



Wilton Park

Guidelines for moderated panels

Discussion Protocol

Wilton Park events are designed to be as interactive and frank as possible. All contributors are encouraged to participate in their own personal capacity, rather than as representatives of their governments or organisations. Discussion in all Wilton Park sessions is 'off the record' and no individual speaker or participant should be quoted (nor their identity or institutional affiliation revealed) without that individual's express permission. Should a panellist wish or agree to talk 'on the record', the Chair will make this clear at the beginning of the session.

Length and format of session

- Plenary sessions will open with a moderated panel discussion involving 3 to 4 respondents. This initial panel, which should last no more than 25 minutes, is intended to provoke a lively roundtable discussion, engaging the expertise of all participants.

Panel members should note that participants are drawn from many countries and from different professional backgrounds. Participants can be assumed to have a good standard of English. Short biographies will be included in the conference pack.

Role of moderator

Session moderators may wish to make some brief remarks on the theme before introducing the respondents and moderating the ensuing panel discussion. The moderator's framing remarks should not exceed 3-4 minutes and the overall panel discussion should be 25 minutes maximum. The remainder of the session provides an opportunity for other participants to contribute their expertise. Moderators are asked to make sure that contributions are short and concise, enabling all who wish to participate the opportunity to do so. The Wilton Park Programme Director will provide support throughout the sessions.

Role of respondent

Respondents should focus on key policy issues rather than giving extensive factual background; participants will already have a sound knowledge of the basic facts. Respondents are asked to keep their interjections short and concise raising questions to stimulate further debate. During the ensuing roundtable discussion, the panel will have opportunities to contribute further and to respond to any specific points raised.

Preparation

Respondents are not required to prepare statements in advance and are encouraged to adapt their remarks to the actual circumstances in the event. If participants wish to reference papers and articles these can be posted on a secure area of the Wilton Park website.

PowerPoint and audio/visual presentations

The use of visual materials to support remarks is discouraged, as many participants find it distracts from the discussion. The format of the meeting and the configuration of our conference room are not favourable to their use.

Conference Room

All plenary sessions take place in the main Conference Room. Participants and panels are seated around a rectangular table which has space for 38-40 people, with additional seating around the edge of the room. All contributors are provided with name plates. There is sound equipment for amplification; the sessions are not recorded.

In addition to focused sessions on key aspects of each theme, time is deliberately set aside on the programme for informal dialogue with fellow participants, in the margins of the conference.