

## Top tips for including people with ADHD in your PPI group (by Martin Wells)

### 1. Create a supportive and non-judgemental space

People with ADHD often mask difficulties or feel embarrassed about asking questions. Setting a relaxed, accepting tone helps them feel safe enough to express needs, ask for clarification, and share their experiences without fear of looking “silly.”

### 2. Provide structure and gentle regulation

ADHD brains can “spark off”, especially in unstructured environments. Clear agendas, reminders, and consistent processes help maintain focus. Structure should guide, not restrict, supporting contributors without shutting them down.

### 3. Use strengths-based, story-focused engagement

Many people with ADHD excel at storytelling, creativity, and making connections. Approaches that invite narrative, curiosity, and genuine dialogue (e.g., asking people to expand on their thoughts, valuing lived experience as expertise) help them contribute meaningfully.

### 4. Be flexible in communication and processing styles

ADHD affects how people process information. Offer multiple ways to engage – speaking, writing later, asking follow-up questions, or capturing “doorway nuggets” that often emerge at the end of a conversation. Avoid environments with distractions (e.g., noisy cafés).

### 5. Ensure practical accessibility and follow-through

Administrative systems can be overwhelming. Clear communication about tasks, deadlines, payments, and next steps reduces stress. Reliable, transparent processes, such as confirming receipts, payments, or required documents, significantly improve inclusivity.

## Key learnings from Martin’s session:

We need to think about the way information is presented, or meetings are conducted with regards to neurodiverse attendees.

That overlooked admin tasks have a bigger impact on individuals than you think and that they can provide accessibility support for people.

I reflected a lot on what might help neurodiverse group members to feel comfortable and how I can try to make sure that everyone's skills and experiences are valued in groups that I coordinate.

All tips - better idea of what to use and how it could be used.

How to support people in meetings to acknowledge ADHD thought processes better, and ways chairs can help too.

All can be a friend! People who have different brain-based needs should be, and can be, successfully supported to contribute to research.