowledges indigenous peoples as the traditional stewards of the land as well as the relationships these people have to the land on which the event is occurring.
4. Department heads should ensure that conference policies are available to staff and students who are organizing events in a permanent format (e.g., intranet, handbooks) and that they are aware of it.