Guide for Facilitating
Inclusive Virtual Meetings

Purpose

This guide is a practical companion to our ProVeritas Leadership blog on neurological diversity, belonging, and planetary health. It is informed by Ludmila Praslova's The Canary Code, Ruby Campbell's Scientists in Every Boardroom, and the Inner Development Goals (IDGs). The aim is to help facilitators and neurodivergent participants co create online spaces that support dignity, fairness, and authentic collaboration.

Before the session

- Send a clear invitation: Share agenda, objectives, time frames, and ways to contribute (voice, chat, shared notes). Be explicit about what is optional.
- Offer multiple channels: Accept questions in advance, in chat, or in a shared document. Value written and spoken input equally.
- Reduce cognitive load: Share slides or key reading early. Use plain language and avoid idioms.
- Set sensory expectations: State that cameras are optional, captions will be on, and breakout rooms used only if flagged.
- Accessibility basics: Enable captions, add alt text to visuals, ensure colour contrast is readable.
- Name the norms up front: "We will move at a thoughtful pace, invite all voices, and value different forms of contribution equally."

During the session

- Open with safety cues: Acknowledge choice in participation and invite people to use the mode that works for them.
- Structured turn taking: Use raise hand, round robin, or direct invitation. Avoid relying only on fast exchanges.
- Integrate the chat: Assign a "chat weaver" to surface contributions so nothing is lost.
- Pace and pauses: Timebox items. Insert pauses for reflection and note taking.
- Breaks: Offer a short stretch break in sessions longer than 45 minutes.
- Plain language: Be concrete. Summarise decisions and next steps clearly as you go.

After the session

- Send a concise written summary: Include decisions, owners, deadlines, open questions, and links.
- Invite asynchronous follow up: Allow additional contributions by email or shared doc for those who need processing time.
- Close the loop: Acknowledge contributions made in chat and asynchronously, not only those spoken in the room.

Guidance for neurodivergent participants

- Prepare your voice: Review agenda early and note the points you want to make.
- Choose your channel: Use chat or notes if speaking feels taxing.
- Adjust your environment: Reduce visual clutter, adjust sound, use tools that support focus.
- Ask for what you need: Request pauses, slower pacing, or written clarification.
- Use asynchronous follow up: Add or refine your contributions afterwards.
- Look after your energy: Build transition time before and after complex meetings.

Shared responsibility for life giving spaces

- Welcome silence as part of thinking.
- Notice who has not spoken and invite gently.
- Credit contributions equally, whether spoken, written, or from follow up.
- Name the process, not the person: focus on what would help the group.
- Remember: clarity and fairness support the whole system.

A short script you can read aloud

"Participation is welcome by voice, chat, or shared notes. Cameras are optional. Captions are on. We will pause regularly. If you need a break or a slower pace, please say so in chat. All contributions will be included in the written summary."

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