



Inclusive Events Guide; Organisers, Speakers, and Panel Chairs School of Security Studies

The School of Security Studies is committed to hosting events which advance scholarly knowledge and practice. To do this, it is essential that events draw upon the expertise of people from a diverse range of backgrounds and that all participants are able to engage substantively. Accordingly, event organisers, speakers, and panel chairs should consult the following guidelines and include the 'Guide for Attendees' in their email communications and/or event programmes. Fostering these best practises as we plan our events, select invitees, and conduct proceedings will help the best ideas flourish by ensuring all participants are able to contribute to their full potential.

Key Considerations

1. Have you recruited a diverse range of participants (across race, gender, disability, career stage) who are best suited to address the event's topics?

If you are struggling to recruit a diverse range of participants, please see the databases for female scholars in [History](#) and [Politics](#), and [BAME experts](#) across a range of fields

Before the Event

Speaker and Participant Selection

Have you recruited a diverse range of participants? This may involve some extra research but doing so will promote innovation and vibrant dialogue as well as broadening your scholarly and practitioner networks. It will also likely encourage audience participation and engagement.

- **Do** select participants who can add valuable insights and perspectives to the debate from a range of backgrounds, countries, and institutions
- **Do** treat all participants with the same degree of formality and respect in communications, programmes, and advertising materials (including consistent use of professional titles)
- **Do** support the development of junior colleagues by including them when they have expertise to contribute
- **Do** make sure participants have the necessary materials and contexts so they can prepare appropriately for the event

- **Don't** put a junior female/BAME colleague who is not a subject-matter expert on a panel with senior colleagues to tick a diversity box. Doing so may only reinforce perceptions that women/BAME colleagues are less capable

Personal Pronouns/Identifiers

- **Do** check how each participant prefers to be addressed beforehand
- **Do** ask participants for their preferred pronouns and honorifics
- **Do** ask colleagues how to pronounce their names *ahead of time* if unsure. Failing to introduce speakers properly can be undermining

Advertising

- **Do** use multiple platforms including social media and email to reach out to the broadest audience

Accessibility

- **Do** include details on accessibility in the event details (e.g. “there is a ramp at the entrance” or “there will be microphones for speakers and for asking questions” (see example of [King's Anatomy Museum](#))
- **Do** include in advertising a contact email for questions about accessibility
- **Do** ensure that the event is fully accessible (see [King's EDI Guidance and Resource Page](#)), including to those with disabilities

Timing

- **Do** hold the event within core working hours. This allows more people with family or other caring responsibilities to participate in the event
- **Don't** hold events on religious holidays (see timeanddate.com for a list of holidays in the UK)

Catering

If you are providing refreshments, ensure they meet the dietary requirements of attendees and participants and are labelled with potential allergens

- **Do** request allergy information from all participants ahead of time if meals are to be provided
- **Do** ensure any self-pay meals are affordable for postgraduate and non-salaried participants

During the Event

Introductions

- **Do** introduce all speakers with a note of their academic/service/experiential credentials and relevant titles
- **Don't** refer less formally to junior, female, or BAME colleagues. If you are using first names, do so for all participants. If not, use professional titles consistently

Chairing

- **Do** set expectations clearly and apply them consistently (i.e. stipulating that each panellist speaks only for x minutes)
- **Do** give all panellists the same amount of time to respond to questions. When questions are asked of the whole panel, rotate who responds first.
- **Do** consider diversity when calling on people to ask questions; do not call on only those you already know or the most senior participants
- **Don't** allocate extra time during Q&A based on speakers' seniority

Question and Answer Session

- **Do** treat all those asking questions with the same degree of formality and respect. This is important as people have a habit of introducing representatives of some groups (usually women, junior colleagues, etc) more informally, which undermines their professional credibility
- **Do** be aware that implicit bias can colour your reaction to questions (e.g. questions by individuals from some groups receive approbation while questions asked by individuals from other groups are unintentionally side-lined or downplayed)
- **Do** try to engage substantively with all the questions asked

Professional Conduct

- **Do** avoid comments about people's physical appearance, even if intended as a compliment
- **Do** avoid making inappropriate comments or jokes such as those with sexual content or personal/religious beliefs

What if something goes wrong?

- **Do** address problems if they arise. If you witness or experience bullying, harassment, or inappropriate conduct/comments you may wish to address the issue on the spot.

This can be done by:

- Speaking to an event organiser or asking someone to do so on your behalf. Often, issues can be resolved quickly, especially if the person or people involved do not realise they have caused offence
 - Speaking to the person or people concerned if you feel comfortable doing so, with or without the event organiser. They may be grateful you did so to resolve what could be an embarrassing situation
- Alternatively, you may wish to make contact after the event to discuss the incident
 - Contact the organisers or the DWS EDI team via diversity-warstudies@kcl.ac.uk, who can inform you of the courses of action available

What if someone complains about me?

- **Do** consider that you might have caused offence without intending to
- **Do** resist the urge to dismiss the allegation or get annoyed
- **Do** listen to the feedback being given and try to engage with it constructively (e.g. “Thank you for bringing this up with me. I will be conscious of that in future.”)
- **Don’t** beat yourself up – we all make mistakes!
- **Do** things differently next time to avoid the issue arising again

Thanks for reading. If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact:

War Studies: diversity-warstudies@kcl.ac.uk

Defence Studies: dsd-di@kcl.ac.uk