

Global Perspective Conversation Program

Guidelines for Conversation

Each conversation session is meant to be an opportunity in which facilitators and participants enter a shared space to engage constructively, respectfully, and insightfully in dialogue.

This is a **SAFE SPACE** shaped by the practices below:

- **Listen actively --respect others when they are talking.** (Respect: give undivided attention to the person speaking, allow them to finish their point; do not interrupt).
- **Speak from your own experience instead of generalizing** ("I" instead of "they," "we," and "you").
 - *Confidentiality:* It is acceptable to discuss confidential situations but do not use names or other identifiable information when sharing stories. [EX: *"I know someone who..."* rather than *"My friend Alex..."*]
- **Respectfully challenge one another by asking questions, but refrain from personal attacks** (Focus on ideas, ideologies, practices, etc.).
 - *Sensitivity to Diversity:* The people in each conversation group differ in cultural background, sexual orientation, class, race, status, nationality, ability, mobility, and gender/gender expression. None of us are a representative of an entire group of people. Avoid essentializing through generalizations about representation in the group [Ex: *"I have noticed some people from (specific group of people) do..."* rather than *"Why do (specific group of people) do...?"*]
- **Instead of invalidating somebody else's story with your own spin on their experience, share your own story and experience.** Remember to pay careful attention to how your own story and experience might influence or affect other members of the group. Check in with the group, if you have any doubts, asking first if certain aspects of your experience are appropriate to share without harming the safety of everyone in the room.
- **The goal is not to agree.** Rather, the conversation aims for deliberation, questioning, examining, and sharing of experience, perspectives, and ideas to gain a more reflective and detailed understanding.
- **Be conscious of body language and nonverbal responses.** These actions, while not verbal and often subtle, can disrupt trust and safety in the space.

Credit: adapted from Ebony Nicholson (2018)