

Virtual Community Agreements

At AIUSA, we are dedicated to fostering a virtual community that is open to learning and incorporating IDEA values into our workspaces. Members of our virtual community agree to incorporate these principles into each of our interactions.

General

- Observe the Inclusive Behavior, including:
 - Manage your biases and behaviors
 - Manage speaking time and make space for different voices
 - Respecting and learning from different perspectives
 - Understanding the difference between intent and impact (assume good intent and take responsibility for your impact)
 - Listen to understand, rather than just respond
- Be as present as possible and manage distractions as best you can.
- Be open to giving and receiving feedback about the effectiveness of virtual meetings.
- No exclusionary or harassing speech is allowed. This includes “calling out” in a way that puts someone on the spot or shames them.

Large-Group Video Calls

- When possible, join calls by video and stay on mute when not speaking.
- Recognize and respect that others may have limitations regarding the use of video.
- Use the reaction features on the platform to share your reactions.
- Follow the host’s directions about using the chat function (general comments and reactions, questions, etc.)
- Use the same guidelines for the chat feature as you would for email as they are both forms of public written communication.
- Some questions, comments or feedback may be better shared offline or in a 1:1 conversation rather than on the call; determine the best course of action accordingly.
- Recognize that there are different comfort levels and technological circumstances with virtual participation, so have patience and flexibility.

Pandemic-Related

- Be mindful that talking about COVID-19 may be a trigger for some; refrain from asking others if they have the virus or if loved ones were affected by the virus. If doing ice-breakers, use neutral and non-pandemic-related questions and prompts.
- Recognize that anxiety and stress due to external conditions can cause reactivity in ourselves and others.
- Virtual communication can add to things getting lost in translation and can cause assumptions/misinterpretations. Feel free to ask for clarification, check for understanding, and create a space for others to do the same.
- Be respectful of everyone's unique WFH situation; refrain from comments about their surroundings and be understanding of distractions that may occur. Be mindful of what you say, knowing that children or other people in their space may hear.

Best Practices

Be open to giving and receiving feedback about the effectiveness of virtual meetings – As we consider the overall meeting burden, be mindful of the amount of time scheduled and the ways in which we each process information individually. Also, consider whether (or not) a meeting is the most effective form of communication for the objective. This should also speak to the importance of discussing meeting effectiveness with each other openly, honestly, and respectfully.

Manage speaking time and make space for different voices – Consider community members who haven't yet spoken (before you speak multiple times).

Be as present as possible and manage distractions as best you can – Understand that managing distraction does not mean eliminating distractions.

Be mindful when recording meetings/downloading chat – If meetings are being recorded, the community should be made aware. The same applies to if and when the host plans to download the chat.

Consider questions, comments, or feedback that may be better suited for sharing offline or in a 1:1 conversation rather than on the call; determine the best course of action accordingly – This may include both critical and constructive feedback. We agree to use our best judgment.

If joining virtually, stay on mute when not speaking. Recognize and respect that others may have limitations regarding the use of video – This pertains to large group calls. For smaller team and 1:1 meetings, the directive expectation should come from the moderator.

Make considerations depending on your meeting community– Not every agreement will apply to every meeting/situation, and agreements may apply differently based on your meeting role (i.e. facilitator vs. participant).