

# THE ROUNDTABLE

“Prospects and Challenges in  
Designing Deliberative Democracy”

**“We all agree that the quality of deliberation is important. Can we also agree how we should measure the quality of deliberation?** In the past, the following aspects have been used as a benchmark for the quality of deliberation (which may not be exhaustive): Opinion change, alleviation of polarisation, Discourse Quality Index, reason-giving / justification quality, story-telling, empathy among members, perspective-taking, and correlational strengths among knowledge, attitude, and preference such as the Q-Methodology, cognitive complexity, etc. **Are these complementary to each other? Is any of the above preferred than the others?”**

“There has been wealth of findings and lessons learned from experimental studies of deliberations (which we have learned from the presentations before the roundtable). Experimental studies tend to focus more on *‘internal validity’* to rigorously test the effect of treatments (i.e. all other factors are controlled) while practices of deliberative democracy may focus more on *‘external validity’* and its general applicability to the real world phenomena. **Are experiments and practices of deliberative democracy compatible to each other? If not, what are the challenges ahead?”**

“How can these lessons at ‘micro’ level from experimental studies be applied to an ongoing ‘macro’ level problem in deliberative democracy? **Can opinions formed in mini-publics influence and contribute to actual opinion formations in society at large?”**”

**“How can mini-publics be applied to different cultures and institutions? Is there any uniform pattern of this process? What differences do we need to bear in mind?”**

**“Ultimately (to put it bluntly), is mini-publics a panacea for recent challenges of global phenomena of ‘illiberal’ turn of democracy and populism?”**