

Concept paper: Panel discussion

A panel discussion is a specific format used in a meeting, conference or convention. It is a live or virtual discussion about a specific topic amongst a selected group of panellists, who share differing perspectives, in front of a large audience.

The panel is typically facilitated by a “moderator” who guides the panel and the audience through the event. The panel, typically 3-4 experts or practitioners in the field, shares facts, offers opinions and responds to audience questions either through questions curated by the moderator or taken from the audience directly. The moderator’s task is to organize effective and result oriented discussion on topic questions. The panel session typically lasts for 60-90 minutes.

Use a panel when you believe the group of panellists will generate something more interesting than any one individual panel member could generate on their own.

What methods/other tools/ techniques can be used while implementing the tool?	Main aims while using the tool
<p>Panel discussion(s) can be part of conferences, bigger seminars, etc.</p> <p>You can use ICT tools such as video conference (e.g. via Facebook, Skype, Go ToMeeting, ezTalks Meetings, TrueConf) to reach a wider audience by offering the possibility to participate in the conference online.</p> <p>During the panel discussion it is possible to use other ICT tools and apps to collect questions/opinions/feedback from the audience, e.g. Slido, Mentimeter, Kahoot.</p>	<p>The aim of the tool is to enable panel participants to discuss current issues regarding senior green mobility, showing different views in a topic and seeking solutions to improve senior mobility.</p>
How can the tool be used in each phase of the process (when developing age-friendlier and green mobility solutions)?	
<p>Panels can be used in most of the phases as it is easy to choose panellists and discussion points based on the aim of using the tool. However, as focus is on panellists (limited no of persons), it is probably not the best tool for evaluation or feedback on how to develop green mobility. However, in case of a well-planned and moderated panel, it is possible to get valuable new ideas and understand problems through the questions coming from the audience.</p>	
What is the aim of engagement with this tool?	
<p>The main aim of engagement with this tool is to involve wide range of panellists: the senior leaders, professionals and municipal representatives and others to discuss and debate actual problems of senior mobility and to empower and bring new knowledge to target groups.</p>	
For how many people and how is the tool suitable (for one-time use)?	How much effort is required from the participant and what influences that?
<p>The panel discussion platform is suitable for a small group of 3-4 panellist. It does not have limits for auditory or online video conference.</p>	<p>Usually, panellists are professionals and confident in their field. As for the audience, they need to spend time to come to the event and attend it.</p>
Time needed to <u>prepare</u> using the tool and what influences the time needed?	Time needed to <u>implement</u> the tool and what influences the time needed?

Preparation time for the Panel is considerable and takes about 1 month, which is mainly influenced by gathering panellists and moderator, setting up the agenda and focus questions and taking care of all organizational issues (incl. sending out invitations).	A panel discussion can take about 60 – 90 minutes , the time is fixed in the agenda.
Time needed to <u>summarize</u> using the tool and what influences the time needed?	Price for the user of the tool and what influences the price
Depending on the length and aim of the panel discussion, summarizing ideas from the discussions can take one full working day . Especially if there is a need for an in-depth summary and the panel is recorded (need to listen the recording, making citations, etc.).	There are some moderate fees to organizing the event (moderator costs, rent of premises, catering and coffee breaks, video conference and sound equipment costs).
SWOT on using the tool	
STRENGTHS It is a strong tool for gaining and consolidating the views of leaders. It provides good interaction with the audience who can ask questions and reflect on the topic. It is possible to send questions to panellists beforehand so that they can prepare their answers.	WEAKNESSES Tool may not be suitable for elaborating very detailed and precise solutions. The value and strength of the panel depends on the moderator's abilities to lead the discussion and the panellists' readiness to share their honest views.
OPPORTUNITIES Using this tool, it may inspire the audience (synergy effect) to start new activities or ideas individually. By deciding on the topic of the discussion and who to invite, it is possible to nudge the audience and the panellists to be more open-minded in view of green mobility.	THREATS Difficult issues or provocative participants can cause sharp debates and chaos, therefore, it is the task of the moderator to control the situation and lead the discussion smoothly. Panellists may not be active enough or give specific answers.
How to use the tool?	
How to prepare using the tool? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare the discussion topic together with stakeholders. • Invite panellists (senior leaders, NGO, professionals, municipality representatives etc.). • Specify topics with panellists, if needed, send them some questions beforehand to prepare and to have a more fruitful discussion. • Find a good and competent moderator. Specify the topics and the focus before the panel. • Provide auditorium and video conference (You Tube, Facebook, Skype). How to implement the tool? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderator: asks questions from the panellists (and audience) connected to the topic, the ones that were prepared by panellists and new ones that arise from discussions. Guide the discussion skilfully and avoid getting off topic. • Use the help of assistants to notice if someone from the audience has questions or comments and to ensure they get a microphone to speak. 	

- Use tools and apps to get questions and opinions from the audience, incl. from people who are not willing to use microphone.
- Take notes from the panel discussion.

How to follow-up using the tool?

- Summarise ideas, thoughts and results from the panel.
- Optional: Publish video on social media to reach a bigger audience.

Tips and hints for using the tool with people in silver age

- **Each ICT tool is different and you have to be skilled to use it properly** – YouTube and Facebook require a device with a high quality camera or an experienced video operator.
- **Record your panel** – afterwards, you can upload the recording to e.g. YouTube and reach a much bigger audience.
- **Cutting costs is easy** – you can use the free video conferencing option on Facebook and cut back on catering and coffee breaks. If you have a suitable venue available, you do not need to rent a new one. Additionally, moderator and panellists may be from in-house.
- **Avoid a set of presentations or interviews with panellists** – slides can be used for introductions, but a panel discussion is not for lengthy presentations. Additionally, avoid asking questions from panellists becoming an interview, the aim is to build dialogue and conversation.
- **Q&A needs to be short** – if you focus mostly on questions and answers, rather than on the panel discussion, consider using a different tool such as a forum or town hall meeting.

3

