

## SSFH Instructions for Chairs<sup>1</sup>

Thank you for agreeing to chair a session. This is an important task and we appreciate your willingness to help the conference in this way. Good chairing will be essential to the success of the panel. The following guidelines are intended to facilitate just such a panel; we hope you won't find them too onerous.

### Prior to the conference

Please make contact with the speakers on the panel you are chairing to introduce yourself; to confirm the final title of their paper and how they would like to be introduced, including any pronoun preferences; to request some information that can be used to introduce them; to confirm if they are happy for their paper to live-Tweeted and/or image of the panel/their slides to be posted online.

### Before your session starts

- Make sure your speakers are there, that they have water, and that they have any technology/supplies that they need. If anything is needed, ask at the conference reception desk or email [ssfh2022@exeter.ox.ac.uk](mailto:ssfh2022@exeter.ox.ac.uk).
- If you have not already done so, double check the titles of the papers in case these have been altered and how to pronounce speakers' names if necessary. Check if they are happy for their papers to be live Tweeted and/or if they have any issues with audience members taking photographs of the panel/PPT slides.
- Ask your speakers if they are covering anything sensitive in their talks (e.g. graphic descriptions of violence). If they are, plan to mention this when you introduce them.
- Make sure your speakers know the time limits, and that you will keep to them strictly. Arrange with them whether you will give e.g. 10 minute and 5 minute warnings, and how you'll let them know when time is up.

### Introductions

Introduce yourself, and your speaker(s), mentioning any potentially sensitive material to come and any speaker preferences regarding live Tweeting and posting photographs from the panel online. When introducing speakers, follow the same simple format for all: their name (no title), and the title of their talk.

### Timekeeping

Be very strict about this. Keeping papers to time ensures fairness for all panelists and preserves adequate time for questions.

### At start of the question period

As set out in the conference code of conduct, when chairing the Q&A, the aim is to ensure that within the limited time available, an equitable range of individuals are given the

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted in part from guidance provided by the British Philosophical Association  
<https://bpa.ac.uk/diversity/good-practice-scheme/guidance-and-resources/>

opportunity to ask questions. If time is particularly short, then priority for further interventions should be given, as far as practicable, to early-career scholars.

Briefly outline how the Q&A will be run. This has the advantage of leaving a few moments for the audience to collect their thoughts.

- Ask the audience to observe a 'one question per question' approach. If there is time at the end of the session and no further questions, then people may be invited to pose additional questions.
- Ask the audience to raise a hand when they want to ask a new question and a finger if they have a follow-up to a question that has already been asked. This will help the chair determine in what order to invite audience members to pose their questions.

When deciding who to call upon, it may not always be best practice to respond to the first hand that goes up in the room; such hands often belong to academics whose voices are already over-represented within our field and our conferences. In the interests of curating an inclusive discussion, think about how to encourage questions from the room as a whole, especially more junior scholars, women and academics from under-represented groups.

We appreciate that this is very context-dependent and we trust that you, as chair, will use your discretion to manage the discussion in a sensitive and inclusive manner.

Thank you!!