

# TELESCOPE

## Facilitator tips

The discussion event will run at \_\_\_\_: \_\_\_\_, as part of the TELESCOPE project. These notes are the same for both schools involved; the differences are highlighted where they arise. Please read through the entire document. This document has three sections:

- **Notes to all facilitators (pg 1)**
- **Notes to lead facilitators (pg 2)**
- **Facilitation top tips (pg 4)**

### Notes to all facilitators

- This event will be staffed by facilitators in \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. There will be one facilitator per small discussion group. Facilitators will ensure that the discussions are going along as planned and to answer any questions etc.
- Please take time to familiarize yourselves with the materials you will be using. These are available on [www.eurostemcell.org](http://www.eurostemcell.org) website. If you have trouble understanding the materials please email your questions to [danielle.nicholson@nuigalway.ie](mailto:danielle.nicholson@nuigalway.ie)
- A 'lead' facilitator has been chosen for each group to do the introduction and the conclusion of the discussion event to decrease any confusion for the participants. In \_\_\_\_\_ this will be \_\_\_\_\_ and in \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_. They will introduce and conclude the participation session.
- All facilitators will help set up the room. You will need to make space for four groups to sit for a discussion, each will need around 6-7 chairs (to include a seat for the facilitator). The first minute will be spent getting the students to come in and sit down.
- During the group discussion it is essential that you make sure that your group understand their scenario and comments.
- Additionally the head facilitator will be involved in organizing the video conference part of this session. \_\_\_\_\_ will take this role and will join the video conference to keep timings running smoothly and to facilitate question asking between the groups, as necessary.
- There will be an opportunity to feed back your views on how the event went during the week that follows the event.

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### Notes for 'lead' facilitators

- 'Lead' facilitators spend the first few minutes explaining what's going to happen in this session to the students. This usually involves a welcome, an overview of the session, rule setting and the instructions to get started. You can follow this sort of format: "Good afternoon and welcome to our video conference discussion session as part of this TELESCOPE event. Today we're going to take part in a discussion about some of the social implications of stem cell research with the other group of students in \_\_\_\_\_ . You're going to work in groups on different scenarios, share your findings with our class, and then using the video conference facilities, one person from each group will report back to someone who discussed the same scenario in the other country. After each pair of groups share their discussion points, we will all have an opportunity to talk to each other about the issues they've raised, before moving on to the next pair of groups. This session will finish at \_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_".
- Rule setting, "This is a discussion, which means everyone gets a chance to talk and everyone gets a chance to listen, you will have facilitators to help you manage your discussions and materials to follow during the discussion."
- Get the students into 4 groups of approximately 5-6 students each, try to ensure that there is the same number of students in each group. Get the groups to sit and face into a circle or semi-circle.
- Each group must elect a chair who will receive the pack of materials for their group. Once each group has a chair you can explain the materials. You'll have a pack of materials: each pack contains an instruction sheet for the chair to read ,3 badges for the 'chair', 'speaker' and 'reporter', a sharing sheet for the reporter, a scenario card and a card with 4 characters' views." When explaining the materials it is a good idea to hold them up so that everyone can see what each piece of material looks like and understand what it is for.
- Explain that the chair of each group must now read their own instruction sheet and carry on from there to elect a 'speaker' who will present the views of the group to their equivalent group in the other country, and a 'reporter' who will fill out the sharing sheet. Make sure that the 'chair', 'reporter' and 'speaker' of each groups wears a badge displaying their roles.
- Groups should now be able to start running through the activity themselves with the help of the individual facilitators.
- Then, the groups will one-by-one share their findings with the rest of their class at the front of the room and gather more ideas to discuss and share during the web conference. Reporter should take notes and add to the sharing card.
- 'Lead' facilitators spend the last 10 minutes, after the video conference, concluding the discussion in their relative countries.
- When concluding the discussion it is important to summarize some of the ideas and interesting points that were shared and to explain why this sort of discussion event is important. It helps some people to keep a note of issues that come up to return to when 'summing up'.

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- Conclusions will be tailored to the issues brought up by the students during the event, but can take this approximate form “Thank you all for participating in today’s discussion, it’s been very rewarding to take part in this with you. Some of the interesting topics that you raised this morning were (\*\*at what point does life start, how important is the role of scientific research, etc\*\*), does anyone have any other questions or issues they would like to raise? This can get little response with a quiet or tired group, so students may need further prompting, i.e. “I know this group were talking about (\*\* research ethics\*\*), what were your conclusions?” Or “Well those are certainly interesting issues; does anyone have anything else they’d like to raise? For example, how do you think the Monika character would respond to the point raised by the last group?”
- Try to finish with a last reflexive question: “Who here has changed their mind about some of the social issues around stem cells, and in what way?”
- The very last part of this session involves an evaluation. Ask the students for a show of hands, “Please raise your hand if you enjoyed this mornings discussion?” This is an obviously biased question, but often the simplest and quickest way to find out, if students did not enjoy themselves they are rarely to shy to say so! Note the approximate ratio of hands up and hands down.
- This session conclusion will be followed by a conclusion to the whole event, in \_\_\_\_\_ this will be done by \_\_\_\_\_ and in \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.
- Follow up for the teacher: discuss the outcome of the web conference with the class as a whole on the following day.

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### Facilitation 'Top tips'

- Facilitators should introduce themselves with their first names only and simply that 'I am here to help with your discussion'. Try not to introduce your academic background, as this can be intimidating in a discussion format where everyone should be on an equal footing.
- Keep in mind the overlap between the small group facilitation role and the role of the elected chairperson. The materials have been developed to encourage the chair to facilitate their own group as far as possible. The role of the facilitators as a result, is to help the chair, and to step in to encourage discussion when needed. The facilitators are not there to take the chairs role, to lead the discussion, but instead as back up for the students.
- Ensure that the chair of each group takes on the responsibility of encouraging everyone in the group to speak and express their thoughts. "This is a discussion, which means that everybody gets a chance to speak and everybody gets a chance to listen".
- Emphasize to the participants that there is no 'wrong' or 'right' answers during the discussion and that everyone's opinions and thoughts are to be respected and considered.
- Stress the fact that participants can call upon the facilitators for help at any point during the activity. The facilitator's role is to assist the process of discussion and sharing opinions, they are NOT there to educate or correct participants.
- Encourage participants to respond to each other, it should not turn into a Q&A session between the facilitator and the participants but a dialogue between the participants.
- If a group is very silent or timid help them easy into a discussion by prompting them with different questions to think about regarding the scenario. Encourage them by reiterating the fact that their opinions are really important and their contributions will be respected.
- It is essential for facilitators to be very familiar with all scenarios, as they will need to prompt students with relevant questions during the group discussions.
- During the video conferencing it is essential that the participants watching the speakers exchange views are kept engaged. It is helpful to remind them to think of a few questions for the speakers when they are preparing for the video conference at the end of their small group discussion.
- The scenarios and comments in the materials provided for the discussion have been given character names; this will enable students to discuss ideas more impersonally. However, bear in mind that personal opinions or life stories do come up in discussions. Sharing personal information can be hard for group participants. Keep in mind that such issues need to be treated with sensitivity.