



Brokering Better Partnerships

- by investing in the partnering process •



www.partnershipbrokers.org

About This Handbook

This Handbook was developed by the Partnership Brokers Association (PBA) to accompany the *Brokering Better Partnerships* introductory course which is offered by its Associates. We are now also making it freely available for others interested in understanding what it is to build successful partnerships through attention to the partnering process. For further information about this and other PBA training courses, contact: training@partnershipbrokers.org.

Acknowledgements

This publication builds on the insights of the growing number of Associates without whom PBA – operating as a small, distributed and non-hierarchical entity – would simply not have the knowledge, global reach and influence that it does. Particular thanks are due to: Bulbul Baksi for her leadership in helping create conceptual frameworks to support this new area of work; Marcia Dwonczyk and Helga van Kampen for their additional insights and to Dianne McLay for her keen editorial eye and design skills.

We always learn a great deal from the many remarkable individuals who complete our 4-day intensive Partnership Brokers Training, Advanced Skills and Accreditation Programmes. They undertake their important work with both persistence and optimism (often against considerable odds) in ways that are humbling. Our thinking about partnership brokering and the role of partnership brokers is regularly both confirmed and challenged by their front-line experiences.

PBA is fortunate to have an artist in residence, Maria Hayes, whose original images (reproduced here) help to remind us that the senses, emotions and imagination all really matter.

Acknowledgement is also due to the pioneer thinkers, artists and writers that have inspired us to date – including Ben Okri, Paolo Freire, Rene Magritte, Hilary Mantel, Otto Scharmer, Peter Senge and David Snowdon. It is always good to remember that we stand on the shoulders of giants.

Julie Mundy & Ros Tennyson
On behalf of the
Partnership Brokers Association
September 2019

All material in this publication is copyright of the Partnership Brokers Association (except where otherwise stated in the text). This publication is not for sale or for reproduction (electronic or otherwise) without pre-agreement in writing from the Partnership Brokers Association.

Partnership Brokers Association

The Partnership Brokers Association is the international professional body for those managing and developing collaboration processes. Our primary aims are to:

- Challenge and change poor partnering practices so that multi-stakeholder collaboration can become truly transformational
- Ensure those operating in partnership brokering roles are skilled, principled and work to the highest standards
- Promote the critical importance of partnering process management to decision-makers in all sectors

Setting the global standards for partnership brokering through its good practice principles, the Association issues formal accreditation to those who reach the required standard.

With the growing number of graduates from our Partnership Brokers Training course, who come from all sectors and a wide range of contexts, and through an international pool of Associates, we provide:

- Opportunities for sharing learning as it emerges
- Specialist and tailored vocational training
- Access to a range of innovative and transforming new initiatives
- A range of supporting interventions to assist in transforming the partnering landscape.



www.partnershipbrokers.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Partnering Imperative	4
Principled Partnering	6
Partnership Brokering	8
Navigating the Partnering Cycle	9
Partnering Challenges	12
Critical Success Factors	14
Further Information	16
The Ten Principles of Partnership Brokering Good Practice	17

THE PARTNERING IMPERATIVE

Building a sustainable and inclusive world

There are reasons why partnering¹ has become the leading delivery mechanism for social, economic, cultural, environmental, crisis management and / or conflict prevention programmes across the globe. It is clear that single entity interventions have failed to achieve the hoped-for results – they have been too narrow in their approach and too restricted in their reach. It is also the case that many issues are more unpredictable, complex and inter-connected than they were before – requiring far more layered and flexible responses. And there is the additional issue of the increased speed, scale and impact when crises occur that make containment increasingly challenging.

If the issues we face were easy to address, partnerships would not be necessary. But it isn't (easy) and therefore they are (necessary).

Partnerships, at their best, offer a model of working that draws on the unique competencies and expertise of what different communities, organisations and sectors have to offer in ways that are intentionally designed to be inclusive and that are dedicated to building sustainable solutions.

It is painful to imagine the kind of world that awaits future generations should we fail to collaborate effectively.

Partnerships and other collaborative models

There is no 'one size fits all' partnership². Arguably there are as many types of partnering arrangement as there are partnerships and there is much to be said for every group of partners co-creating the model of partnership that best suits their purpose, capacity and context rather than adopting a set approach. There are a number of types of mechanisms described as 'partnerships' (see Box 1 opposite).

It is also important to recognise that there is an increasing use of other terms for collaboration – for example: consortia; alliances; multi-stakeholder forums / platforms / networks – where those involved prefer not to use the term 'partnership' even though many of the intentions, characteristics and ways of working are very similar to those associated with a partnership.

Our experience suggests that a very high percentage of what is proposed below about managing the partnering process is equally applicable to these other forms of multi-stakeholder collaboration.



¹ The authors would like to point out that partnering is not the only possible approach to addressing global challenges and that this publication does not intend to promote partnering above other forms of engagement. Indeed, they believe that a key skill of those managing a partnership is to know when it is not the right approach, and to explore / suggest alternatives.

² There are several other forms of multi-stakeholder engagement (for example: consortia, coalitions, alliances) that do not use the term 'partnership' though they may share many characteristics of a partnership. We believe / hope that this publication will be of use to those involved in all forms of this type of boundary-crossing activity.

THE PARTNERING IMPERATIVE

Box 1: Range of current partnership typologies

- **Policy partnerships** – multi-stakeholder engagement in policy-making or scrutiny
- **Consultative** – on-going multi-stakeholder enquiries into key and / or controversial issues
- **Public: private partnerships** – typically government driven outsourcing arrangements
- **Multi-stakeholder: global / national / local** - issue or project-based partnerships
- **Intra-sector / single sector** – cross-organisational partnerships from the same sector
- **Capacity-building** – partnerships designed to build skills, capabilities and / or resilience
- **Learning / research** – partnering specifically for knowledge generation / dissemination purposes
- **Internal partnerships** – for example, collaboration across different government departments
- **Intermediary organisations** - both operating as, and promoting, partnerships

Why ‘process’ matters

Signing an agreement to partner is relatively straightforward, but partnering effectively is significantly more challenging than those who sign up to a partnership often realise. A partnership, according to a dictionary definition, is an on going working relationship in which risks and benefits are shared. It is probably true that these features are what distinguish a partnership from other forms of collaboration, but for partnerships to achieve the kinds of goals we all hope for, this definition is too simplistic.

In our work over 15+ years, we have found the following, (see Box 2 below), to be a helpful guide to the kinds of attributes that are at the heart of effective partnerships.

Partnerships need more than good intentions to be successful. They require ‘de-layering’ for partners to understand and share their potential contributions and concerns. They also need consistent and persistent effort to build strong and productive relationships that can break through differences and build on diversity and that enable partners to challenge prevailing / unhelpful approaches when necessary and grow imaginative, fit for purpose and impactful solutions.

These things can only be achieved if the partners pay attention to **how** they work not just **what** they do and they are prepared to **invest** quality time in the partnering process itself.

Box 2: Ten key attributes for effective partnering

1. A **clear understanding** between the partners of the word ‘partnership’
2. Agreement to a **shared vision and common purpose**
3. Account and allowance being made for **individual partners’ interests**
4. The **co-creation** of design, decisions and solutions
5. Commitment to **sharing risks as well as benefits**
6. Every partner **contributes resources** (whether tangible or intangible)
7. Partners **share decision-making and leadership** responsibilities
8. Partners commit to **mutual / horizontal accountability**
9. Partners work together to develop a **principled approach** to their partnering endeavours
10. Attention is paid to the **partnering process** as well as the partnership’s projects

PRINCIPLED PARTNERING

Getting beneath our preconceptions

One of the earliest issues that new partners have to face is how they feel about each other – whether their assumptions and preconceptions are valid or are simplistic and unhelpful. It is hard to genuinely partner when you are suspicious of, or anxious about, each other's motives and / or reputation and / or values. And yet partnerships are created in the belief that working with others is the only way to achieve real change and lasting impact. This is a conundrum and we have to crack it!

How a partnership starts will set the tone for what it becomes. Providing opportunities to explore the differences between partners and to assess which can be transformed into new ways of thinking and working and whether any are 'deal-breakers' is an essential first step. And it takes some skill to hold the space for this conversation and for managing uncomfortable moments.

Five key partnering principles

Partnering invariably cuts through established, more traditional, single entity, ways of working and requires people from different entities, sectors and communities to cross their organisational boundaries and engage differently. For this to be really productive and manageable, in the PBA experience, it is crucial to establish some operational principles that

all those involved agree to abide by or, more accurately, to strive towards. Every new partnership benefits from an early conversation about what principles may be necessary for that particular group of partners to work together – these vary according to partners' priorities and the context in which they are operating. Over time, five core principles have emerged³ that seem to be quite fundamental to effective partnering – these are outlined in Box 3 on the next page.

Challenging and changing

Every partnership de facto positions itself somewhere on a spectrum from the more 'transactional' to the more 'collaborative' – and many partnerships move along this spectrum (in either direction) over time. But there is another spectrum which is to do with the degree to which the partnership is embedded in current systems and operating practices or whether it intentionally operates on the edge of those systems in order to challenge and change prevailing operational norms. Navigating the boundary between compliance (collusion?) and disruption (anarchy?) is a critical issue that partners face in their day-to-day work.



³ In a cross-sector workshop in Bangladesh in 1994, the question was asked: what would it take for you to be able to partner with the other two sectors? The NGO group said: We need to be treated as equals. The government group said: We need to be able to know what we are being told is true. The business group said: We need to be able to benefit from being partners and not just be expected to be donors. This was the origin of the principles of Equity, Openness and Mutual Benefit that have subsequently been adopted internationally. The other two – Diversity and Courage – were added by the PBA Trainers Community of Practice in 2016 in response to these challenges being increasingly experienced by practitioners and partnerships globally.

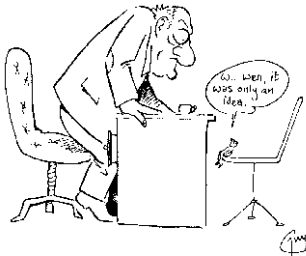
⁴ Cartoons by Guy Venables first published in Tennyson, R. *Managing Partnerships* (1998), International Business Leaders Forum

PRINCIPLED PARTNERING

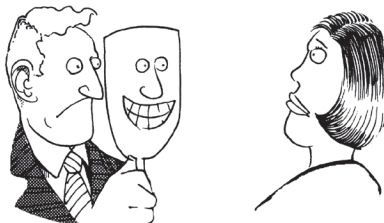
Box 3: Some Key Partnering Principles⁴



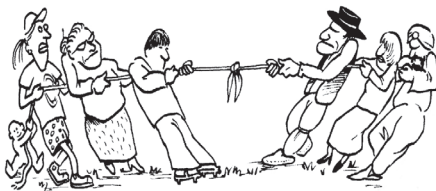
Anxiety about difference



Power imbalance



Hidden Agendas



Competitiveness



Uncertainty

Diversity

Many go into partnerships with real anxieties about how possible it will be to work with those operating in different sectors and a fear that any difference of views will quickly lead to divergence, conflict and, possibly, relationship breakdown. A commitment to exploring each others motivation, values and underlying interests will build understanding and appreciation of the added value that comes from diversity.

Equity

Power comes in many forms and is a valid aspiration for those who feel powerless, but all too often partnerships can be held hostage by individuals or organisations wielding power inappropriately. A partnership in which some partners are, or feel, marginalised has serious problems that need to be addressed. Equity is built by truly respecting the views, attributes and contributions of all those involved.

Openness

Partnerships quickly get stuck where there are (or are perceived to be) hidden agendas. There is a difference between information that needs to be confidential (for commercial or legal reasons) and information that has a bearing on the partnership and is intentionally kept secret. Whilst trust is not necessarily a precondition for partnering, it is an important aspiration. This is especially true where doing things differently is seen as high risk.

Mutual benefit

Competitiveness seems to be the modus operandi for many – particularly for those working in the same sector – and this can easily become highly destructive in partnerships. Agreeing to explore and build on the added value of collaboration and understanding the right of all partners to gain from their engagement in the partnership is an important starting point to build commitment to the shared goals.

Courage

Perhaps the only thing that all partners have in common at the start of any partnership is their uncertainty about each other, the partnership itself and what it will demand of them. Even a well planned and prepared partnership has many unknowns in relation to the complex issues it seeks to address that require partners to be bold rather than tentative if they are to achieve breakthrough results.

PARTNERSHIP BROKERING

Managing the partnering process

Partnering is always a kind of journey with a number of options and routes to a desired destination. We see the **partnership process manager** (whom we term the partnership ‘broker’) as an accomplished and active go-between who helps partners to navigate their partnering journey by assisting them in co-creating a map, planning the most appropriate route, choosing their mode(s) of transport and knowing when a change of direction is necessary.



The term **partnership broker** is increasingly used across the globe, but it can be problematic in certain contexts because of certain negative connotations associated with the word ‘broker’. Alternative terms (apart from ‘process manager’) are: change leader, partnership intermediary, bridge-builder, animator, alliance builder, partnership facilitator, collaboration manager and there may be others used that we don’t yet know about.

There are many circumstances where someone takes on the role of a partnership broker informally driven by a strong sense of what is needed for the partnership to work and stepping up to take on typical brokering tasks out of experience or, often, gut instinct. One doesn’t have to be called a partnership broker to be one but there is (in our view) a strong case for defining and acknowledging the role.

Skills and attributes

Those operating in partnership brokering roles, whether formally or informally, need to have (or to know when to access from others) a range of professional skills and personal attributes to be successful.

The skilled management of partnership/collaboration processes is essential if we are to create collaborative approaches that will lead to an inclusive and sustainable world – would be partners and those promoting or funding partnerships would be wise to recognise this and invest in skills-building whenever and wherever possible.

Box 4: Professional Skills and personal attributes needed by those in partnership brokering roles:

- **Understanding** of the specific opportunities and challenges of partnering as a paradigm
- **Confidence** in holding space for difficult conversations and breakthrough ideas to emerge
- **Empathy** for different perspectives, values and constraints
- **Good judgment** about what is / is not possible
- **Facilitation & negotiation** skills that are suitably tailored for a partnership model
- **Communication** – specifically the ability to synthesise and communicate complex information
- **Coaching** and a strong commitment to building the capacity of partners to partner well
- **Balancing** imagination / vision for the partnership with the discipline / rigour needed to deliver it

Internal and external partnership brokers

Partnership brokering is most frequently undertaken by an individual working from within one of the partner organisations (typically, in the organisation that initiates the partnership) – these can be best described as **internal partnership brokers**. Their focus is therefore twofold – they operate in the name of their own organisation whilst also taking on a larger remit on behalf of the partnership.

The advantage of a partnership having the support of an internal broker is that this person is likely to be there for the long haul, they are familiar with the aspirations of the partners as well as the operating context and they are on hand to help shape the partnership, communicate its aspirations and steer its activities. An internal broker is most likely to bring about incremental changes within the system.

There is also a growing number of **external partnership brokers** – independent specialists with a combination of professional skill sets and attributes (see Box 4 above) who can be called in for specific purposes. They are most commonly used on an episodic basis – though some may have a light touch, long-term relationship to a specific partnership.

A partnership is most likely to access the services of an independent external broker when there are particular challenges to address (for example, relationship breakdown or new ideas generation) or tasks to be undertaken that would benefit from an outsider’s expertise (for example, conducting a partnership review or writing a learning case study) as well as their relative objectivity and wider perspective. An external broker is most likely to bring innovative ideas to the table when the time is right.

NAVIGATING THE PARTNERING CYCLE

What is the partnering cycle?

Working through a project cycle as a way of building and tracking a programme of work is familiar territory, but in a partnership something more is required. Systematic attention needs to be given to the changing needs of the partners and to optimising the potential of the partnership over time. A strong partnership where the interests and commitments of the partners are understood and incorporated leads to robust

programmes, more sustainable outcomes and higher-achieving impacts. The partnering cycle (see Box 5) provides a useful framework in helping to navigate the partnership over time. This is as well as, not instead of, a project cycle.

Box 5: The Partnering Cycle



© PBA 2019 adapted from the Partnering Toolkit

NAVIGATING THE PARTNERING CYCLE

Box 6: Seven Steps to Reaching Agreement



Scoping & Building

It is not uncommon for those involved to sign an agreement almost before the partnership exists – often under pressure to apply for funding as a partnership. This has many potential repercussions arising from the fact that the ‘partners’ know relatively little about each other including their different values, motivations and possible types of contribution. In an ideal scenario, agreement would be reached only after considerable scoping had taken place and relationships have been built.

Process tasks during the first phase of the partnering cycle include:

- **Scoping** the partnership’s potential
- **Exploring** drivers, expectations and underlying interests
- **Embedding** key partnering principles
- **Enabling** partners to differentiate between their partnership and its projects
- **Negotiating** a detailed agreement to underpin the partnership

As with the partnering cycle seen in Box 5, the *Seven Steps to Reaching Agreement* above, is a schematic and things rarely progress in quite such a linear way – but it is useful as a checklist to ensure that as much ground as possible has been covered before signing a collaboration agreement.

Managing & maintaining

Once an agreement has been reached, it is tempting to assume that the partnership will take care of itself and that the focus needs to shift entirely to delivering programmes of work. This is a common mistake and leads partnerships into trouble – especially when programmes do not go according to plan and the partners find they are out of touch.

Process tasks during the second phase of the partnering cycle include:

- **Co-creating** appropriate governance arrangements
- **Helping** partners to work through complex internal and external challenges
- **Building** partner capacities to strengthen and optimise the partnership
- **Enabling** partners to explore new ways of transforming systems

NAVIGATING THE PARTNERING CYCLE

Reviewing & revising

An invaluable tool in the (often invisible) process management toolbox of a partnership is that of providing opportunities for reflection on how the partnership is working and whether it is optimising its potential to the partners, to the programme beneficiaries and to the wider environment. Encouraging partners to be reflective in the midst of their inevitably busy schedules can be a challenge, but those who adopt more reflective practices see a return on investment.

Reviewing the partnership (in addition to evaluating the partnership's projects) can take many forms ranging from regular 'health checks' – perhaps at the end of every meeting – to far more structured in-depth approaches. Writing up the partnership's story (a kind of learning case study) is another way to enable partners to be reflective and to build on their work to date.

Process tasks during the third phase of the partnering cycle include:

- **Supporting** partners in reviewing added value and effectiveness
- **Assisting** in revising the collaboration agreement
- **Helping** partners implement changes needed to improve the partnership
- **Guiding** partners to plan for sustaining outcomes and moving on

Sustaining outcomes

Partnerships are a means to an end, not an end in themselves, so most partnerships are date stamped – they are designed to conclude at a certain stage unless, of course, they become permanent structures by re-forming as a new entity. When a partnership ends, for whatever reason, it is of considerable importance both that it ends well (ie the closure process is managed with as much attention to detail as the scoping phase) and that the outcomes of its endeavours (whether in terms of project activities or impacts on partners, policy and systems) are secured and maintained.

Process tasks during the final phase of the partnering cycle include:

- **Exploring** moving on options and supporting decisions
- **Managing** closure / moving on processes collaboratively
- **Helping** partners celebrate and learn from their partnership 'story'
- **Ensuring** outcomes are able to be sustained / embedded / scaled / transferred



PARTNERING CHALLENGES

As has already been mentioned, partnering is not always easy but then a partnership that is too easy may not be achieving very much, so we should not necessarily see challenges as problems to be solved but perhaps opportunities to challenge our behaviour and habitual ways of operating. In any event, acknowledging challenges is the first step towards addressing

them - the key being to actually address them and not to simply work around, ignore or smooth over them. In addition to the core problems or issues (identified in Box 6 on page 10) there are a number of common partnering challenges that are frequently identified in partnership reviews and case studies.

Box 7: Ten common partnering challenges

<p>1 Lack of partnering experience</p>	<p>Partnering is a new way of working for some and it can take time for them to realise that partnering requires both an understanding of the paradigm and adaptations in terms of both attitudes and behaviours. Building capacity to partner effectively, whether through formal training or informal coaching, can make a big difference.</p>
<p>2 Governance contradictions</p>	<p>A key issue is how a partnerships is 'governed' – how decisions are made and how leadership is exercised / shared. Added to this is the common experience in many partnerships of having to manage both horizontal accountabilities (between partners) and vertical accountabilities (to senior managers in each partner organisation and / or to external funders). This needs to be tackled head on!</p>
<p>3 The wrong paperwork</p>	<p>Partnerships work best when partners co-create their partnership as well as their agreed projects. They then need to enshrine their arrangements in written form to provide a strong foundation for all that follows. A jointly written Collaboration Agreement / MoU / Statement of Intent is far more appropriate than a conventional contract for this purpose – persuading lawyers that both types of document are needed to fulfil two different purposes can be tough but is important.</p>
<p>4 Not counting what counts</p>	<p>Whilst most (though not all) partnerships need funding and many manage large budgets from external donors, money should not be the only currency that has value. All partners bring significant contributions to the partnerships (otherwise they should probably not be partners) and it is vitally important (though still relatively rare) for non-cash contributions to be given proper acknowledgement.</p>
<p>5 Poor Communication</p>	<p>In an age of communication saturation it can be hard for those operating as partners to find new and imaginative ways to keep each other informed and engaged. It is also important to tailor communication to the different needs and preferences of the partners and to find opportunities for communication to be as direct and personal as possible, for example: sometimes using images rather than words; skype rather than email and stories rather than reports.</p>

PARTNERING CHALLENGES

<p>6 Too many comings and goings</p>	<p>The rapid turnover of those involved in partnerships is often a real inhibitor to partnership continuity, stability and sustainability. People arriving can be as disruptive as people leaving. Taking time to manage exits and entrances is important and the process needs careful management. Those who enter a partnership need genuine opportunities to establish themselves and to contribute their own ideas. Comings and goings can, however, be constructively disruptive and can help to keep a partnership dynamic.</p>
<p>7 Loss of momentum</p>	<p>Many partnerships run for a number of years and it is not uncommon for them to fall into a repetitive, predictable way of working. Meetings become formulaic and / or dull; key players stay away and send their less engaged colleagues to deputise for them; project priorities take precedence over wider partnership considerations. Whilst it is inevitable that things will change and certain elements will become more routine, the risk is that the partnership loses its energy and falls short of its greater potential (for influence, system change, wider impact). Regular health checks and occasional 'blue sky thinking' sessions can make a real difference.</p>
<p>8 Reverting to business as usual</p>	<p>Partnering is about doing things differently – finding better solutions to intractable problems by working in new ways and crossing traditional boundaries. The most successful partnerships challenge 'business as usual' approaches and seek to explore and build on diversity. However, it is not uncommon, especially under pressure, for partners (individually or collectively) to revert to conventional patterns of behaviour and practice, thereby undermining the potential of the partnership to bring about real change at organisational and system levels.</p>
<p>9 An ever-changing context</p>	<p>Of course partnerships do not work in a vacuum (though sometimes it can seem as if they do). The context in which any partnership operates has a very significant influence on what is and is not possible. Any partnership can be assisted or undermined by factors over which the partnership has no control (ranging from changes in the strategic priorities of partner organisations to new government policies or unexpected crises / disasters). Partnerships that are strongly grounded and yet nimble in their operations will be better able to adapt and adjust.</p>
<p>10 The ticking clock</p>	<p>Having no time is probably the most often cited excuse given by partners for their lack of engagement and / or for lack of progress in the partnership. This usually means that some give far more time than others to the partnership (because they have more time available and / or they care about it more) and this can lead to resentment. But the global clock is also ticking and if the partnership is to have real impact on growing inequities, critical needs, escalating conflicts and environmental degradation, partners need to be convinced to give the partnership priority.</p>

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

Partners that are ambitious in their aims for their partnerships drive for a range of wider partnering impacts – of both a quantitative and qualitative nature – as well as project deliverables. Such partnerships are successful because they succeed in working across boundaries (including geographic distance), distributing leadership roles between the partners, negotiating with external funders so that arrangements support rather than undermine the partnership and, wherever possible, working together to co-create ideas and new initiatives.

Most of the success factors mentioned above are tangible, but there is something else that is more elusive but no less critical. It is the development of a partnering mind-set that leads to partners being willing to explore the unknown, to turn failures into learning and genuinely engage with each others interests and not just their own.

Box 8: Critical Success Factors for effective partnering⁵

<p>Efficiency / Effectiveness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear, well articulated shared vision • Partnership / collaboration is well managed with clear roles, mutual accountability and regular reviews • Partnership / collaboration has strong / appropriate communications in place • Senior management buy-in to partnering as a paradigm • Systems in place to support a collaborative approach
<p>Approach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All those involved understand and acknowledge what each partner brings to the collaboration • Individual expertise and preferred ways of working are incorporated consciously and constructively • Those involved are flexible whenever they can be and clear about their constraints • Collaboration processes are understood and incorporated into day-to-day work • Programmes of work are co-created and undertaken on behalf of the partners by agreement / mandate • All partners have a genuine voice at the table and their contribution is respected
<p>Attitude & Competencies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals involved strive to adopt a collaboration mind set • Individuals involved build the necessary knowledge and skill sets • There is tangible evidence of each individual’s / organisation’s engagement, commitment and contribution • Willingness to devote enough time to relationship building and maintenance
<p>Results / Productivity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The partnership is highly action / results oriented • The goals of each partner organisation are achieved whilst also achieving shared goals • The partnership is adding value to each organisation / individual involved • Through joint advocacy and a common voice the partnership is achieving wider impact & influence

Partnerships and other forms of multi-stakeholder collaboration work best when those involved: build sensitively on **what has been**; make an honest appraisal of the **current context** from diverse perspectives and drive with confidence to **what might be**. Any management of the partnering process needs to involve these three things with energy and rigour. But the unique role

of those brokering the collaboration process may well be that of ensuring partners engage fully with the **here and now** so that they are able to be courageous and ‘seize the day’ so that their partnering efforts are truly transformational.

⁵Adapted from: Hundal & Tennyson

References & resources

Appointing a Partnership Broker – www.partnershipbrokers.org/brokering

Being a Partnership Broker: Tools for Self Assessment & Reflection – www.partnershipbrokers.org/brokering

Emerging Partnering Lessons from Diverse Contexts – available from www.effectivepartnering.org

Partnership Brokers Training – www.partnershipbrokers.org/training

Promoting Effective Partnering – www.effectivepartnering.org

Tennyson, R. *The Partnering Toolbook* – available in 18 languages from www.thepartneringinitiative.org

What do Partnership Brokers Do? An Enquiry into Practice – available from www.partnershipbrokers.org

www.partnershipbrokers.org - access to information about partnership brokering, vocational training, action research, case studies and partnership brokering support

www.remotepartnering.org – new initiative that addresses the challenges and opportunities that arise from partnering long-distance

www.workingwithdonors.org - new initiative that examines the potential for changing the donor-partner relationship to be more effective and have greater impact

FURTHER INFORMATION

Papers by Partnership Brokers

Learn more about what partnership brokers do and how they navigate the often complex dynamics of multi-stakeholder collaboration? Browse through this collection of insightful papers – written by alumni of the PBA Accreditation programme – and dive into individual stories of partnership exploration. Each paper contributes to a colorful, diverse, and ever-growing mosaic of what partnership brokers do to achieve real transformation.

<https://partnershipbrokers.org/w/learning/papers-by-partnership-brokers/>

The Journal of Partnership Brokering

The Journal of Partnership Brokering, provides a public platform for thought leadership, critical analysis and insights into breakthrough practice from across cultures, sectors and geographies.

<https://partnershipbrokers.org/w/journal/>

Weaving Threads - How We Work

Learn more about our unique approach to supporting the partnering process.

<https://partnershipbrokers.org/w/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/WEAVING-THREADS-HOW-WE-WORK.pdf>

Our Training Programs

Dates and locations for Partnership Brokers Training, Advanced Skills courses and the Online Certificate in Brokering Remote Partnerships.

<http://partnershipbrokers.org/w/training/training-programme-dates-and-locations/>

THE TEN PRINCIPLES OF PARTNERSHIP BROKERING GOOD PRACTICE

1. Keep up to date with new developments in the theory and practice of brokering multi-stakeholder partnerships
2. Be reflective and strive for diversity, equity, openness, mutual benefit and courageous practice when operating in a partnership brokering role, modelling this behaviour to partners
3. Be prepared to challenge assumptions and poor partnering behaviour at any stage of the partnering cycle in ways most likely to bring about constructive change
4. Take every opportunity to build partnering and partnership brokering capacity in others
5. Share knowledge generously and don't hold onto knowledge for personal aggrandisement or gain
6. Explore any available alternative approaches before promoting a partnering process, in a commitment to achieving the best possible outcomes
7. Be open about risks and seek prior endorsement of those most likely to be affected by them before taking actions that might entail such risks.
8. Be an ethical and responsible practitioner by raising concerns about the partnership or the actions of individual partners
9. Acknowledge competence limitations and be open to requesting assistance from others who will bring complementary skills or different approaches to the task
10. Be willing to let go and hand over the partnership brokering role when the time is right



Copyright: Partnership Brokers Association

NOTES

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.

NOTES

A series of horizontal dotted lines for taking notes.



www.partnershipbrokers.org

info@partnershipbrokers.org



Building new approaches to effective partnering
for an inclusive and sustainable world