Top Tips for Presenting at an APPG Roundtable

A short guide to what an All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) is, the power they have to influence policy change, and top tips on how you might develop a speech if you are invited to a roundtable.

What is an APPG?

APPGs provide a forum for Members of the House of Commons and the House of Lords to join together around a shared topic of interest. The groups are considered 'informal' as they have no official status within Parliament. However, since they bring together MPs and peers from different political parties, they offer a unique opportunity to influence stakeholders across the breadth of Parliament.

An APPG must be run by at least four officers, who are MPs or peers, and be open to members of every party. The chair must be an MP, and officers must come from both the government and main opposition parties. Many APPGs are supported by an external organisation who provide their secretariat (that is, the day-to-day operations and governance). APPG secretariats are often a charity or membership body, and they are responsible for organising meetings and producing outputs on the group's behalf.

APPGs must be registered with the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards and meet at least twice a year. Since they have no formal powers, the government is not obliged to respond to them, and their reports are not considered official parliamentary publications.

Why APPGs matter for creative health

An APPG's influence is informal, but it can be significant. APPGs provide their members with a space to learn, build relationships, and develop arguments about their topic of interest which they can take into debates, written questions, select committee work and conversations with ministers. For a field like creative health, which cuts across areas such as health, social care, culture, and education, an APPG offers a single place where these agendas meet.

Creative health has a strong track record with APPGs. The APPG on Arts, Health and Wellbeing (formed in 2014) ran a two-year inquiry which led to the well-known 2017 report Creative Health: The Arts for Health and Wellbeing. The National Centre for Creative Health was established in 2021 in response to that report's first recommendation (pg154). NCCH and the APPG then worked together on the Creative Health Review (2023), chaired by Lord Howarth of Newport, which set out how policy can embrace creative health. The APPG was relaunched as the APPG on Creative Health in November 2024, with NCCH acting as its secretariat.

In addition to these two topical APPGs, creative health has featured in a number of other APPG roundtables. For example, in 2026 alone the APPG on Comedy hosted a second *Comedy on Prescription* roundtable, as well as a dedicated podcast series (one episode of which featured

Andy Burnham, shortly before he became Prime Minister of the UK); the APPG on Health hosted two roundtables with p_ART_icipate! discussing *Digital Creative Health*; the APPG on Dance hosted a roundtable, in collaboration with Royal Opera House, where they discussed the positive impact of dance on school children, men and addiction; and the APPG on Visual Arts will soon have a roundtable on fair pay and working conditions for artists in creative health.

If you are interested in better connecting with parliament, it is well worth exploring the different APPGs which exist. A detailed list is provided at the bottom of this document, with more available in the official Register of All-Party Parliamentary Groups.

APPG on Creative Health roundtables

Alongside general meetings, inquiry reports and targeted briefings, a common method for APPGs to share knowledge and influence policy is a roundtable in parliament. Each brings together a small number of invited speakers, followed by discussion with parliamentarians and others in the room.

As secretariat for the APPG on Creative Health, NCCH design roundtables around live government agendas with an aim to maximise our potential impact. Examples from 2025 and 2026 include:

- Prevention and Creative Health (March 2025)
- Creativity and Children and Young People's Mental Health (June 2025)
- Neighbourhood Health and Creative Health (November 2025)
- Digital Health and CreaTech (April 2026)
- The Economic Case for Creative Health (October 2026)

We select speakers based on a range of expertise and seek to balance different voices so that together they build a coherent case. Typically, our roundtables try to include:

- **Policymakers and health leaders**, who can explain how creative health fits into the system and its priorities
- **Creative health practitioners**, who bring knowledge of what delivery looks like on the ground
- **Researchers**, who offer credible and independent evidence
- **People with lived experience**, whose stories show the difference creative health makes to people's lives

Wherever possible, our roundtables are streamed live, recorded and made available on-demand. After each roundtable, we develop a dedicated briefing for members of the APPG to share with their peers in parliament, Government departments and other key stakeholders within the civil service, along with a blog on our website for audiences in the creative health industry. These outputs give the conversation a life beyond the room, so speakers' contributions can reach a far wider audience.

How to prepare if you're invited to speak at a roundtable

There are no hard and fast rules for how you need to prepare if you are invited to speak at a roundtable. Different people bring different qualities to their contributions – if you have been

invited, it's usually for a good reason, so feel confident in presenting yourself in a way that feels right to you. To help you in that preparation, we have collated some approaches which you might want to consider. Before you start writing, it is worth finding out and thinking about:

- **How long you have** – time slots are often short (5-10 minutes) and the chair may stop you if you start to run over.
- **What formats are available** – at NCCH, our roundtables use an oral format and speakers are welcome to bring visual or tactile objects to share with the room; we don't usually include presentation screens whereas this can be the norm in other APPGs.
- **Who else is speaking** – knowing what they are likely to cover can help you consider how your own contribution might complement, build upon or purposefully reinforce their contribution, rather than simply repeat it.
- **Who will be in the room** – knowing which parliamentarians, officials and sector organisations are expected to attend can help you target your message around the different powers and interests they hold.
- **The policy hook** – making sense of your work or experience in the context of a government agenda can strengthen the ability of parliamentarians to meaningfully respond.
- **Your ask** – if you would like to ask something of the people in the room, it is important to think about what parliamentarians can realistically do – for example, this might be raising an issue in a debate, tabling a written question, writing to a minister, or visiting a project. You may prefer your role to be one of awareness raising and advocacy. Knowing your intentions will shape how your contribution is likely to influence the roundtable briefing.

Dr Simon Opher MP's top tips for presenting at an APPG

Dr Simon Opher is Member of Parliament for Stroud constituency and chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Creative Health. As a long-serving GP, he pioneered the integration of creative health into Gloucestershire's health system, 25 years ago.

- Get to parliament really early - it can take an hour plus to get in.
- Number 1, try and say hello to the chair and say you are down to speak, before meeting starts
- Keep to the time allotted.
- It's often better if you don't read a speech verbatim, but instead speak a little more spontaneously. I have my beginning and end written in full, and then have a series of bullet points. It makes your talk more interesting if not totally read.
- Rehearse! I did in front of my kids- they are the harshest critics.
- Know who your audience are and feel free to be passionate. It's not a science lecture.
- Use personal stories to illustrate - people remember them
- Know what 1 -2 points you are trying to put across.
- Smile
- Watch the chair for signs they want you to stop.
- Enjoy it - you're speaking in parliament. Not many people get that opportunity! I've never known someone do a bad talk, the worst go on too long, so brevity is your friend.



Simon Opher © House of Commons/Roger Harris

APPGs You Might Want to Explore

Below we have created a list of APPGs which link to creative health in some way. This list was created from the October 2026 release of APPGs and the register of available APPGs may have changed since this list was published. The register of APPGs is updated monthly and APPGs disband (either temporarily or permanently) during a general election. To find out what APPGs exist at present, you can visit the Register of All-Party Parliamentary Groups.

Relating to artforms and creative activities

- Arts and Heritage: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/arts-and-heritage.htm
- Ceramics: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/ceramics.htm
- Craft: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/craft.htm
- Digital Creators: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/digital-creators.htm
- Film and Broader Screen: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/film-and-broader-screen.htm
- Gardening and Horticulture: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/gardening-and-horticulture.htm
- Jazz: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/jazz.htm
- Music: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/music.htm
- Play: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/play.htm
- Theatre: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/theatre.htm
- Video Games and Esports: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/video-games-and-esports.htm
- Visual Arts and Artists: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/visual-arts-and-artists.htm
- Writers: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/writers.htm

Relating to health and social inequalities

- Black Maternal Health: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/black-maternal-health.htm
- Care-Experienced Children and Young People: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/care-experienced-children-and-young-people.htm
- Homelessness: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/homelessness.htm
- Literacy: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/literacy.htm
- Poverty and Inequality: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/poverty-and-inequality.htm

Relating to health conditions, disability and neurodivergence

- Acquired Brain Injury: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/acquired-brain-injury.htm
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD): https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder-adhd.htm
- Autism: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/autism.htm
- Dementia: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/dementia.htm
- Diabetes: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/diabetes.htm
- Health: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/health.htm
- Learning Disability: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/learning-disability.htm
- Parkinson's: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/parkinsons.htm
- Respiratory Health: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/respiratory-health.htm
- SEND Parent and Carer Expertise: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/send-parent-and-carer-expertise.htm

Relating to life stages and target audiences

- Ageing and Older People: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/ageing-and-older-people.htm
- Babies (Pregnancy to Age 2): https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/babies-pregnancy-to-age-2.htm
- Black Health: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/black-health.htm
- Children: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/children.htm
- Men and Boys' Issues: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/men-and-boys-issues.htm
- Women's Health: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/womens-health.htm

Relating to mental health and wellbeing

- Emotional Support for Parent Carers of Seriously Ill and Disabled Children: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/emotional-support-for-parent-carers-of-seriously-ill-and-disabled-children.htm
- Mental Health: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/mental-health.htm
- Tackling Loneliness and Connected Communities: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/tackling-loneliness-and-connected-communities.htm
- Wellbeing Economics: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/wellbeing-economics.htm

Relating to social care and carers

- Adult Social Care: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/adult-social-care.htm
- Carers: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/carers.htm
- Children who Need Palliative Care: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/children-who-need-palliative-care.htm
- Dying Well: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/dying-well.htm
- Young Carers and Young Adult Carers: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/young-carers-and-young-adult-carers.htm

Relating to education, skills and employment

- Art, Craft and Design in Education: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/art-craft-and-design-in-education.htm
- Education: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/education.htm
- Music Education: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/music-education.htm
- Performing Arts Education and Training: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/performing-arts-education-and-training.htm
- Sixth Form Education: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/sixth-form-education.htm
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/special-educational-needs-and-disabilities.htm
- Skills, Careers and Employment: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/skills-careers-and-employment.htm
- Youth Employment: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/youth-employment.htm

Relating to the creative health workforce

- Allied Health Professionals: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/allied-health-professionals.htm
- Freelancers: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/freelancers.htm
- Healthcare Workers: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/healthcare-workers.htm

Relating to systems of governance and community engagement

- Governance and Inclusive Leadership: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/governance-and-inclusive-leadership.htm
- Local Government: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/local-government.htm
- Social, Cooperative, and Community Economy: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/social-cooperative-and-community-economy.htm

Relating to planetary creative health and nature

- Climate Change: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/climate-change.htm
- Outdoor Recreation and Access to Nature: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/outdoor-recreation-and-access-to-nature.htm

Relating to values common in the creative health field

- Access to Justice: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/access-to-justice.htm
- Citizens' Rights: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/citizens-rights.htm
- Future Generations: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/261012/future-generations.htm

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MOBILISING COMMUNITY ASSETS

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