

Introduction

Group discussion on a topic is a valuable tool for enhancing understanding. It fosters exchange of knowledge among participants, benefiting all involved. Group discussions:

- Enhance comprehension of the subject matter.
- Stimulate the generation of diverse ideas.
- Encourage thought-provoking questions.

A facilitator can use the following questions to lead a group discussion after the summit.

General Discussion Questions

1. What key takeaways from the program do you find most relevant to your current practice or work?
2. Were there any concepts or ideas presented that challenged your existing knowledge? If so, how?
3. What is one concept or suggestion that you could incorporate into your work (or agency)? Why did you choose that one? What impact do you think it will have?

Program-Specific Discussion Questions

1. Is AI only for large organizations that have significant resources to invest in research and development?
2. Do public works agencies have to have a policy, plan, or framework in place before using AI?
3. How should organizations get started with exploring how and when to use AI?
4. What are some of the best practices when discussing AI with your leadership team?
5. AI tools can feel expensive. Do you worry about the implementation costs?
6. How would you evaluate a new AI tool for your organization?
7. What unique ethical challenges does AI in public works present that differ from other sectors?
8. What specific training content should be included for public works professionals to understand not just how to use AI, but also how to do so ethically?
9. What are the most critical steps public works agencies should take immediately to address ethical AI use?
10. How can interagency collaboration be enhanced to establish and maintain ethical AI standards across different public services?
11. Do you think generative AI will replace employees?
12. What do your unions think of AI?
13. How adaptable is your organization to new technologies?

Program Specific Discussion Questions continued

14. How is your organization currently addressing the challenge of maintaining infrastructure with limited resources? What tasks do you believe could benefit most from AI automation?
15. Given that 35 percent of the public workforce is eligible for retirement, how is your organization planning to capture and transfer institutional knowledge? How might AI tools help with this challenge?
16. What barriers do you foresee in your organization when it comes to adopting AI tools? How might you address these barriers using the “start small, iterate quickly” approach discussed today?
17. How do you engage your staff in the adoption and use of AI applications?
18. How do you stay informed about new AI technologies?

Tips for the Facilitator

1. Keep the discussion focused on the AI Summit topics.
2. After reviewing key program information, focus on implications to participants’ work, or the agency in general.
3. Provide opportunity for all voices to be heard.
4. Acknowledge contributions. For example: “I appreciate you offering a different view.” or “Thanks for mentioning that.”
5. Keep the group engaged. If no one is responding, suggest an answer and ask for agreement or disagreement.
6. End the discussion on time. Some ways to end a discussion are:
 - Give a two-minute warning or some other transition time to prepare the group to change direction.
 - Summarize the major substance of the discussion.
 - Have each participant share one take-away.
 - Challenge participants to engage in follow-up conversations.
 - Acknowledge at the beginning of the session that time will be a factor and that some issues may not be discussed.