CONVERSATION GUIDE: SOME TIPS AND IDEAS FOR INITIATING GROUP CONVERSATIONS ABOUT BELONGING, FAIRNESS, AND RESPECT

YOUR IDEAS MATTER
You’re invited to participate in creating a more inclusive SFU. Please help us to develop a strategy for advancing equity, diversity and inclusion across all parts of the university.

Anyone can host a conversation and it can be as structured or free/open as you want. It’s all up to you. The idea behind this Guide is to encourage small groups of friends or classmates to engage in a conversation on a topic that’s important to the group.

This Guide provides some ideas and tips for hosting a conversation. This do-it-yourself framework provides a way for everyone to join SFU’s conversations on equity, diversity and inclusion and to have your voices and ideas move this community forward.

WE WILL LISTEN AND REFLECT ON YOUR INPUT AS WE PREPARE A REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS
After hosting a conversation, we invite you to share the topic(s) you discussed and a summary of your group’s ideas with us.

WHAT DOES HOSTING A CONVERSATION INVOLVE?

PLANNING YOUR EVENT
The goal is to create a space where people feel comfortable to listen to others, but also to share their own ideas and insights that stem from their lived experiences and knowledge.

PLACE & TIME
These conversations about inclusion and belonging can take place anywhere - in a quiet room, around a firepit, in a coffee hour, or over a shared meal. There’s no time limit, but you might want to put aside at least an hour.

PARTICIPANTS
Keeping the group small (between 5 and 10 participants) helps to create more intimate conversations. These dialogues work best in groups where everyone present feels comfortable voicing their thoughts and opinions. Invite people who are open to communicating and have a willingness to hear and consider diverse or opposing views.

FACILITATING & NOTE-TAKING
As a host, you may wish to take on the role of the facilitator, or even the note-taker. If not, ask if someone can volunteer or maybe share the responsibility among more than one member of the group.

You can find more helpful tips for facilitating a respectful dialogue.
THE TIPS FOR HOSTING A CONVERSATION

CHECKLIST FOR HOSTING A CONVERSATION

Decide on date and time and pick a comfortable location. Bring people together around a firepit, a cup of coffee, or an intimate dinner.

Invite your guests. Tell the group what you are interested in talking about and explain why it’s important to you.

Gather together. Let the group decide how structured or free/open they would like the conversation to be. Give everyone a chance to talk about what’s on their mind.

Tell us what you talked about! We encourage you to tell us about your topic and share any ideas your group had for achieving a culture of inclusion, belonging, fairness, and mutual respect on campus. You can submit a summary and any ideas to EDI@sfu.ca.

MATERIALS

Feel free to use a notebook and pen, or laptop, to take notes so you don’t forget what is discussed.

You might also find it helpful to bring a few copies of the Community Guidelines on facilitating respectful dialogue to share with your group.

SUPPORT

Try to create a welcoming and accepting space, not only physical but also mental and emotional. Some participants may wish to access support through MySSP or SFU Health & Counselling.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Here are some suggested questions for your group to discuss. If your group is interested in discussing a different topic related to fairness, belonging, and mutual respect, that’s okay too.

1. How does SFU currently create a culture of inclusion, fairness, and mutual respect? In what ways can SFU improve in fostering this kind of campus culture?

2. What specific steps can SFU take to achieve a culture of inclusion, belonging, fairness, and mutual respect on campus?

3. What specific steps can SFU’s staff/faculty take to achieve a culture of inclusion, belonging, fairness, and mutual respect?

4. What is your role in fostering inclusion, belonging, fairness, and mutual respect at SFU?

SEND US YOUR IDEAS

We encourage you to send us the topic(s) you discussed with your group as well as a summary of your ideas. We will reflect on your input as we develop a strategy for advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion at SFU. Please send your input to: EDI@sfu.ca

It’s time to listen, talk, and reflect.

Join the conversation on belonging, inclusion, fairness and respect at SFU.