



國立臺灣大學  
建築與城鄉研究所

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NETWORK ASIA

## **Constructive Contestation around Urban Heritage in Taipei: Exploring A New Approach for Cities in Asia**

### **2012 Taipei International Roundtable Forum**

October 7 to 10, 2012  
Taipei, Taiwan

Organized by  
International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS), Leiden, the Netherlands  
and  
Graduate Institute of Building and Planning, National Taiwan University, Taipei, Taiwan

In collaboration with  
Institute of Sociology and Institute of Taiwan History, Academia Sinica  
Foundation of Chinese Dietary Culture

### **Guiding Principles of a Roundtable Discussion**

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#### **The Spirit of a Roundtable Discussion**

The objective of a roundtable is to stimulate open and spontaneous discussion and interaction between experts who are practitioners and/or scholars in their field. In a roundtable, all participants are expected to make a contribution to the discussion. Unlike a conventional conference, which features an active presenter and a passive audience, a roundtable is a forum where *all* participants are active and act as “resource persons” around a certain session topic, guided by a session moderator.

The Taipei heritage roundtable aims to gather a diverse group of resource persons, including practitioners and scholars as well as activists, academics, civil society representatives, government officials, and business people. The diversity of participants will help to ensure that the discussions contribute to improving the roundtable’s relevance for policy, practice *and* theory on the subject matter.

#### **The Roundtable Format**

The most ideal physical setting for a roundtable is a round or square central table around which participants are seated so that they can all face each other. The moderator also sits at the same table, so that he/she can easily direct proceedings. If the central table cannot

accommodate all participants in a session, then additional rings of seats can be placed around or behind the central table, depending on the room configuration.

A roundtable discussion has a progressive or linear format: each session informs the next one, starting with broader, background issues and moving towards specific questions, often related to a specific case study. For this reason, it is preferable that a core group of local and international participants attends the sessions from the beginning to the end. If there is little continuity of participants from one session to another, then it is important that the organizers brief and update session moderators and participants about the topics covered in the previous discussions, so that they can further build on progress made so far.

The language of the Taipei heritage roundtable will be English, but contributions in Chinese are welcomed. Contributions in Chinese will be translated by the organizers and/or fellow participants.

### **Logistical Arrangements**

A background report will be made available electronically to all participants at least 2 weeks prior to the forum, which will provide extensive information about the case study topic. The background document will serve as a substitute for formal presentations. All participants are expected to have read this report and to be well-informed about the case study area. In addition, before the start of the event, participants will receive a welcome kit which will contain a handbook with program, practical information, participants introduction, as well as promotional material about Taipei and Taiwan.

During the event, a note taker will record the proceedings, with the help of recording equipment. After the roundtable, the organizers will produce a final report, which will consist of: a summary of the background report; an executive summary of the proceedings; a list of participants; and other relevant materials, as a record of the event. The final report will be disseminated electronically to all participants. Hard copy, printed versions of the final report will be made available to the organizers for further dissemination.

### **Guiding Principles for Moderators**

In a roundtable setting, the role of session moderators is very important, to: 1) stimulate constructive discussion and lively debate; 2) make sure that the discussion addresses the topic and questions raised by the session; and 3) propose some concluding points and remarks that help to summarize the session and pave the way for further discussion.

In the light of the above, session moderators have the following key tasks:

- To briefly introduce the session and the substantive context of the session (i.e.: to address the rationale for the session) based on previous sessions and discussions, or based on actual policy debates and/or the literature;
- To present the objectives and main questions to be addressed by the session, as well as the expected outputs (if any);
- To stimulate interactive debate among participants. To this effect, the moderator can take the liberty to: 1) invite specific people to make an intervention (but not a prepared presentation!) based on their expertise or personal experience; 2) propose additional

questions related to the main session questions; and 3) politely but firmly cut off any participants who dominate the session;

- To ensure that all participants have the opportunity to make their interventions;
- To make concluding remarks (roughly 10 minutes before the end of the session), to identify and summarize: 1) the main points discussed; 2) any conclusions of the session (if possible); and 3) to propose future topics for follow-up discussion and investigation.

### **Guiding Principles for Participants**

Participants are expected to abide by the following principles:

- They should have relevant expertise or practical or personal experience related to the session topic, which they are keen to share with their fellow participants. In this sense, they become “resource persons” on the subject;
- They recognize that all participants are equal around the table;
- They agree to *not* make prepared presentations;
- They should adhere to the key rules of a debate: listen to and respect the views of others, engage and challenge them where necessary, but do not interrupt others;
- They should not dominate the session, and should give equal time to their fellow participants to make their interventions.