

The Collaboration Spectrum

What is collaborative working?

The charity commission describes 'collaborative working' as 'joint working by two or more organisations (community and voluntary) in order to better fulfil their purposes, while remaining as separate organisations'.

The spectrum of collaboration between organisations can take a range of forms. Options range from informal networks or arrangements such as borrowing equipment to a legally binding agreement, for example a consortium contract.

Why collaborate?

Interest in collaborative working between voluntary organisations has been growing over the last few years. The factors that have led to this include:

- A move away from grant funding to contracts
- Streamlining of procurement processes; a preferred single point of contracting rather than multiple contracts
- A decline in small contract opportunities and a rise in large scale contracts
- A need for more efficient use of resources

The Charity Commission's 'Hallmark of an effective Charity' says that you should regularly "consider whether collaborations and partnerships (including the possibility of a merger) with other organisations could improve efficiency, the use of funds and the better delivery of benefits and services to beneficiaries".

Potential benefits of collaboration

- New or improved services
- Wider geographical reach or access to new beneficiary groups
- More integrated or co-ordinated approach to beneficiary needs

It
is
K
I
N
O
O
T



Celebrating 40 years of
making a difference in Salford

Registered office: The Old Town Hall, 5 Irwell Place, Eccles, Salford M30 0FN

0161 787 7795 office@salfordcvs.co.uk www.salfordcvs.co.uk

Company Limited by Guarantee: 1948293 Registered Charity: 519361



- Financial savings and better use of existing resources
- Knowledge, good practice and information sharing
- Sharing the risk in new and untested projects
- Capacity to replicate success
- Stronger, united voice
- Competitive advantage
- Mutual support between organisations

Potential risks of collaboration

- Outcomes do not always justify the time and resources invested
- Loss of flexibility in working practices
- Complexity in decision-making and loss of autonomy
- Diverting energy and resources away from core aims - mission drift
- Damage to or dilution of your brand and reputation
- Damage to organisation and waste of resources if collaboration is unsuccessful
- Lack of awareness of legal obligations
- Stakeholder confusion

The collaboration spectrum

Click on the items below to find out more on the particular model of collaborative working:

[Ad hoc joint working](#)

[Sharing back office services](#)

[Collaborative bids](#)

[Consortium](#)

[Merger](#)



*Celebrating 40 years of
making a difference in Salford*

Registered office: The Old Town Hall, 5 Irwell Place, Eccles, Salford M30 0FN

☎ 0161 787 7795 ✉ office@salfordcvs.co.uk 🌐 www.salfordcvs.co.uk

Company Limited by Guarantee: 1948293 Registered Charity: 519361



Successful collaboration

1. Think about why you want to collaborate - collaboration needs to be driven by a sensible need.
2. If you want to work with new partners, seek out organisations that complement your skills and objectives. Get recommendations from others who have worked with them.
3. Join a network that can support you in developing links. But don't underestimate the time and energy required to create and nurture a partnership.
4. Don't rush. Take time to build the relationship and make sure you have processes and partnership agreements in place before you undertake joint activities.
5. Think short-term and long-term. It's useful to have a short-term benefit, as it gets people round the table, but collaboration is about being in it for the long haul.
6. A clear, fair and transparent system for allocating funds to partners is essential.
7. Building up internal partnership goodwill is crucial - early internal and external mini-successes help! Set aside time for people to get to know each other.
8. Recognise that building a good partnership is extra work and that saying thank you is important.
9. Spend time with your key stakeholders to ensure they understand the full depth and vision of the partnership.
10. Listen carefully to voices outside the partnership too. There's a lot of benefit to be gained from hearing how other people perceive you.

top tips!



For further information, guidance and support, please visit www.salfordcvs.co.uk or call 0161 787 7795



*Celebrating 40 years of
making a difference in Salford*

Registered office: The Old Town Hall, 5 Irwell Place, Eccles, Salford M30 0FN

☎ 0161 787 7795 ✉ office@salfordcvs.co.uk 🌐 www.salfordcvs.co.uk

Company Limited by Guarantee: 1948293 Registered Charity: 519361

