

SCOTLAND FOR EVERYONE

>>>>>>>> EVENT TOOLKIT

Voices
Voices
Voices
Voices
for
Scotland



Sophie

“Scotland, to me, means home and it means really sound people. For me, my biggest hope is independence.”



Abdolreza

“Scotland is a nation, that wants to be a nation, that *is* a nation.”



Tobi

“As long as everyone’s voice is heard, that’s what’s important to me.”

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INTRODUCTION

Our goal is to bring people together to share meaningful, respectful and inclusive conversations about a Scotland for Everyone and build support for independence.

For Scotland to gain self-determination, we need to ensure that a positive case for independence is a consistent part of everyday conversations between friends, family and colleagues.

This means we need to try out a different way of campaigning, a way of campaigning that is proven to work.

Now is the time to bring people together and ask them what a Scotland for Everyone looks like

We want to do this by speaking without party politics, Yes/No labelling, and choosing when to talk directly about independence.

Building support for independence is a journey, the first steps of which need to involve conversations about the Scotland we want to become.

For others to join us, we first need to envisage where we want to be as a nation, then what steps we need to take to get there.

We need to move away from assumptions of what matters to people and instead really listen.

As much as this document is a guide to bring people together to talk about Scotland's future, it is also means to understand what matters most to people and help shape future conversations about Scotland.

We need to create spaces where everyone feels welcome to share their hopes, ideas and visions for the future of Scotland, without judgment or prejudice.

This guide therefore offers you the following:

- Good conversation guide
- Tips on what to do before, during and after a conversation
- Materials

We hope this guide is helpful for members of existing independence groups as well as for people who have not previously been actively engaged in campaigning.

No conversation is too small

GOOD CONVERSATION GUIDE

Scotland for Everyone

We use *Scotland for Everyone* as it is evocative of an optimistic future for an independent Scotland, it is also a means to talk about independence without using 'Yes' and 'No'.

Many people are part of 'Yes' groups across Scotland and the work they carry out is amazing in maintaining momentum in the movement, but in addition to this we really need to build support.

In the referendum in 2014 people made a decision about what was best for them at that particular time and no one should be vilified or made to feel bad about the decision they took then.

Calling someone a 'No voter' implies that that person was wrong and that they are different to 'Yes voters'

This language makes it more difficult to persuade someone that independence is the best course for Scotland's future.

Hundreds of thousands of people across Scotland are not sure how they will vote when another referendum comes along.

Our research shows that when speaking to people who are undecided or uncomfortable using terms like 'Yes' and 'No' it makes people uncomfortable.

Additionally, it is really important to leave your party allegiances out of any conversation. This is another major turn-off for the undecided on independence.

With conversation we are trying to bring people together through the common ground we share

Everyone cares about the NHS, everyone cares about better provisions for homeless people, everyone wants a fairer, richer, greener and happier country and these are exactly the kinds of issues we need to tap into.

We want to know what a Scotland for Everyone means to you.

A future Scotland needs to build upon the ideals and values that we share, not fracture over that which divides us.

A Scotland for Everyone is inclusive and all starts with a conversation.





MEANINGFUL CONVERSATIONS

The aim of a Voices for Scotland conversation is to listen and speak with respect, understanding and empathy.

Whilst these conversations are about independence, rather than focussing on 'independence' as a word, we aim to unpack the reality of a future Scotland and understand what matters to you.

What matters to you?

Having a good, constructive conversation is about more than winning an argument or getting your point across, it's about a transfer of ideas.

Here are a few key points:

Actively Listen

It may seem obvious, but listening helps us understand other's perspective, underlying feelings and helps to find mutual ground.

Build Mutual Ground

This creates a positive relationships in which to discuss and understand each other's points of view. These conversations aren't about anyone being a particular expert in a given field, they focus more on personal experience and individual viewpoints.

Show Empathy and Understanding

Seeing someone else's point of view and trying to understand their feelings is a key part of making someone feel valued.

Labelling Emotions

You don't have to feel your counterpart's emotions to understand them, you can label them.

The most effective labels of emotions start with phrases like:

It seems like...

It sounds like...

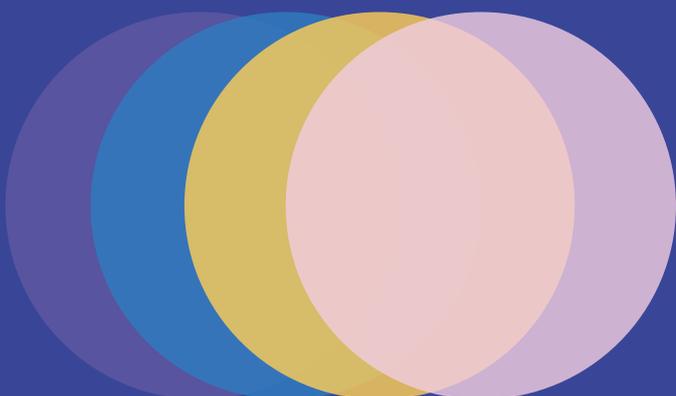
It looks like...

Summarise

This is an opportunity to show your engagement in someone else's points and to bring in others who may have not had a chance to speak.

Be Authentic

How much you believe in what you're talking about and the passion with which you express yourself is really important in getting people to believe in you.



EVENT

Things to consider before organising an event

As trust in politicians and institutions decreases, the most effective way to grow support for independence is through peer influencing.

This means engaging with people who we know, or who we might know through friends.

When it comes to who you should invite to a conversation, think about the networks you are part of – work, neighbourhoods, hobbies, volunteering etc., and see if there are people who you know who may be indy-curious.

Success isn't a number, it's quality of conversation

Inviting these people might mean we are not completely breaking out of our political or social bubble, but having conversations now about Scotland's future can have a big impact on growing support for independence.

Success needn't be defined by the number of people at your conversation event, more on the quality of the conversation and what you and everyone else taking part learns.

Aim for 3–6 people for your first event, let them know what you are trying to do and what is the purpose of the conversation.

The great thing about these events is that you can hold more than one, develop your own ideas and reach out to more and more people over time.

Location is an important factor when organising your event.

We want people to feel comfortable enough to open up about their hopes and fears, so think about whether you would like to invite people around to your house.

On the other hand you might think the people you have invited will feel more comfortable at a pub or cafe.

Think about what works best for you and what works best for the people who you have invited.

If it is a public place, you may need to think accessibility, the place being quiet enough to talk and listen, and being accessible by public transport.



TIPS FOR THE CONVERSATION

Your role as the host is to make everyone feel welcome and included.

It's important to tell everyone the purpose of the conversation and what you are trying to achieve, i.e., lead an open discussion on what a Scotland for Everyone looks like without party politics.

It might be useful to give a quick overview of what you will talk about.

First impressions are really important, so as the host you should make sure that everyone is welcomed and introduced to each other.

The sooner people bond, the easier it will be for them to open up during the conversation

Some people like to talk more than others, so it's important to make sure everyone is included.

Stay as neutral as possible when it comes to the conversation, your role is to stay engaged and keep things moving.

You might want to start with an ice breaker to warm people up, e.g. ask everyone to show a photo on their phone of what matters to them.

If the conversation goes slightly off topic, you might have to bring it back. It's your job to focus the conversation.

As the conversation might touch on the values people hold, it may be that people get defensive when others do not share the same views as themselves. Keep the conversation friendly, kind and respectful.

If the conversation gets heated, try and remind people of the common ground they share and the value of having this conversation in a safe space.

We need open conversations to get different viewpoints together and find common ground

Instead of shutting conversation down, remind everyone that it's valuable to have different points of views in the room and having a chance to talk about things thoroughly.

There are examples of how to deal with situations like these in our accompanying documents available on our website.

We have prepared three sets of questions to help you have an open conversation, and we suggest to spend 25 min on every set:

How do you feel about the world around you?

What brings you here today?

What matters to you, to the people closest to you and to your community?

How could things be different in a Scotland for Everyone?

What's the one thing you would change?

Take notes during the conversation on the topics raised, this will help to summarise what has been discussed and guide future conversations.

AFTER THE EVENT

Hopefully your conversations will have helped everyone see things from a new perspective and recognise some things we all have in common.

Please let us know what worked well for you and what didn't, so we can continuously improve this guide.

Get in touch

These conversations are part of phase one of our campaign. To move forward we need your feedback and involvement, shaping future conversations and taking positive steps towards a Scotland for Everyone.

Please complete this survey about your event – bit.ly/VFSconvo20

Make sure you visit www.voicesforscotland.scot to download and view the associated documents to this toolkit.

We would love to share ideas, stories and photos from your conversation event, so email us at info@voicesforscotland.scot.

As people across Scotland hear your stories and ideas, we move closer to achieving a Scotland for Everyone.

This toolkit is an evolving document and requires your input, so please share your experiences from the conversations you hold.

Please let us know what does and does not work by contact us at info@voicesforscotland.scot.



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