

THE PARTNER 2025



THE ART OF COLLABORATION



Advancing Collaboration to make Good Things Happen

Contents

4 ICW BOARD MEMBERS

FOREWORDS

5 Lord Hannett of Everton CHAIRMAN

6 Frank Lee CHIEF EXECUTIVE



INTRODUCTIONS

8 JOHN WILKINSON BAM

9 ADRIAN MILLER ICW

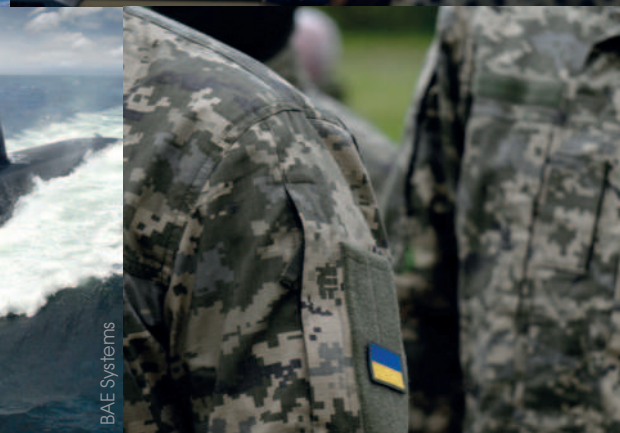
AMBASSADORS

- 10 **BAM**
David Robson; Gillian Peters
- 14 **Babcock**
Nichole Booker
- 16 **Raytheon UK**
Marc Waterman
- 19 **NATS**
Matthew Rumble; Tim Bullock
- 22 **Graham**
Jim Smyth
- 27 **Leidos**
Simon Hutchings
- 28 **Leonardo**
Alvaro Esteves; Craig Sharp
- 31 **Emcor UK**
Steven Dolan
- 34 **Costain**
Victoria Groom
- 37 **BSI**
Thomas Harrison; Simon Healey
- 40 **Network Rail**
Stephen Blakey

EXECUTIVE MEMBER INITIATIVES



BAE Systems



SPECIAL FEATURES

- 49 **Multi-disciplinary collaboration for innovation**
Prof. Jane Lynch
Cardiff Business School,
Cardiff University
- 52 **The art of the possible at the University of York**
John McDonald
Graham
- 56 **A collective approach to accelerating the upskilling of our future workforce**
Prof. David L Loseby
Leeds University
Business School

- 44 **Collaboration is the key ingredient**
Bob Gray
ESS

- 46 **Cultivating sustainable partnerships**
Juan Bulacios Keena
Indra

ICW IN ACTION

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

- 68 **Collaboration – more than an art**
Adrian Miller, ICW
- 70 **Collaborative state of mind**
William Cotter, ICW Ireland
- 73 **Coaching a collaborative disposition**
Mike Healy, ICW Scotland
- 76 **The art of the collaborative deal**
Richard Holm, Atkinsréalis
- 79 **The power of shared purpose**
Michael Taylor, Schellingpoint
- 82 **The collaborative journey: Unstructured collaboration to ISO 44000, a research study**
Denis Leonard, Graham
- 84 **AI: Enriching collaboration**
Bill Taylor, ICW;
Graham Thomson, Affinitex

ICW ACTIVITIES

- 86 **Strengthening internal collaboration as a core capability for change and innovation**
Henry Pavey, ICW
- 88 **Healthcare and collaboration rooted in evidence-based practice and human behaviour**
Trevor Gore, ICW
- 90 **Advancing collaboration: ICW Leading Edge Scheme**
Adrian Miller, ICW;
Bill Taylor, ICW
- 92 **ICW empowering SMEs with structured collaboration guidance**
Adrian Miller, ICW
- 94 **More offers to members while supporting international ties**
Brett Ackroyd, ICW Australia
- 95 **Social Value**
Michelle Lawrence, Link Up UK
- 96 **Collaborative behaviours and challenges**
Jill Clancy, ICW
- 98 **Public Procurement**
Valerie Elliott, ICW
- 100 **Professional Development**
Jo Potter, ICW
- 103 **Marketing and Communication**
John Osborne, ICW

- 105 **ICW Collaborative Awards 2024**
- 118 **Executive Network Members**



Institute for
Collaborative
Working

Tel +44(0)203 691 1530
Email enquiries@icw.uk.com
Web www.icw.uk.com
83 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0HW

ICW

Board members

CHAIRMAN

LORD HANNETT OF EVERTON

PRESIDENT

LORD DAVID EVANS OF WATFORD



CLAIRE WARD



CHRISTOPHER KEHOE



DOUGLAS MCCORMICK



TIM BULLOCK



STEVE ABRAHAMS



PROF JANE LYNCH



This pivotal moment is our opportunity to shape a better, fairer future

CHAIRMAN ICW

Lord Hannett of Everton

As your new Chairman, it has been a great pleasure and privilege to meet many of our members in a relatively short time. I've been struck not only by your passion, but by the way your stories reflect the transformative power of true collaboration. It's reminded me of something I've learned over a lifetime in public service and the trade union movement: lasting progress is never achieved alone – it's the result of people coming together with shared purpose and mutual respect.

Throughout my career – particularly during my time leading USDAW – I saw firsthand how partnership and dialogue can deliver meaningful change, not just for organisations, but for people. Whether it was negotiating fairer conditions, driving improvements in health and safety, or influencing policy to support working families, the outcomes that mattered most were always built on trust, shared goals, and collaborative leadership.

Those experiences have shaped my firm belief that collaboration isn't a luxury or a buzzword – it's a necessity. When we face complex challenges, whether in the workplace or in society, solutions don't come from working in silos. They come when we listen to each other, value each other's expertise, and commit to working together. That belief has never left me, and it's why I feel so strongly that collaboration is not only the most effective path forward – it's also the most ethical.

In today's world, where we face daunting issues like climate change, inequality, economic uncertainty, and the ongoing need for skills development, our strength lies in unity. We must bring together governments, businesses, trade

unions, academia, and communities – each with their own perspectives, resources, and knowledge – to build solutions that last and deliver for all.

That collective spirit has always inspired me. I've seen it bring about real innovation and progress, often in the face of adversity. And it's why I'm more passionate than ever about the mission of the Institute: to make collaboration the cornerstone of how we approach challenges and opportunities.

Our ambition is clear – to champion collaboration as a driver of positive impact. By building stronger relationships across sectors and supporting organisations of all sizes, including SMEs, we can shape new ways of working that promote inclusion, resilience, and sustainable success. Whether it's addressing digital transformation, building fairer workplaces, or accelerating action on sustainability, the answers will come from working together.

Of course, this requires a shift in mindset. We must look beyond

competition and short-term gain and focus instead on shared outcomes and long-term benefit. It's a mindset that served me well throughout my working life – and one I know many of you already live and breathe.

As Chairman, I am committed to ensuring that the Institute continues to be a leading voice and catalyst for collaboration. We will continue to create frameworks, platforms, and partnerships that enable collaboration to flourish.

We are at a pivotal moment. The challenges are great – but so

“We must look beyond competition and short-term gain and focus instead on shared outcomes and long-term benefit”

too is our opportunity to shape a better, fairer future. I look forward to working with all of you to lead this important work.

The time for collaboration is now – and together, we will deliver the change our society needs. ■



Strengthening collaboration, shaping futures

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Frank Lee

As we reflect on the past year, I am incredibly proud of the progress we have made as an institute in advancing the collaborative working agenda across sectors. We have achieved this through close collaboration with our members and by delivering a host of new activities and events designed to provide even greater membership value. At ICW, we are not only championing the principles of effective collaboration, but living them by actively collaborating with our members, partners and with government to co-create the tools, knowledge, and networks that bring these principles to life in practice.

Driving practical support for collaboration

A key focus this year has been on developing practical resources and activities that support our members in embedding collaborative approaches into their businesses and with partners. This includes:

The ICW Collaboration Playbook

Collaboration is increasingly recognised as an essential strategy in procurement, enabling the delivery of value-driven outcomes far beyond cost reduction. The *ICW Collaboration Playbook* supports this shift, offering guidance aligned with the Procurement Act 2023 and the *National Procurement Policy Statement* (both for public procurement). It addresses today's economic, environmental, and social imperatives, highlighting how shared success, trust, and sustainable relationships are vital in managing complex supply chains and mitigating risk. The playbook was itself a collaborative effort – co-created with our members and government partners across national and devolved administrations – demonstrating the very principles it promotes. Its overriding aim is to

enable more effective collaboration between the public and private sectors.

The SME toolkit and training programme

Tailored to small and medium-sized enterprises, this toolkit helps bridge capability gaps and supports SMEs for confidently engaging with larger clients and public sector partners. It helps them begin their journey toward ISO 44001 certification while also giving their clients greater confidence in their ability to collaborate effectively. It will assist our members with their collaboration conversations and activities with SMEs.

Deepening engagement with universities

At ICW, we understand that shaping the future of collaboration requires a strong bridge between academic insight and practical application. That's why we're deepening our engagement with leading academic institutions, including **Leeds University Business School, Exeter**

University, Cardiff University Business School and Warwick Business School.

These partnerships serve multiple purposes: they connect our practical knowledge of collaborative working with the latest academic thinking, ensure research is grounded in real-world challenges, and provide opportunities to influence the education of future leaders. We are embedding collaborative principles into curricula and helping equip students with the tools, behaviours, and mindsets they need to thrive in an interconnected world. It also gives us access and the support of recognised and distinguished experts. We are also exploring opportunities for joint research, guest lecturing and the co-creation of case studies and learning materials. By working with academia in this way, we are fostering a new generation of professionals who not only understand the theory of collaboration, but also know how to lead and deliver it in practice.

Promoting advanced collaborative practice

As collaboration matures in many organisations, we are continuing to

"We are embedding collaborative principles into curricula and helping equip students with the tools, behaviours, and mindsets they need to thrive"

provide leadership and inspiration through initiatives that push the boundaries of what is possible:

The ICW Leading Edge Scheme

This recognises and celebrates organisations that exemplify excellence in collaboration beyond certification. It provides our members with an opportunity to demonstrate that their ISO 44001 certification is not just a standard but a strategic asset – delivering tangible value to their clients and stakeholders at an enterprise level.

Sector forums

ICW currently supports two active sector forums – in highways and nuclear, with more in development. Both are focused on how structured collaboration can support critical national priorities such as net zero, sustainability, and productivity. In the highways sector, ICW is working closely with member organisations to establish the Collaborative Highways Forum. This initiative recognises a greater need for collaborative behaviours and aligned incentives to meet the sector's evolving challenges – particularly in improving productivity, reducing environmental impacts, improving margins, and delivering greater social and economic value. The forum will focus on collaborative culture, organisational capability, and practical tools such as standards, toolkits, and performance measures. It will serve as a platform to share best practice, foster innovation, and tackle systemic issues such as waste, delivery efficiency, and supply chain resilience.

By bringing together collaboration-minded organisations with diverse perspectives, the forum aims to build a united community grounded in mutual trust and shared responsibility – delivering high-quality outcomes for road users, industry participants, and the wider public. All ICW

members working within the sector will be welcome to participate in this inclusive platform, which is aligned with National Highways' strategic objectives. We are also inviting local authorities to join the forum.

In the nuclear sector, the forum continues to explore how collaboration can support the transition to net zero and greater sustainability. Here too, ICW is providing a platform for members to exchange best practices, align on strategic objectives, and explore collaborative approaches to improving project delivery, reducing duplication, and achieving better societal outcomes.

Sector networking lunches

Over the past year, our Chairman has hosted three successful sector-specific networking lunches, bringing together key stakeholders from the rail, highways, and aviation sectors. These informal yet focused gatherings created valuable spaces for leaders and practitioners to connect, share challenges, and explore collaborative opportunities. By fostering open dialogue and cross-sector insight, these lunches help strengthen relationships, identify common themes, and deepen understanding of how structured collaboration can drive innovation, performance, and value. They reinforce ICW's objective of building a recognised and highly collaborative community.

Webinars showcasing 2024 ICW Award winners

Through our award winner webinar series, we are shining a spotlight

on real-world success stories that demonstrate the tangible impact of collaboration, offering practical learning for our wider community. We will be running a series in 2025.

Looking ahead

All of the above activities – and many more that I haven't mentioned – are delivering real value for our members and helping us in our mission:

“Advancing collaboration to make good things happen”.

When I began my role as Chief Executive at the start of 2023, I was determined to modernise the Institute and ensure its long-term sustainability. Thanks to the tremendous efforts of the ICW team and the engagement of our members, we have made enormous progress. Our financial position is healthier than it has been in many years, and our membership – both corporate and individual – is at an all-time high; and we have never provided member benefits, activities, and thought leadership on the scale we are doing today.

But we are not resting on our laurels.

The next 12 months are already filled with events and initiatives designed to continue delivering value. And true to our ethos, we will continue to practise what we preach – working collaboratively with our members, government partners, and like-minded organisations to shape a more connected, resilient, and high-performing future underpinned by effective and value-adding collaboration. ■

frank.lee@icw.uk.com

“We are fostering a new generation of professionals who not only understand the theory of collaboration, but also know how to lead and deliver it in practice”



This year's annual ICW reception at the House of Lords is again kindly sponsored by BAM. We thank them for their continued support for the Institute for Collaborative Working, and have asked BAM Chief Operating Officer, John Wilkinson, to contribute an article that explores how collaboration is important to BAM, their people and sustainability for us all..

The future is ours to make

BAM

John Wilkinson

At BAM we're building a sustainable tomorrow, and that is no small promise. We're thinking beyond the build and focusing on the bigger impact, as we create the buildings and infrastructure that shape our society.

It's a commitment we can't fulfil without collaboration.

Collaboration with our people, our clients and our partners. Sustainability involves all of us because it affects all of us.

There are hard choices to make and new ideas to unlock, and we cannot do this alone. We must work collaboratively with clients and partners who see the world in the same way. We must bring together diverse people, with innovative ideas, to imagine a better tomorrow and to start building it today.

We are focused on decarbonising our economy, driving circularity and adding social value to the areas where we build. We must adapt to the changing climate and protect our flora and fauna by enhancing biodiversity. We must also care for our people; they are our engine and we must ensure they are physically and psychologically safe and prosper in the way they deserve.

When we sit around the table with our clients, we learn that the challenges we face are shared. To deliver the buildings and infrastructure they need, our clients are not simply looking for a contractor who knows how to build, but for a true collaborative partner who shares their aspirations for a sustainable future.

Taking ownership of this journey

means looking outside our industries, for partners with fresh perspectives. It means investing in new technologies that can take sustainable construction to new heights. And it means nurturing a truly collaborative culture, where people are equipped with the skills and expertise to work in these new partnerships.

The key to our success will be our investment in the incredible, passionate and talented people

who work within our sector. These are the people who will lead the sustainable infrastructure projects of the future. Whilst working practices and processes can guide us towards better collaboration, our ability to truly collaborate relies on these people who are doing the collaborating.

We know that the path to a sustainable future is not a journey we can take alone. By working alongside partners who share our vision, we can build a better tomorrow – one that's not only more sustainable, but also more connected, resilient, and capable of facing the challenges ahead. Through collaboration, we turn

possibilities into reality, and together, we create lasting change. ■
ukandireland.bam.com



"We must bring together diverse people, with innovative ideas, to imagine a better tomorrow and to start building it today"

*From top, clockwise:
RHS Bridgewater;
John Wilkinson; Lincoln
Medical School*





INTRODUCTION

Bringing the ‘art of collaboration’ to life

ICW

Adrian Miller

Collaboration is increasingly recognised as a key driver of success. However, in today’s complex and interconnected world, its true potential is only realised when it is effectively harnessed with the right partners and through a structured approach.

This year, in *The Partner* we are focusing on the ‘art of collaboration’. Our goal is to provide readers with valuable insights into the different facets of structured collaboration. We aim to demonstrate that collaboration is not a one-size-fits-all approach, but an evolving process that requires careful planning, open communication, and a willingness to adapt. By following the lifecycle model outlined by ISO 44001, organisations can navigate these complexities and build successful partnerships.

Furthermore, by highlighting the capabilities of our members and sharing success stories, we aim to encourage greater collaboration across various industries. When executed well, collaboration drives innovation, creates lasting relationships, and delivers results that would be impossible to achieve alone.

We invite you to explore the art of collaboration, recognise

its importance in your own organisational journey, and consider how adopting a structured approach can lead to even greater success. Whether you’re just starting your collaboration journey or looking to refine your existing partnerships, the insights shared here will offer practical guidance and inspiration.

Collaboration journey

To frame this exploration, we turn to the eight-stage collaboration lifecycle, as defined in ISO 44001, the global standard that outlines the stages and processes that guide organisations through successful collaborative journeys (see Table 1 below). These stages offer a roadmap that can help organisations navigate their collaboration journey, ensuring alignment, fostering innovation, and creating value for all parties involved.

We asked our contributors to focus on this lifecycle as a reference, to share examples of good practices,

8

STAGES EXPLAINED

- 1 Awareness**
intent for collaboration
- 2 Knowledge**
determining scope and objectives
- 3 Internal assessment**
assessing strengths and determining partner suitability
- 4 Partner selection**
engaging to find potential partners
- 5 Working together**
developing a joint approach
- 6 Value creation**
focusing on output
- 7 Staying together**
managing relationship performance
- 8 Exit strategy**
planning for disengagement

success stories, strategies, and innovations that exemplify the art of collaboration. From vision setting to disengagement processes, the focus is on real-world applications and strategies that our members have successfully applied in their own industries. ■
adrian.miller@icw.uk.com

TABLE 1 EIGHT-STAGE COLLABORATION LIFECYCLE

Mechanisms and behaviours in the management phase of relationships

Awareness	Knowledge	Internal assessment	Partner selection	Working together	Value creation	Staying together	Exit strategy
STRATEGIC PHASE			ENGAGEMENT PHASE			MANAGEMENT PHASE	



Polar partnerships: Collaborative construction at the edge of the world

BAM

At BAM, our vision is to build a sustainable tomorrow through innovation and collaboration. Our work on the successful Antarctic Infrastructure Modernisation Programme (AIMP) is ensuring efficient and safe construction in one of Earth's most challenging environments. Working in partnership with the British Antarctic Survey (BAS) and a team of expert collaborators, we are delivering vital improvements to BAS's research station facilities, helping to keep the UK at the forefront of polar research.



DAVID ROBSON

Getting to Antarctica is no small feat. After 19 hours of flying and around 10 hours waiting in airports, if you are lucky, not only will your bags arrive, but the weather will be good enough to fly the final five hours to Rothera, Antarctica.

For those working on the AIMP construction partnership, this is a regular trip to one of the planet's most remote locations. The isolation of the site requires teams to be highly collaborative, resilient, and adaptable, as all challenges must be solved using the limited people and resources already on site.

Construction work must be meticulously planned as Antarctica is the coldest and windiest continent on Earth, with coastal temperatures averaging -12°C and plummeting to -60°C at higher ground. Building infrastructure in these extremes while ensuring the continued safe operation of up to 165 scientists and station staff at Rothera while protecting the unique environmental landscape takes exceptional people and successful collaboration.

Working together

With only a short Austral summer construction window, seamless integration between the AIMP construction partners is vital. The partnership between BAS, BAM and our strategic supply chain SWECO, GA Barnie, AJ Engineering, and Hugh Broughton Architects is carefully structured to foster collaboration and trust at every level to ensure the charter strapline:

"We look after our team."

A shared ethos of trust and partnership prioritisation above individual company interests lies at the approach's core. This is reinforced through a partnership charter and regular open-book meetings held in a co-located office. With our strategic suppliers, BAM works closely with BAS and their technical adviser, Ramboll, during the early conceptual and spatial design stages. This collaboration is fundamental to reducing design risks and ensuring absolute

*"The isolation of the site requires teams to be **highly collaborative, resilient, and adaptable**, as all challenges must be solved using the limited people and resources already on site"*

confidence in the buildability of the design, summarised by a partnership director as: "I would say that more than half of innovation is about how you work together."

BAS made a long-term contractual commitment to the partnership, sharing projected workload and budgets to





enable effective joint planning and resource alignment. This transparency allows BAM to understand BAS's operational constraints and enables the joint development of strategies to minimise disruption to polar activities. As the main UK hub for Antarctic operations, Rothera is a hive of activity with a live operational runway supporting deep field scientific research, active wharf operations, international collaborations, and ongoing research studies. BAM must carefully coordinate

project construction, including a new runway, aircraft hangar, wharf, and research hub around these critical activities.

Creating value

Early cross-partnership collaboration facilitates comprehensive risk identification. This enables BAM and partners to design methodologies that mitigate unique risks such as iceberg impacts, crevasses, extreme UV exposure and freezing temperatures. Combined with a focus on digital construction, trial erections, and off-site

manufacturing, the unified risk approach has enabled accurate time, resource, and interface planning. Highly integrated teams are equally critical to meeting BAS's long-term aim of decarbonising all directly owned operations by 2040. BAM's deep understanding of BAS enables the framework to proactively deliver with sustainability as a key consideration.

Staying together

The level of integration and trust achieved at all levels of the value chain has been widely recognised as unusually good across the partnership. Substantial time and effort have been invested in team building, which has led to personnel continuity and effective knowledge transfer within the team. Collaboration maturity surveys have recorded a growing trust in the partnership, with metrics such as the ability to adapt to change, prioritisation of objectives, decision making and fairness all improving over time.

To date, the highest-rated indicators have been "trusted to work in the best interests of the partnership" and "leadership is consistently supportive of the collaborative approach". Both traits are reflected in a team member's testimonial: "We just trusted each other to do the right thing, and everyone was pushing in the same direction."

If we want to meet the challenges of the future, we must transform the way we work. We listen, work together, and collaborate with our colleagues, clients, and supply chain – because together, we achieve great things. ■

david.robson2@bam.com



Major infrastructure projects commonly begin with collaborative aspirations

BAM Gillian Peters



At BAM, collaboration is a principle that shapes our approach to every interaction and project. Our commitment to collaboration is rooted within our core values – being sustainable, inclusive, collaborative, reliable and having ownership.

Every major project requires carefully planning safety, logistics, quality, design and delivery. Consider, for example, the months of planning through digital design and modelling, risk assessment and people development before each construction season for the British Antarctic Survey. Each process and tool has to be thoroughly considered, tested and assured. The art of successful collaboration is applying this care and attention to planning, engaging and managing working relationships.

Major infrastructure projects commonly begin with collaborative aspirations. Yet, as challenges arise and risks are realised, trust is too often eroded as organisations and teams retreat to positions of defence and blame.

Collaboration has the potential to be a powerful

enabler to meet project outcomes if we afford the same respect to, and nurture perceived “softer skills” as we do with broader tools and processes. Effective collaboration requires insight, a strategy, engagement with multiple parties, a plan and continued measurement. The ISO 44001 operational model offers a practical eight-step guide to support organisations on this journey. Providing a framework helps us understand our organisation, why we seek to invest in collaboration, how we plan to engage with others, what value will look like, and how we will actively stay together.

Amiable behaviours are easy for people and teams when all is running smoothly. Collaboration drives value during times of adversity, becoming the most valuable enabler to overcoming challenges. To realise these benefits, it is BAM’s proud role as an ICW Ambassador to support the development and continual improvement of collaborative relationships. ■

gillian.peters@bam.com

Collaborating with partners who share our vision



At BAM, our vision is to build a sustainable tomorrow.

Through innovation, collaboration and determination, we're shaping tomorrow's world. Every day, we look to improve how we deliver our work and to reduce our impact as we do it. Restless in our pursuit of better, we work collaboratively with our partners to unlock what's possible, together.



We believe in actions, not words and that's why we're on a mission to make possible.

Scan here
to discover more



#bamukandireland
ukandireland.bam.com

**Making
Possible**



Knowledge management: meeting the challenge of retention and sharing

BABCOCK

Nichole Booker

Our purpose, to create a safe and secure world, together, defines our strategy. This defines and underpins our new ways of collaborative working together, creating value for our shareholders and delivering for our customers.

Sustaining knowledge through a diverse and complex business can be challenging, whether through natural career progression or succession planning. Critical to this is knowledge loss where individuals leave without any effective knowledge retention or sharing, which can subsequently have an impact on business strategies, culture, behaviours improving efficiency costs and ability to add further value to our business.

At Babcock, knowledge creation does not happen effectively without taking a structured approach within a collaborative environment supported by a management system. However, there is always a high risk of knowledge loss for a large organisation, where skills are essential in maintaining the services and competencies of a multi-

national and transient workforce.

At executive level, the leadership must be both motivated and realistic about the need for change and the potential constraints that exist which might dislocate strategic objectives when knowledge is not sufficiently captured. In addition, effective exploitation and implementation can create a challenge in what can be shared successfully due to ethical walls or contractual boundaries; therefore, the leadership is pivotal in ensuring the right approach is sustained throughout management systems, processes and with people.

- Appropriate sharing and management of information and knowledge is a key ingredient for effective collaboration.
- An important part of collaborative working is the ability of parties to share their knowledge, experience and expertise.
- Openness between individuals across organisational boundaries and clarity of access removes potential areas of conflict, builds trust, enhances speed of operation, facilitates appropriate behaviours and enables the creation of new value.

As part of our Group-wide process to harness knowledge, ISO 44001 has been a fundamental component in capturing,

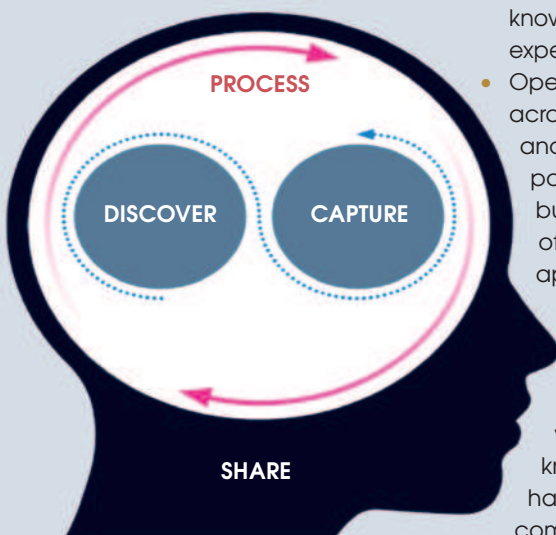
evaluating, and addressing how we use knowledge as part of collaborative frameworks and information sharing. As an international company with various sectors and contracts, ISO 44001 knowledge management is an integral part of the workflow process. This is not just specific to technical knowledge but also to the broader dimension of how knowledge flows in, around and through a collaborative and operational environment.

Creating effective collaboration requires strategies that are focused on the business objectives, and recognises the risk associated with greater collaboration and integration, including knowledge management and business continuity, underpinned by an exit strategy.

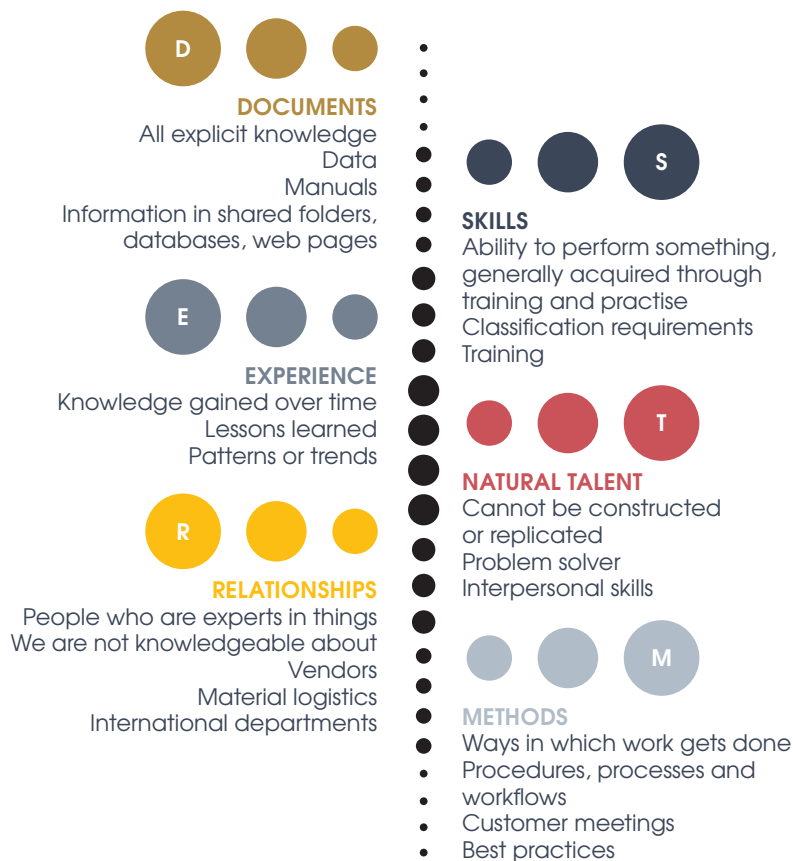
The importance of knowledge created is generally understood, but not always the diversity of it and where it exists or is recorded. Therefore, knowledge is widely considered to be 20% explicit (codified), i.e. written down, physically available in documents or online. The remaining 80% is tacit – in people's heads.

Knowledge transfer

Our investment in training via apprenticeships, graduates and our wider workforce, relies on excellent communication and methods to ensure we maintain



KNOWLEDGE TYPES



innovative information and knowledge transfer, enabling our ability to learn, develop and train.

- **Extra learning opportunities** allows us to access “free” (to us at least) learning, for example from outside events, industries, customer’s suppliers and professional bodies.
- **Learning from experience** allows us to capture “here and now” experiences from those involved in various activities, and corrective action and preventative action (CAPA) allows us to initiate appropriate

action in line with our established governance arrangements.

- **Knowledge acquisition retention transfer (KART)** aims to acquire a colleague’s previous “there and then” knowledge which would otherwise be lost to the organisation prior to them moving-on. Knowledge is captured in an appropriate format such as a piece-to-camera for example, and subsequently transferred to others through team briefs, Lunch and Learns, formal training or through events such as our own Knowledge Café.

“Leadership is pivotal in ensuring the right approach is sustained throughout management systems, processes and with people”

Measure and evaluate

- 1 Educate our employees on tacit knowledge as contrasted with recorded knowledge, and identify from whom in the organisation you need to gather knowledge (e.g. Knowledge Café, learning from experience)
- 2 Conduct a knowledge loss risk interview to gather initial data on what types of knowledge the person has, including relationships with vendors, suppliers and partners.
- 3 Perform a knowledge loss risk assessment.
- 4 Understand the knowledge transfer process.
- 5 Execute and share the plan.
- 6 Measure and evaluate the knowledge transferred.

Knowledge is not about empowerment or being considered as siloed, but it must be shared where interest drives value, innovation, trust and behaviours.

This in turn:

ENHANCES COLLABORATION

INCREASES PRODUCTIVITY

IMPROVES DECISION MAKING

CREATING VALUE FROM EXISTING KNOWLEDGE

nichole.booker@babcockinternational.com



Staying together: Collaboration using ISO 44001 in the Dreadnought Submarine Programme

RAYTHEON UK

Marc Waterman

The Dreadnought Submarine Programme will replace the UK's Vanguard class fleet and is on track for the First of Class, HMS Dreadnought, to enter service in the early 2030s. It is a monumental undertaking that requires seamless collaboration among various stakeholders. ISO 44001, the international standard for collaborative business relationships, provides a framework for managing such complex partnerships. This article explores the "staying together" phase of ISO 44001 and putting in place the right things upfront to focus on team management, measurement, monitoring, and behaviours to jointly manage relationship performance within the Dreadnought Submarine Programme.

Team management

Effective team management is crucial for sustaining collaborative relationships in the Dreadnought Submarine Programme. ISO 44001 emphasises the importance of clear roles and responsibilities, open communication, and mutual trust.

1 Roles and responsibilities:

Clearly defined roles ensure that each team member understands their duties and how they contribute to the programme's goals. For instance, Raytheon UK is tasked with delivering the development of training and the procurement of training

equipment in line with The Defence and Security Public Contracts Regulations (DSPCR). With clear Statements of Work and the inclusion of collaborative working as part of the contract, Raytheon UK collaborates with trusted training partners to deliver sovereign technologies and capabilities.

2 Open communication:

Regular and transparent communication fosters trust and ensures alignment among all parties. This is achieved through regular meetings, updates, and collaborative tools, ensuring that all stakeholders are on the same page. Raytheon UK's commitment to open communication is evident in their partnerships with over 4,000 UK suppliers.

3 Mutual trust:

Building and maintaining trust is essential. This involves being reliable, meeting commitments, and addressing issues promptly and fairly. Trust is particularly important in a programme of this scale, where multiple entities must work together seamlessly. This means also

including stakeholders outside of the direct contractual bounds, which requires agility and flexibility for delivery to remain on schedule.

Measurement and monitoring

To ensure the success of the Dreadnought Submarine Programme, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) measures and monitors performance continuously. ISO 44001 provides guidelines for setting up effective measurement and monitoring systems.

1 Key performance indicators (KPIs):

Establishing KPIs helps track the progress and performance of the collaboration. These indicators are aligned with the programme's objectives, such as meeting design and build milestones for all stakeholders to be cognisant of during programme reviews, and actions required. Raytheon UK employs balanced scorecards with all partners to provide additional clarity and opportunity to feedback improvements through two-way reporting. This helps to bring KPIs alive and "driven to succeed" rather than being "just" a contractual clause. The balanced scorecards include aspects such as behaviours and innovation.

2 Regular reviews:

Conducting regular performance reviews allows partners to assess progress, identify areas for improvement, and make necessary adjustments. These reviews are outcome focused and are documented and shared with all stakeholders, ensuring transparency and accountability.

3 Feedback mechanisms:

Implementing feedback mechanisms ensures that all

"Trust is particularly important in a programme of this scale, where multiple entities must work together seamlessly"

parties can voice their concerns and suggestions. This helps in addressing issues proactively and improving the collaboration process. These develop right from the start of each project, with the opportunity for Raytheon UK to visit partner sites and create connections at multiple levels and across functions.

Behaviours

The behaviours of individuals and teams play a significant role in the success of collaborative relationships. ISO 44001 highlights the importance of fostering positive behaviours that support collaboration.

- 1 Collaboration culture:**
Promoting a culture of collaboration within the

programme encourages team members to work together towards common goals. These are achieved through joint workshops, planned reviews, feedback and leadership support.

- 2 Conflict resolution:**
Addressing conflicts and challenges promptly and effectively is crucial. Establishing clear resolution processes helps in resolving issues before they escalate and put programme milestones at risk. We know every project will have challenges; it's how these are addressed and the decisions made that builds trust and gets results.
- 3 Recognition and reward:**
Recognising and rewarding collaborative behaviours

motivates team members to continue working together effectively. This has included formal B2B recognition, and informal acknowledgments between teams

Jointly managing relationship performance

Joint management of relationship performance is a cornerstone of ISO 44001. It involves partners working together to ensure the ongoing success of the collaboration.

- 1 Shared objectives:**
Established shared objectives ensures that all parties agree and are working towards the same goals. These objectives are clearly defined, communicated, and aligned with the overall programme strategy.

*An artist's impression
of Dreadnought*



*“Staying together in a collaborative relationship requires effective team management, with organisations able to look outward as well as inward to discover innovation through continuous measurement and monitoring, **fostering positive behaviours, and jointly managing relationship performance**”*

and adapts to changing circumstances. This involves regularly reviewing processes, seeking feedback, and implementing improvements. Within this programme, Raytheon UK deliver on several devices with different partners. Best practice is shared across the projects, enabling real time lessons to be learned and implemented.

2 Collaborative decision-making:

Involving all partners in decision-making processes fosters a sense of ownership and commitment. This is achieved through joint committees, working groups, and collaborative tools enabling transparent and real time updates to be seen by all relevant stakeholders.

3 Continuous improvement:

Embracing a culture of continuous improvement ensures that the collaboration evolves

Conclusion

Staying together in a collaborative relationship requires effective team management, with organisations able to look outward as well as inward to discover innovation through continuous measurement and monitoring, fostering positive behaviours, and jointly managing relationship performance. By adhering to the principles of ISO 44001, Raytheon UK can build and sustain successful partnerships that drive mutual success. ■

marc.waterman@raytheon.co.uk



Trusted partners

RAYTHEON UK

Marc Waterman

With over 2,000 employees in the UK, Raytheon UK is a major supplier and systems integrator to the UK Ministry of Defence that designs, develops and manufactures defence and space products.

We are also a leading provider of training

transformations services and continue to invest in research and development, supporting innovation and technological advances across the country.

Innovation in defence training is rarely achieved on its own. It requires an ecosystem of partners

working collaboratively to provide emerging technologies, transparency, inclusion, agility and value for the customer. We collaborate with trusted partners to provide sovereign technologies, capabilities and systems, and it is through this collaboration that we are able to help the armed forces innovate and better meet the fast-evolving threats to the UK's national security. ■

*Raytheon UK is part of RTX's
Raytheon business*

*“Innovation in defence training is rarely achieved on its own. **It requires an ecosystem of partners working collaboratively to provide emerging technologies, transparency, inclusion, agility and value for the customer**”*



Establishing effective collaborative relationships

NATS

Matthew Rumble MICW

Same score, different performers

In music and theatre, whether a symphony, hit song, or a play, multiple variations on the same core work are common. Depending on the performers and director, two performances of the same work can have vastly different results. It is easy to spot the unique balance of a particular orchestra's approach to Beethoven's 5th; the stylistic nuances of a specific director's take on *Romeo and Juliet*; or your favourite band's unmistakable sound when they cover a classic Beatles hit.

Similarly, although we follow a common structured approach when establishing collaborative business relationships, NATS has several distinct partnerships, each with their own specific focus areas and unique "style".

Just over two years ago, our supplier segmentation process identified two new partners for structured collaborative working under ISO 44001. Joint relationship management plans now in place with CGI and Mitie reflect the respective shared objectives and specific joint actions that we've each agreed to create mutual value.

A collaborative approach to enabling collaboration

Very much like when actors first read through the script with the director, or a jazz orchestra sees a brand-new work for the first time, a key element in setting up a new collaborative relationship is defining the overall context and establishing the "why" – the strategic intent for the collaboration. Contracts define well the "what" of delivery outcomes (timescales, KPIs and SLAs for example), however, it's the collaborative relationship that establishes a shared vision of "how" we agree to achieve these outcomes. Therefore, when a project has options for how it might achieve

a deliverable, these joint strategic objectives are valuable context for deciding which one is "best".

NATS set up initial alignment sessions with both partners through in-person workshops. The inclusion of key relationship sponsors – senior executives responsible (SERs) was crucial, securing their insight and commitment to the joint strategic objectives and relationship values. Each team walked the other through their organisational strategy, allowing everyone to really connect to each strategic aim as it was described and explained in real-world terms.

This approach quickly reveals which of our strategic aims are aligned; this area of synergetic overlap is fertile ground for the joint relationship to create additional value through shared objectives.

SHARING STRATEGIES



Defining collaborative behaviours, and communicating them

A key part of any collaborative partnership is a shared view of how we will behave. NATS introduced our partners to ten core behavioural values and their intended outcomes. Using these as a "starter for ten", or an "overture", we openly discuss each in the context of this relationship.

For example, one core behavioural value is "pragmatism". How might this look and feel in the specific nature of *this* partnership? A detailed sentence defining "what good looks like" for each behaviour is documented.

After agreeing on these definitions, the partnership establishes the best way to communicate them to the teams. For example, Mitie suggested distilling the values, behaviours, and joint relationship objectives into an easy-to-consume partnership charter, which is then shared with individual and teams across the relationship.

"The ways of working with NATS were truly collaborative. We appreciated being able to jointly facilitate the workshops and the sharing of knowledge on respective approaches to measuring relationship health beyond net promoter score such as measuring trust and the efficacy of delivery against the shared values."

Natasha Gandolfi MICW

Strategic Partnerships and Collaboration Manager, Mitie

Critical friends

As every talented artist seeks constructive critique to continually



improve, so we have established a way to measure and evolve trust within the partnership.

We have created questionnaires specific to each relationship to understand which behaviours impact trust positively or negatively. The survey asks stakeholders at regular intervals (initially quarterly, now half-yearly) about their experiences of the behaviours exhibited by the individuals and teams they interact with most. Relationship managers analyse the results and share the output with the SERs, who can then recognise great partnership working and agree actions to address identified areas for improvement.

Conclusion: A coda

So, the art of collaboration is akin to the nuanced performances of a symphony or a play. Just as musicians and actors bring unique interpretations to a piece, collaborative business relationships thrive on the distinct contributions of each partner. The structured collaborative approach taken by NATS shows that even with a common framework, the outcomes can be diverse and mutually enriching.

The initial alignment sessions, focusing on strategic objectives and shared values, have laid a sturdy foundation for these collaborations. By engaging stakeholders across the relationship and fostering open communication, we have ensured that each partnership is built on mutual understanding and respect. The synergetic overlap of strategic aims has created fertile ground for additional value, much like the harmonious blend of instruments in an orchestra.

"CGI began our ISO 44001 journey with NATS in 2023. Since then, we've agreed our first joint relationship management plan, achieved accreditation, and completed a valuable first annual review. Through the collaborative process, we've embedded new practices that enhance mutual value and trust. ISO 44001 has provided a structured framework to align strategic aims, define shared behaviours, and foster open, purpose-driven dialogue, moving us towards a stronger partnership."

Stephen Vance
Director Consulting Services
**Aerospace and Assured
Space Systems, CGI**

Defining and living collaborative behaviours has been a cornerstone of our approach. Introducing core behavioural values clarifies what good looks like in the relationship. By documenting and committing to these standards, we have created a culture where collaboration is not just encouraged but expected. This has allowed us to support those who embody these values while addressing areas needing improvement.

Lin-Manuel Miranda, creator of numerous works including the musical *Hamilton* and the score for Disney's *Encanto*, aptly said: "The fun for me in collaboration is, one, working with other people just makes you smarter; that's proven." And I often quote Stuart Crawford FICW: "Collaboration alone will not guarantee success. But without collaboration we are guaranteed to fail".

As we look to the future, the importance of collaboration will continue to grow. The dynamic nature of our industry demands adaptability and openness to new ways of working together. By embracing the art of collaboration, we can unlock our collective potential and drive innovation and success. ■
matthew.rumble@nats.co.uk



The importance of flexibility in structured collaboration



NATS

Tim Bullock FICW

For those of us deeply involved in leading crucial business relationships, structured collaboration, like ISO 44001, is our lifeline in today's fast-paced and unpredictable

world. Whether we're grabbing opportunities or tackling threats from market conditions or forging long-term delivery partnerships to navigate the shifting geopolitical landscape, our ability to collaborate effectively can truly make or break our success.

Harnessing opportunity and mitigating threat in volatile times

When we work together using a structured collaborative approach like ISO 44001, it ensures that teams across partner organisations stay closely connected to their shared strategic goals. This connection helps us anticipate and understand how external factors might impact our joint efforts. At NATS, our clear purpose,

defined roles, and structured processes empower us to recognise and manage risks – both threats and opportunities. We strive to communicate this clearly within our collaborative partnerships, ensuring everyone stays aligned and works together to create shared value.

We've also discovered that our approach not only boosts productivity, but also builds resilience, and collaborative teams that can adapt swiftly to changing circumstances.

A foundation for enduring delivery partnerships

Structured collaboration is key to maintaining the effective integration of diverse teams, and this highlights why selecting the right partner is so critical, as they should be who you can rely on for support in challenging times.

Experience has shown us that increased volatility often leads to behavioural changes, with individuals and teams potentially reverting to less collaborative methods. In tough times, some may mistakenly believe

that prioritising self-interest and semi-isolation is the best strategy. However, abandoning collaboration means losing the ability to address threats collectively in a volatile environment, as well as the opportunity to revive partnerships when circumstances improve.

For those of us nurturing long-term delivery partnerships, structured

collaboration is essential to maintain consistency and continually create shared value over time. By setting clear expectations, having well-defined values and behaviours, ensuring regular dialogue at all levels, and focusing on continuous improvement, we can avoid complacency and respond effectively to change.

I believe we've created a collaborative environment where we and our partners can openly share insights. We've built strong, enduring relationships that drive continued value creation, and we see joint success despite the ever-changing external landscape. ■

tim.bullock@nats.co.uk



"We've built strong, enduring relationships that drive continued value creation, and we see joint success despite the ever-changing external landscape"



A journey through engagement

GRAHAM

Jim Smyth

GRAHAM has formed a collaborative partnership with the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) across multiple frameworks over several years, including Next Generation Estates Contracts (NGEC), Clyde Commercial Framework (CCF), Crown Commercial Services (CCS) and Defence Estates Optimisation Portfolio (DEOP). Effective collaboration is crucial for the success of these partnerships. ISO 44001 provides a structured approach, facilitating effective management. One of the key phases of the eight-stage lifecycle is the engagement phase, which sets the foundations for successful collaboration.

mechanisms to encourage innovation. This phase ensures all parties are aligned and committed to common goals.

Partner selection

The focus is on identifying and selecting suitable partners for collaboration. This involves identifying potential partners, evaluating capabilities and cultural fit, establishing common goals, selecting partners and updating the relationship management plan based on alignment with collaboration goals.

Working together

Partners collectively establish and maintain successful and sustainable collaborative relationships. This includes defining a governance structure to oversee collaboration, establishing communication procedures to facilitate open dialogue, performance evaluation protocols, managing risk through jointly agreed mitigation strategies and developing processes for continuous improvement.

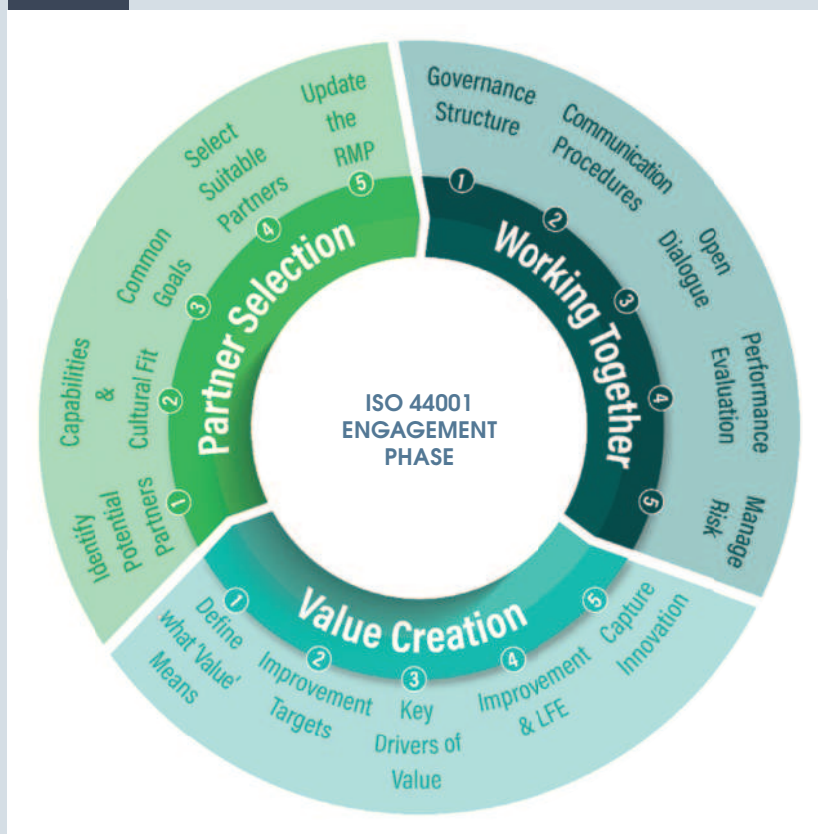
Value creation

This stage focuses on developing added value through collaboration. The key components of this stage include defining what "value" means to partners, establishing improvement targets, identifying key drivers of value, promoting behaviours that support value creation and implementing processes which capture and share innovation, improvement and learning from experience (LFE). These components ensure objectives are met and value is continuously developed over the duration of the partnership and beyond.

Key components of engagement

The engagement phase focuses on establishing benchmarks for collaboration. This includes selecting the right partners; defining mutual objectives, establishing governance structures, management systems and processes for working together; and developing continuous improvement processes and

FIGURE 1





Case study: Clyde Commercial Framework

The Clyde Commercial Framework (CCF) is a ten-year collaborative relationship specifically developed for the unique requirements and operating conditions for HM Naval Base (HMNB) Clyde, including project delivery on high security, regulated sites with complex processes and logistical challenges. The framework agreement outlined DIO objectives, including “to develop a long-term relationship based on mutual trust and co-operation with the framework contractors”.

Kier Construction and GRAHAM formed a joint venture called Kier Graham Defence (KGD). By following the ISO 44001 framework, KGD worked in partnership with DIO and other framework contractors throughout the engagement phase. DIO and all contractors signed a charter setting out the vision, specific goals and principles that everyone agreed on. DIO set ten KPIs at tender stage (such as

collective responsibilities) and invited all parties to progress meetings. This was to ensure awareness of potential issues associated with their projects (for example safety and quality) and provide collaborative assistance.

Partner selection

The tender stage of the CCF included a rigorous evaluation process based on clear selection criteria to assess potential partners' collaboration capabilities, culture and strategic fit. “Collaboration” was a scored element in determining the most economically advantageous tender and involved an independent behavioural expert observing and scoring behaviours.

As part of this process, Kier and GRAHAM board members were interviewed and assessed based on defined selection criteria which focused on collaborative

“Through open and honest communication, joint planning and collective risk management, the ‘art’ of structured collaboration leads to significant success”

“From the outset of the framework, KGD established open communication channels and regularly reviewed their effectiveness throughout”

behaviours to ensure the approach was driven from the senior executives responsible. This was a crucial part of the engagement phase to identify partners who shared similar values and objectives to DIO.

Working together

A senior leadership team (SLT) was created to drive collaborative framework objectives. This included representatives from DIO and the framework contractors – each represented by a framework director, responsible for all framework related activities. SLT representatives were co-located at HMNB Clyde to facilitate relationships, trust and co-operation. The SLT members were named in the framework agreement contract documents and had autonomy from their respective businesses to influence decisions and goals for the framework.

The SLT met regularly from the outset, even prior to projects commencing on site, through structured dialogue sessions to establish and agree collaborative working principles and common goals. These sessions covered framework level activities and key project level delivery areas, such as leadership, communication, management processes, mobilisation, governance structure, commercial management, design;

and delivery, safety, sustainability, regulatory controls, operations, quality and time. Sessions were monitored by an independent behavioural expert to ensure behaviours aligned with the collaboration goals

and culture. From this process “output papers” were produced which were then included in the framework agreement.

Value creation

The framework provided for joint collaborative behavioural training for all parties, based on a set of behavioural descriptors. This helped the integrated teamwork required in NEC’s “spirit of mutual trust and co-operation”, as well as joint NEC training. The framework required face-to-face structured dialogue workshops for each package to discuss and understand its scope, constraints and each party’s issues.

KGD proposed a “procurement lite” approach to facilitate a faster, more efficient process for mini-tender competitions, which was agreed by all parties. This drove efficiency, reducing tender durations and resource requirements for the bidding process.

GRAHAM has supported wider industry collaboration, particularly centred around taking LFE and best practice used on the CCF and sharing it with the wider industry through safety, sustainability and productivity forums such as the Get It Right Initiative (GIRI), other frameworks such as CCS and DEOP, and the Institute of Collaborative Working Group, who facilitate meetings with other contractors and representatives from other industries.

Negotiating common pitfalls of the engagement phase

The structured approach in ISO 44001 on the CCF framework led to projects moving into the construction phase ahead of schedule with clear budgets and quality standards established, demonstrating the power of effective engagement. This approach also helped to mitigate the common pitfalls of the engagement phase which can include:

- **Ineffective partner selection:**

A poor partner evaluation process can lead to unclear objectives and values. The selection process on CCF facilitated a comprehensive assessment of potential partners, and was independently verified, ensuring alignment of culture and strategic fit.

- **Unclear objectives:**

Failing to define clear, mutual objectives can result in misunderstandings, reduced performance and decreased productivity. During the engagement phase, DIO set out clear goals and SMART targets that all parties agreed on. These were included in the framework charter.

- **Poor communication:**

In the absence of open and transparent communication, trust between partners can diminish. From the outset of the framework, KGD established open communication channels and regularly reviewed their effectiveness throughout.

- **Undefined governance structures:**

Well defined governance structures, roles, responsibilities and accountability are essential for effective decision-making. This was established from the start of the CCF, which facilitated an integrated



Our people make us unique



Our work connects communities,
builds a better future and transforms
and maintains the places where we
live, work and relax.



Let's collaborate.





collaborative approach.

- **Recognising cultural differences:** Difficulties can arise if cultural differences between partners are not fully considered, and this can lead to an adversarial culture. By establishing a SLT comprising partner representatives and engaging an independent behavioural expert, this potential pitfall was addressed very early on in the framework.
- **Inadequate risk management:** Inadequate identification and management of risks can lead to significant issues later in the collaboration. On CCF, the procedures for assessing, managing and mitigating risks were established and

agreed during the start of the engagement phase.

- **Not considering continuous improvement:** If continuous improvement is not considered with clear processes to progressively refine and maintain effectiveness, then the potential benefits of collaboration are not achieved. Continuous Improvement and LFE were crucial elements of the output papers developed for CCF.

Conclusion

The engagement phase of ISO 44001 (partner selection, working together and value creation), is crucial to successful collaboration. By selecting the right partners, defining clear

objectives and creating effective governance structures, partners can lay foundations for long-term relationships that produce mutual benefits.

Through open and honest communication, joint planning and collective risk management, the “art” of structured collaboration leads to significant success. Embracing innovations and best practices further enhances potential for achieving shared goals. This journey through the engagement phase, has helped to unlock the full potential of partnerships, leading to business growth, enhanced performance, innovation and continuous improvement. ■

jim.smyth@graham.co.uk

“By selecting the right partners, defining clear objectives and creating effective governance structures, partners can lay foundations for long-term relationships that produce mutual benefits”



Collaboration is key to contested logistics success

LEIDOS

Simon Hutchings OBE

In a world of renewed great power competition, collaboration is not just a choice — it's a necessity. Nowhere is that more evident than in the evolving AUKUS partnership, where the complexity of modern defence logistics demands unprecedented unity between nations, militaries and industries. Leidos, the UK Ministry of Defence's (MOD) strategic defence logistics partner, believes collaboration is the cornerstone of resilience in the contested logistic environments of today and tomorrow.

In its recent white paper, *Achieving Resilience in a Contested Logistic Environment*,¹ Leidos outlines why an integrated, collaborative approach across the AUKUS nations – Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States – will be critical to sustaining operational credibility and capability in the Indo-Pacific and beyond.

AUKUS represents a generational opportunity to create a mutually supporting, interoperable logistic ecosystem, but success will depend on deeper joint ventures between defence and industry, and stronger data and information-sharing architectures.

While AUKUS Pillar 1 focuses on submarine capabilities, it is Pillar 2 – the development of advanced technologies and innovation – where Leidos is most aligned. With a proven track record in transforming the UK MOD's supply chains and delivering cloud-based logistic data solutions, Leidos brings the expertise, infrastructure and cross-national presence needed to lead collaborative integration efforts.

Leidos counsels that resilient logistics must now be treated as a core capability in itself. Lessons from global competitors, such as China, demonstrate the value of embedding industry at the heart of military strategy – something

AUKUS partners must emulate to stay ahead.

Leidos proposes a five-point approach centred on increased collaboration: supply chain adaptiveness, shared data ecosystems, and a logistics workforce that is trained, empowered, and integrated across all three nations. With its presence embedded in each AUKUS country, Leidos is uniquely positioned to drive this vision forward.

Strategic deterrence today relies as much on the credibility

of logistics as it does on military hardware. To deliver AUKUS objectives, we must act now to develop cohesive, combined logistic architectures that reflect the speed and scale of the modern threat environment.

Leidos is ready to meet that challenge – not just as a partner, but as a proven leader in contested logistics. With the right collaboration, AUKUS can set the global benchmark for allied defence co-operation in the 21st century. ■

www.leidos.com



¹ You can read the paper here: <https://www.leidos.com/company/global/uk-europe/logistics-thought-leadership>



Mastering the engagement phase

LEONARDO

Alvaro Esteves

Collaboration, when executed effectively, fosters innovation, drives efficiency and creates long-term value. However, building successful, resilient partnerships requires more than just goodwill and shared intent. It demands structure, an agreed process, discipline, and a clear roadmap.

One of the most critical stages in the collaboration lifecycle is the engagement phase, since it lays the groundwork for successful partnerships.

It encompasses three key areas:

- 1 **Partner selection:** ensuring cultural alignment and compatibility.
- 2 **Working together:** establishing trust, governance, and shared processes.
- 3 **Value creation:** moving beyond transactional relationships to drive innovation and long-term benefits.

Mastering these aspects is essential for organisations looking to turn collaboration into a strategic advantage. At Leonardo, we have learned from experience how important it is to have a proper engagement phase – specifically,

how important it is to have selected the right partner and how important it is to share some key cultural values.

Partner selection: Making the right choices

As mentioned, selecting the right partner is a pivotal step that can determine the success or failure of a collaboration. From experience a partnership was formed based on convenience or short-term goals, it was painful and not successful. For a sustainable, structured, advantageous collaboration we must select our partnerships in the correct way, and the process within the ISO 44001 provides us as a business the right structural approach and guiding principles to successfully deploy such resilient partnerships.

Therefore, to choose the right partner, organisations should consider:

- **Strategic alignment:** Does the partner share similar values, objectives, and commitment to collaboration? Misalignment can lead to conflicts and inefficiencies.
- **Capabilities and competencies:** Does the partner bring unique strengths that complement your organisation's needs? A successful collaboration should enhance capabilities rather than duplicate them.
- **Cultural fit:** Beyond technical competencies, cultural compatibility is essential. Differences in communication styles, decision-making processes, or risk tolerance can impact collaboration.
- **Risk and reward balance:** Conducting a thorough risk assessment ensures both parties understand potential challenges and rewards, allowing for realistic expectations and risk-sharing mechanisms.

A well thought partner evaluation process, including due diligence and joint capability assessments, can help organisations make informed decisions and avoid costly misalignments. Or worse, engaging on bids or projects where a long-term marriage can end in a sour divorce.

Working together: building trust

Once the right partner is selected, the focus should shift to establishing a working relationship based on trust, transparency, and governance. Without these elements, even well-intentioned collaborations can falter.

Key considerations:

- **Clear roles and responsibilities:** Defining who does what prevents duplication of effort,



COLLABORATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR POLICING AND SECURITY

Part of Leonardo's 'Secure Digital Platform' solutions – automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) systems provide law enforcement with dependable, proven results. With a capacity of 40 billion reads and 80 billion images, Leonardo is a proud collaborative partner providing Enterprise Operations Centre (EOC) software as the core of the National ANPR Service (NAS) for policing and law enforcement.

Our systems have been deployed to twenty-five countries around the world, are in daily use by 3000 Italian Carabinieri and police patrol cars, and support more than 1000 agencies across the United States and worldwide.



uk.leonardo.com

 **LEONARDO**
TECHNOLOGY FOR A SAFER FUTURE

enhances efficiency, and ensures accountability.

- **Open and transparent communication:** Establishing structured communication channels fosters trust and enables proactive problem-solving. Regular meetings, joint reporting, and shared digital platforms can enhance transparency.
- **Joint decision-making:** Collaboration should not be one-sided. Decision-making structures should encourage shared input and ensure that all parties have a voice.
- **Conflict resolution mechanisms:** No collaboration is without challenges. A predefined conflict resolution process – whether through mediation, escalation frameworks, or independent arbitration – can help prevent disputes from derailing the partnership.

In Leonardo, we value a well-defined governance framework, for our collaborative programmes, aligned with ISO 44001 principles, assuring the structure needed to manage the relationship effectively while allowing flexibility for adaptation and growth.

Value creation: Moving beyond transactional relationships

It is not just about working together – it is about creating new value that neither party could achieve alone. While many partnerships focus on operational efficiencies, it appears that the most successful collaborations prioritise innovation and long-term impact.

To drive value creation, it is important to:

- **Identify joint opportunities:** Exploring new markets, co-developing products, or enhancing service offerings can unlock significant benefits for both partners.
- **Encourage knowledge sharing:** Open exchange of expertise, research, and best practices leads to innovation and continuous improvement.
- **Measure and adapt:** Establishing clear performance indicators ensures progress is tracked, successes are celebrated, and areas for improvement are identified. A collaborative relationship should evolve over time to remain relevant and impactful.

The goal of value creation is to move beyond transactional partnerships and develop relationships that drive mutual growth. It's within Leonardo's strategy to have a culture of continuous improvement and innovation, whilst sustaining long-term collaboration success.

Conclusion: The art of engagement in collaboration

Collaboration is a journey, not a destination. The engagement phase – from selecting the right partner to working effectively together and driving value creation – is fundamental to long-term success.

Leonardo believes in following a structured approach grounded in ISO 44001 and focusing on trust, governance, and shared value, so that we transform partnerships into engines of growth and innovation.

Ultimately, the art of collaboration lies not just in what organisations do, but in how they do it. When partnerships are built with the right foundations, they become more than just strategic alliances – they become catalysts for sustainable success. ■

alvaro.esteves@leonardo.com



LEONARDO

Craig Sharp

Importance of a good exit strategy when it's one of our own

Strong collaborative relationships rely on the right leadership and capable people. Too often, businesses do not always

effectively consider or manage the impact on those involved when these people leave our organisation. We frequently focus on the operational impact, but losing an employee can affect the performance and morale of the team and colleagues left behind.

Triggering a "good" exit strategy has been crucial in maintaining continuity as Leonardo's long-standing ICW Ambassador, Anita Broadhead, has moved organisations after years of advocating collaboration and undertaking work internally and on behalf of ICW.

Whilst Anita's legacy will live on, I'm honoured to take up the role as the new Leonardo Ambassador within our Cyber and Security Solutions Division.

My key takeaways from the handover are:

Enabling conversations: Relationships are made between people who continue to think and feel even when the structured relationship ends. People want to be heard, and well considered conversations, offering an opportunity for people to express emotion, leads to a positive experience for those involved.

Celebrate achievements: The opportunity to recognise partners for their achievements should not be missed and is the key to honouring the contribution of your partner and the relationship itself.

Understand and mark the end: Consider what is an appropriate ending for your relationship. Endings must be handled with care if we hope to embrace fresh starts and new beginnings. Getting it wrong can create powerful, challenging dynamics that continue to affect us, influencing our future experiences and interactions.

On behalf of Leonardo I would like to thank Anita. I embrace this opportunity with a deep sense of purpose. I look forward to working alongside ambassadors, stakeholders, and passionate individuals who are committed to the vision of collaboration. ■
craig.sharp@leonardo.com



Working together to deliver lasting benefits

EMCOR UK

Steven Dolan

To illustrate the impact of our collaborative approach, I would like to share a case study from one of our key customer accounts, a leading organisation in the defence sector, which we have secured for over 30 years. Throughout these years, we have successfully deployed our collaborative strategies to drive retention, create value, and foster trust, resulting in multiple contract extensions and renewals.

This relationship began with EMCOR UK delivering hard services in a highly regulated technical and critical environment, but has evolved into a strategic collaboration that has spanned three decades. The key to this success has been our commitment to the principles of ISO 44001, particularly Stage 5: working together. The account is certified to ISO 4001 through BSI.

Central to our approach are our Key Account Management (KAM) and Voice of the Customer (VoC) programmes. These initiatives have been instrumental in enhancing Stage 5 of ISO 44001.

Our KAM programme ensures that our customer's needs are consistently met and exceeded. This involves regular meetings, performance reviews, and strategic planning sessions

to align our services with the customer's evolving requirements. By maintaining open lines of communication and fostering a culture of mutual respect, we have built a strong foundation of trust.

Valuable insights

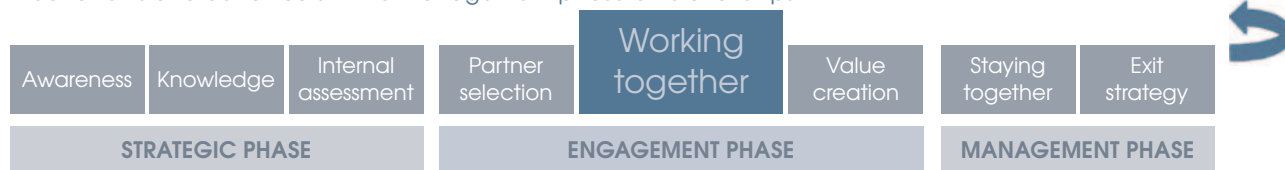
The VoC programme complements our KAM efforts by gathering feedback and measuring the maturity of our collaborative initiatives. This programme provides valuable insights into our customer's satisfaction levels and highlights areas for improvement. By acting on this feedback, we continuously enhance our services and demonstrate our commitment to the customer's success.

One of the most significant outcomes of our collaborative



FOCUSING ON THE MOST EFFECTIVE APPROACH

Mechanisms and behaviours in the management phase of relationships



approach was the extension of our contract multiple times over the 30-year period. This longevity is a testament to the value we created through strategic collaboration. By working closely with our customer, we were able to

identify opportunities for innovation and cost savings, which further strengthened our partnership.

Customer's trust

For example, we collaborated on several energy efficiency projects that not only reduced operational costs but also supported the customer's sustainability goals. These initiatives included the implementation

of advanced building management systems, energy audits, and the adoption of renewable energy sources. Our proactive approach to sustainability not only delivered tangible benefits but also reinforced our customer's trust in our capabilities.

Moreover, our collaborative efforts extended beyond

operational improvements. We worked together on community engagement initiatives, supporting local charities and promoting health and wellness programmes. These activities not only enhanced our customer's corporate social responsibility profile but also fostered a sense of shared purpose and commitment.

In conclusion, our experience demonstrates that the principles of ISO 44001, particularly **Stage 5: working together**, are instrumental in driving long-term success in collaborative business relationships. By leveraging key programmes such as Key Account Management and Voice of the Customer, we have been able to create value, foster trust, and achieve sustained growth. This case study serves as a powerful example of how strategic collaboration can transform business relationships and deliver lasting benefits for all stakeholders. ■ steven.dolan@emcoruk.com

"By maintaining open lines of communication and fostering a culture of mutual respect, we have built a strong foundation of trust"



Steven Dolan

EMCOR UK

The transformative power of effective collaboration

In today's dynamic business environment, collaboration has become a cornerstone for achieving sustainable success. The case study above aims to illuminate the principles of ISO 44001,

specifically focusing on Stage 5: working together. As an expert with 30 years of experience in the facilities management industry, I have witnessed firsthand the transformative power of effective collaboration.

ISO 44001 provides a structured framework for

collaborative business relationships, emphasising the importance of mutual benefit, trust, and strategic alignment. Stage 5 of this standard is pivotal as it encapsulates the essence of working together to achieve common goals. This stage involves the practical implementation of collaborative strategies, ensuring that all parties are aligned and committed to the partnership's success.

The case study showcases just one example of how adherence to ISO 44001 principles can drive significant value for all stakeholders. By sharing insights and practical examples, I aim to inspire organisations to embrace collaborative working as a strategic imperative. This approach not only enhances operational efficiency but also fosters innovation, resilience, and long-term success. ■ steven.dolan@emcoruk.com



EMCOR^{UK}

Innovating workplaces,
engineering excellence


Delivering Facilities Management services in complex and regulated environments

Find out how your organisation
can benefit from working with
EMCOR UK by visiting:

www.emcoruk.com

a better world at work



Scan for all the
latest insights,
follow us on 

EMCOR^{UK}



Embracing collaboration to thrive together

COSTAIN

Victoria Groom

At Costain, “being collaborative” is one of our core behaviours and is fundamental to how we work. Our policies and processes fuel collaborative behaviour to ensure that when we go to work, our efforts are grounded in sound core principles that recognise the value of true collaboration at any stage of the relationship lifecycle. Our focus here will be on the approach, mechanisms and behaviours that have proved most effective during the management phase of relationships. We detail some key learning, and share what has made a meaningful difference to our relationships, specifically in relation to how we stay together: but in fact, it’s more than that; it’s not simply just staying together, it’s taking the necessary steps to ensure that we thrive together.

Setting the scene for collaboration to thrive

As the structure of the standard would suggest, in order to collaborate well, all parties must truly understand the ground rules and make firm and real commitments to working together. This involves investing time and effort in thrashing out the detail of the commitments in practical terms and fully understanding and embracing how everyone will live by these rules. The strategic and engagement phases are critical for the relationships to thrive and must not be underestimated in the collaborative relationship lifecycle. Without these building blocks, it’s unlikely that collaboration will thrive, at least not to its full potential.

One key observation is that the engagement phase is iterative. Without dwelling too much on this phase, to ensure that the relationship remains as healthy as it can be, plans must be strategically revisited so that all parties understand the benefits of working together and the value that’s being created. This needs to feel like something that is alive, with a strong heartbeat, eyes wide open and an appetite that will sustain it. The only

COSTAIN VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS



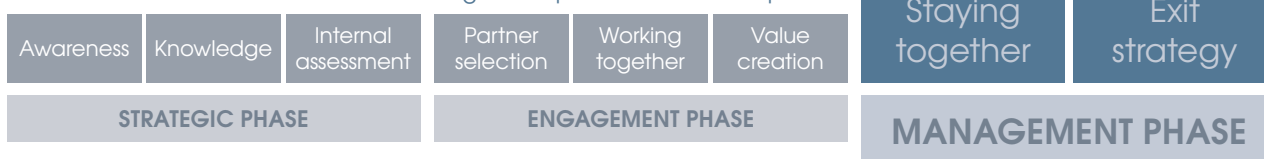
way to achieve this is by keeping it alive with regular and meaningful conversation and interaction. How

this happens should in fact be captured as part of understanding your working together efforts; but



FOCUSING ON THE MOST EFFECTIVE APPROACH

Mechanisms and behaviours in the management phase of relationships



making sure that this regular health check of relationship expectations must be a significant feature of your approach, so it is worth taking time to ensure that this is really working effectively.

Delivery of joint objectives and analysis of results

As with all collaboration, whether formal or informal, organisational or relational, a key enabler to being able to thrive relates to understanding what's in it for the people and organisations involved. Establishing a mechanism for making sure that all parties can regularly recognise and realise the value that they are getting from the collaboration they are fostering should remain a high priority. The detail of this, should all be agreed within the strategic and engagement phases with strategic objectives and performance management regime. However, the reality of making this happen in the real world when real world pressures are at play, takes dedication and commitment. Taking the time to ensure that

whatever structure or format we take to jointly review performance against our objectives is an opportunity for people to see that they are getting what they need and will make this process more effective.

The joint performance reviews were most effective when accompanied by an energetic collaborative conversation that provides real improvement or betterment to be identified, with collaborative decision making at its core. If these reviews become disconnected from value and the behaviour of attendees is not collaborative, the dedication and commitment that people have to them can swiftly subside.

Where joint performance management and analysis of results have worked effectively, we have identified operational efficiencies such as reduced duplication and optimised resource use, leading to cost savings. In addition, this approach supports improved trust and transparency, key behavioural enablers to effective collaboration.

Collaborative performance management has identified innovation and continuous improvement from a joint perspective.

Managing risk, opportunity and issues proactively

Risk management is a crucial component of joint relationship performance arrangements, and ensuring an open and transparent approach to risk reporting is maintained during the relationship management phase, is key. The risks associated with the health of a collaborative relationship should be integrated where possible with operational risk management. Where operational outputs are impacted by the health and strength of a collaborative relationship and its effectiveness, it makes sense to review these risks in line with operational matters and therefore ensure that the appropriate mitigation measures are being implemented and the right routes for risk escalation are being identified and taken. By jointly managing and sharing risk, it is possible to anticipate challenges before they emerge,

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND RELATIONSHIP HEALTH

JOINT PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT STAGE

Behavioural expectations to support strong relationship health

1 Joint development of performance goals and targets

- Listen
- Be open and honest
- Challenge constructively
- Make decisions all parties will advocate
- Demonstrate alignment

2 Joint communication of performance goals and targets

- Communicate real value
- Ensure understanding
- Listen to feedback
- Enable connection
- Enable performance

3 Joint review of performance against goals and targets

- Show respect
- Be curious; learn together
- Challenge; explore opportunities to improve together
- Be caring; demonstrate you care about performance

4 Joint performance improvement approach

- Enable accountability
- Be courageous – you might not always get it right
- Celebrate success

effectively respond to disruptions, and ensure long-term stability.

It's important to reflect that thriving together does not mean that there are no difficult periods in relationships. Performance expectations not being met, changing environments impacting

conversations to be had, there is alignment in relation to the practical steps for resolution, how individuals should treat each other during the process and behaviour expectations throughout.

Monitoring behaviour and indicators of trust

In relation to behaviour, structured collaboration is no different to any other type of relationship where there is a reliance on one another to deliver a joint outcome; a marital relationship, a friendship, a project. For us to work well together, we all need to have sound

understanding of the things that we have to deliver and specific behaviours that we are required to exhibit consistently that will help us collectively deliver the outcomes required. It is important

for behavioural expectations to be explored jointly, as this enables people to have enough time to really reflect on individual performance and quickly identify the behavioural gaps that need to be addressed.

Costain's collaborative behaviours programme has ensured that, through competency assessment, behavioural observation and feedback, dedicated training targeting leadership and more broadly across the business, along with behavioural surveys and improvement plans, we have been able to create an environment and culture where collaboration is understood and strived for as part of all relationships. Getting the balance of a mature behavioural approach aligned with the structured approach of the standard has allowed our collaborative relationships to thrive. ■

victoria.groom@costain.com

"Collaborative performance management has identified innovation and continuous improvement from a joint perspective"

operational arrangements, or behaviours not being right, are common challenges faced by any working relationship. However, the structure of the standard means that when there are difficult

Pushing the boundaries of collaboration as ICW Ambassadors



Victoria Groom

As an Ambassador Member of the Institute for Collaborative Working (ICW), Costain continues to build relationships and capability in the collaboration space to advance collaborative best practices across the infrastructure sector.

COSTAIN

Through our involvement in ICW and the many associated forums and networks, we are advocating not only for structured collaboration but also actively shaping the partnership-driven projects of the future.

Continued commitment to working better together:

Throughout 2024 and into 2025, Costain has reinforced its commitment to collaboration by leveraging the ISO 44001 standard. Our approach has seen us enhance our partnerships across infrastructure projects, fostering stronger connections with clients, suppliers, and industry stakeholders, delivering real success across our project portfolio that extends beyond policy into real-world impact. Our structured approach remains effective and adaptable to industry change due to the regular internal and external monitoring and audit regime that has helped to drive real continual improvement and maturity in how we manage relationships.

Knowledge sharing beyond ISO 44001 compliance:

Costain has taken a proactive role in sharing our collaborative expertise across the industry and also

fully embraces the opportunity to learn and grow through engaging in forums and networks for a rich conversation with practical implications. Through formal training initiatives and informal knowledge-sharing networks, we have continued to provide valuable insights into best practices for integrated teamwork, and embedded learning into our practices.

Sustainability and collaboration: In addition to project-based teamwork, Costain has embedded collaborative principles into our sustainability and carbon reduction efforts. Verification to PAS 2080:2023¹, a leading standard for carbon management, highlights our commitment to the future of sustainable infrastructure and our leadership in integrating environmental targets within our supply chain collaborations. By sharing data and best practices with partners, Costain is driving collective carbon reduction goals across the infrastructure sector, improving our collective understanding of carbon emissions and informing decision-making as we create a sustainable future.

The future of collaboration at Costain: Looking ahead, Costain will continue to embrace the "art of collaboration" as a key enabler to unlocking long-term value for all stakeholders. ■

victoria.groom@costain.com

¹ Costain achieves leading standard for carbon management [costain.com/media/press-releases/2025/costain-achieves-leading-standard-for-carbon-management](https://www.costain.com/media/press-releases/2025/costain-achieves-leading-standard-for-carbon-management)



The supply chain's pathway to net zero

BSI

Thomas Harrison

With sustainability and net zero becoming an increasingly important topic for organisations, more and more commercial decisions will be made using sustainability as a differentiator. Our clients are all under increasing pressure to demonstrate not just their own sustainability credentials, but the environmental impacts of their spend and investments throughout their entire value chain.



With supply chains that cross continents and contain hundreds of businesses of different sizes and scales, what can organisations at the top of the chain do to influence the importance of sustainability throughout the chain?

Organisations that are adapting to sustainability are showing that deep down, they are committed to support their client and stakeholders' values. And there is still a first mover advantage for those who want to make products or deliver services in a new, sustainable way.

However, in a recent BSI survey, 62% of chief operating officers say they don't know where to start on

their journey to net zero, and 41% cite lack of industry collaboration as a barrier to reaching net zero.

The challenge

Even for those organisations that have made their first few steps on the journey, reaching net zero is becoming something of a reality check as they realise how much work is still to be done.

Most organisations started their net zero journeys with projects that sat entirely within their domains of control. Changes such as switching to renewable energy, improving building insulation and deploying electric vehicles. Whilst these have

delivered strong, tangible results, the majority (80%+) of the carbon impact of an organisation usually sits outside of direct control and within their Scope 3 emissions.

Scope 3 and the supply chain

An organisation's carbon footprint is calculated by combining the direct emissions and energy usage (Scope 1+2) and indirect emissions from up and down the value chain that aren't directly controlled by the organisation (Scope 3)

What this means is that the carbon footprints of all organisations involved in delivering a product or service are intrinsically linked. It will be impossible for an



*“The majority (80%+) of the carbon impact of an organisation usually sits outside of direct control and within their Scope 3 emissions...
It will be impossible for an organisation to fully decarbonise in isolation”*

organisation to fully decarbonise in isolation.

Scope 3 is the area where BSI has seen most struggle with being able to calculate and review accurate data. Mostly due to the difficulty in collecting data from disparate sources, in varying formats and with different methodologies or even as simple as a lack of awareness and understanding of carbon within the supply chain.

To be able to accurately assess our footprints and understand the areas needed for intervention, high quality, reliable data is crucial.

High quality data

Manually collecting, formatting and analysing data for every supplier is so time consuming and cost prohibitive as to be

effectively impossible.

So how do you ensure that data is created and defined the same way? That’s where standards come into play. Working with your supply chain to raise awareness of the importance of data being produced according to agreed and defined standards helps improve not just your own carbon visibility, but that of the smaller businesses within your supply chain as they better understand their own impacts and emissions.

Gaining full visibility of carbon emissions will also allow organisations to understand what areas can be decarbonised through changing methods of working and in what areas they can’t decarbonise without new technologies and innovation.

Collaboration for net zero

As we make more reductions in emissions and progress towards net zero, the harder it’s going to become to reduce the final percentages of our emissions.

The closer we are to our 2050 goal; the scale and frequency of industrywide decarbonisation



efforts will have to increase. And this form of collective action and responsibility will only succeed with collaboration at the heart of it.

Using standards to support

your net zero journey provides a comprehensive framework written in a common language that can be shared up and down the supply chain. Reducing duplication and

waste and increasing the amount of time and resources that can be dedicated to making real, tangible change and benefits to a business.

Standards such as ISO 14064-1 provide an internationally recognised framework for accurately defining your organisational scope of emissions and calculating your carbon footprint. The ISO Net Zero Guidelines (otherwise known as IWA 42) provides guiding principles and recommendations for a carbon reduction plan – reducing confusion and driving progress towards a common approach to net zero.

The Guidelines provide a common reference for understanding and planning for net zero for organisations across all sectors, sizes, and jurisdictions.

By working in a collaborative, standardised, way, organisations can increase the pace on the pathway to net zero, raise up the organisations within their value chains and help save the planet. ■

thomas.harrison@bsigroup.com



BSI

Simon Healey

*“Using standards to support your net zero journey provides a comprehensive framework written in a common language **that can be shared up and down the supply chain**”*

Collective effort is central to a sustainable world

In a constantly changing world, the only certainty is uncertainty. Modern business leaders don’t just have to deal with the challenges of how to run a profitable, resilient company, but also how to handle some of the most significant changes and disruption that humanity has ever faced.

The advent of AI is changing our plans for the future, and the transition to a low carbon net zero economy is meaning that we cannot rely on the business practices of the past.

No single organisation has all the skills to answer the questions these situations pose. But collectively, across

all our organisations large and small, these pockets of expertise are available and ready to be used to create the solutions required.

We need to work together to share these skills and expertise and that’s exactly what’s at the heart of collaboration and the very ethos of BSI.

Collaboration brings stability in times of uncertainty. I look forward to continuing to work not just with the ICW team, but so many of the other Ambassador companies as we all drive together towards our common goals and accelerate our progress to a more sustainable world. ■

simon.healey@bsigroup.com



Turning a vision into reality

NETWORK RAIL

Stephen Blakey FRICS, FCInstCES, FICW

Network Rail and its 48,000 staff, operate, maintain, renew and enhance Britain's rail infrastructure, including tracks, electrification, signals, bridges, tunnels, level crossings, viaducts and 21 major stations. Since 2011 it has shown industry leadership in sustained collaborative working, a key feature of its £43bn five-year investment programme. But turning a collaborative vision into reality whilst delivering a multi-billion-pound portfolio in a complex organisation poses significant challenges. In this article, as Strategic Commercial Director at Network Rail, I share my insights on the key enablers for sustained collaborative capability.

For the rail sector, collaborative working is a key facet in our pursuit of safe, timely, efficient investment delivery that is value for money to our tax paying passengers, adds social, economic and environmental value and instils stakeholder confidence in the capabilities of our people, process and systems.

But the environment in which we seek to create consistent collaborative working is one of change. And in the fourteenth year of our collaborative journey, we are entering a period where the tectonic plates of the rail sector are moving inexorably towards a new industry-wide operating model and the creation of Great British Railways.

And whilst the reasons for industry change are compelling, consistency is important when it comes to sustaining a "business as usual" capability for collaborative working. It requires constant cultural leadership supported by a stable framework of people, process and systems. Bring these aspects together within your business and you create a mature in-house collaborative capability. Extend and integrate them with your suppliers through progressive

forms of contract, and you create a "collaborative eco-system". We generally refer to such eco-systems as alliances.

But to be effective and sustainable, collaborative capabilities need to be reciprocal, which means establishing that all important in-house capability and becoming an "intelligent client".

In 2011, Network Rail set out to be such a client and lead the development of the rail sector's collaborative capability, securing BS 11000 and ISO 44001 accreditation in 2012 and 2017 respectively.

The Magnificent Seven

This required creating an "in-house" capability, which was built on seven key enablers. Together these engaged both stakeholders and practitioners and brought consistency by regularising corporate processes, systems and practitioner capabilities:

- 1 **Leadership:** actively commit to and constantly role model collaborative values and behaviours to set the cultural tone.
- 2 **Stewardship:** appoint a head of profession with responsibility for setting the competency

standards and the assurance regime of people, process and systems.

- 3 **People:** deploy targeted collaborative leadership and practitioner competency assessment and training. Mentor and develop subject matter experts and champions to support, guide and form the heart of an emerging "community of practice" across the business.
- 4 **Process:** deploy a suite of processes, procedures, templates and toolkits embedded in corporate information management systems to establish pan-business consistency.
- 5 **Systems:** establish connectivity across the business via effective systems that promote pan-business consistency, effective learning and the demonstration of value creation.
- 6 **Assurance:** develop a self-assurance regime to assess corporate maturity, capability, examples of excellence and areas for improvement; integrating these with external assessments to preserve and expand any third-party certified status.
- 7 **Constant engagement and communication:** actively promote awareness, adoption and advocacy of collaboration across the business, recognising expertise, highlighting success and learning from our failures, sharing both with equal enthusiasm.

Setting the culture through values and behaviours

Whilst each of the seven is a key component to success, at the

NETWORK RAIL VALUES



EMPOWERED TO ACT



ALWAYS SAFE



CARE ABOUT PEOPLE



TEAMWORK IS KEY

NETWORK RAIL BEHAVIOURS

CHALLENGING

We challenge ourselves and others to keep improving

COLLABORATIVE

We work together and bring out each other's strengths

ACCOUNTABLE

Rather than waiting for others to tackle challenges, we step up ourselves

CUSTOMER DRIVEN

We run the railway for passengers and freight users

heart of establishing a collaborative culture is the need to define what's culturally important through corporate values and behaviours. In addition to setting the cultural tone, you need to equip your people – across all managerial tiers – with the competencies, skills and attributes needed to work collaboratively in a consistent

way. Teamwork and being collaborative feature in our corporate values and behaviours (see above).

Network Rail has consistently placed emphasis on our corporate values and behaviours, inviting all employees to role model them, seeking regular peer and colleague feedback on the degree to which these values and behaviours are

evident in how they go about their daily activities. We have defined the terms and characteristics of our values and behaviours, which in turn are supported by mature training and development material. For our practitioners and managers, the characteristics of being collaborative are defined in our Collaborative Behaviours as below.

COLLABORATIVE BEHAVIOUR

Leading self

Acting as one team

- You work well with others from different backgrounds and invite and value diverse ideas
- You know that people work differently, so you listen and help teammates, praising good ideas and sharing your own to quickly solve issues

Driving continuous improvement

- You don't simply go with the flow, you challenge existing ways of working, going out of your way to improve them
- You balance your own views with everyone else's
- You don't stand still in your thinking, you update your ideas when things change around you

Leading team/activity

Acting as one team

- You bring people together as one team
- You look out for, listen to, support and challenge teammates and ask them to stand up for their decisions
- You make work inclusive, seek out and celebrate everyone's successes, pooling ideas in and outside of your team to solve challenges quickly and help everyone move ahead together

Driving continuous improvement

- You challenge yourself and others to improve services, adding value
- You set an example for continuous improvement and help your team and others see the benefits of change
- You're open to new ideas, talking to others inside and outside your team, even if they are quieter and less visible
- You are always looking for new approaches and adapt your thinking to suit any situation

Leading leaders

Acting as one team

- You get results through partnering with your team departments and beyond
- You're skilled in managing individual and team dynamics and bring people together around common goals
- You promote a team ethic, looking out for and celebrating those who perform well and represent our values
- You collaborate and share resources to deliver key business goals

Driving continuous improvement

- You constructively challenge senior managers to drive improvements, encouraging others to speak out
- You give clear reasons for the changes you make and help others to see the opportunities this creates
- You partner with diverse business areas, encouraging different views and best practice
- You evolve your department's plans to keep pace with internal and external changes



By defining the behavioural/ collaborative characteristics of our people and equipping them with the associated competencies, we are defining the characteristics and capabilities of our organisation; who we are and how we want to “trade” with colleagues, stakeholders and suppliers.

Being collaborative is also enshrined in our Corporate Policy which states: *“We will foster a culture of collaboration to build and maintain effective relationships across our supply chain as well as internally, across stakeholders, functional teams and disciplines.”*

Learning and sharing our experience

Our commitment to leading our sector includes an obligation to highlight our successes and share what we have learned, bringing structured continuous improvement not only to our business, but to stakeholders and our broader supply chain. In 2018 Network Rail published its view of the 12 key enablers to successful alliances:

- 1 Robust business case addressing strategic, delivery and commercial benefits.
- 2 A clear value for money statement confirming budget and performance expectations with an output-based specification defining what’s to be done, by when, leaving the “how it’s to be done” to the discretion

of the alliance.

- 3 One single alliance agreement signed by all parties to establish joint and several liability to aligned objectives and defined collaborative behaviours.
- 4 Alignment with and certified to ISO 44001 with alliances working to the standard’s structure and terminology to develop their collaborative culture, people, process and systems.
- 5 Creating an alliance identity – branding, values and ethics – with individuals committed to the objectives and values of the alliance rather than that of the parent organisation.
- 6 Clear accountability and governance via a robust framework that ensures the alliance is held to account for effective governance, risk and performance management regimes.
- 7 Partners selected through an emphasis on capability, leadership and behaviours (rather than price) to create the right supply chain eco-system.
- 8 Establish an effective collaborative culture through recruitment of strong, deft and effective leaders to create one high performing integrated leadership team.
- 9 Create a high performing culture through an emphasis on promoting and maintaining values and behaviours, and

developing, measuring and maintaining a collaborative culture.

- 10 Establish a fully integrated structure of people, process and systems via co-located teams, working to common and aligned objectives via a single suite of processes and systems, with integrated and transparent data supported by collaboration enhancing technology such as BIM.
- 11 Regular performance measurement and improvement via a regime that in addition to delivery, commercial and VFM performance metrics, measures and reviews behaviours.
- 12 Foster innovation and continuous improvement via a framework and culture that promotes and rewards structured continuous improvement and innovation.

It’s characteristics such as these that were key factors in Network Rail’s £4bn Train Control Systems Framework receiving ICWs Public Sector Collaborative Excellence Award for 2024.

Summary

The rail industry is a dynamic environment faced with a perennial challenge; the safe, consistent, predictable and timely delivery of “more for less”, fault and dispute-free, in a way that puts our tax paying passengers first, is sustainable to our supply chain and environment



and instils stakeholder confidence in the capability of our people, process and systems.

We know that in-house collaborative working capabilities can be built through a seven-point strategy that is anchored in defined values and behaviours embodied by competent people, supported by effective process and systems. And that through progressive supply chain engagement and good stewardship

of collaborative forms of contract, we can meet this challenge.

As the rail sector goes through reorganisation, collaborative working will be more important than ever and Network Rail will continue its cross-industry engagement with suppliers, professional institutions and stakeholders, extolling the benefits of collaboration.

Turning a vision of collaborative working into a sustainable reality in

an ever-changing and sometimes volatile world requires constant cultural leadership across all tiers of your business, professional competency of your people, effective processes and agile systems. And anchoring collaboration in your values and behaviours, as well as in policy, is key to building a cultural consistency that allows collaboration to flourish. ■

stephen.m.blakey@networkrail.co.uk



Collaboration: a blend of art and science

NETWORK RAIL

Stephen Blakey FRICS, FCIInstCES, FICW

The theme of this year's *The Partner*, "the art of collaboration", immediately throws a spotlight on a key question: Is collaboration an "art" anchored in values and behaviours, or is it a "science", defined by process and systems, and can it ever really be seen as a profession in its own right?

Many individuals and organisations continue to grapple with this question. Some see it as a style, some a core personal value and others a behaviour. Indeed, within Network Rail, being collaborative has been one of four established behaviours for some time, alongside teamwork (aka working collaboratively), one of our four corporate values. And we're no longer "alone", as there is a growing body of research indicating that collaboration is now the number one value across leading UK businesses. However, that same research highlights challenges in making it real and sustained.

I've always believed that the competencies required to build an organisation's collaborative capabilities are embodied in the interplay between *people, process, systems and culture*, with the heartbeat of that capability being *the people* and their professional competencies.

Historically, professional competencies focused on the consistent application of technical knowledge aligned to subject-matter-specific processes and language. However, for some years now, progressive institutions and organisations such as Network Rail have placed increasing emphasis on "cultural skills", i.e. values, behaviours, emotional intelligence, communication skills and the dynamics of inter-personal relationships.

And for collaboration to flourish and be sustainable, just like their technical counterparts, these cultural attributes require "professionalising" through definition, competency assessment, honed training and development collateral and validation of proficiency. As you move from the "micro" – assessing the proficiency of an individual practitioner – to the "macro" – assessing the capability of an organisation, you need a framework of defined processes and support systems. So, the truth of course, is that collaboration is something of a "yin and yang" – both an art and a science.

And as to collaboration's standing as a profession in its own right? Well, for many within the mature professions (e.g. engineering, project management, commercial management, procurement) whilst there is a readiness to recognise and co-opt the cultural aspects of collaborative working, acknowledging the emergence of a new profession in its own right is something of a slow burn.

Yet, it has defined processes, standards, competencies and capabilities, all of which are independently codified, assured and accredited by a professional body; the Institute for Collaborative Working (ICW). ICW has active links to industry and academia and tailored training and development collateral for its members; there is an established supply base of qualified consultants and subject matter experts; and, increasingly across organisations and delivery programmes, there are job roles dedicated to managing the people, process and systems required to turn collaboration from a concept into reality. All of these aspects very much constitute the hallmarks of a profession.

Network Rail has a strong record of collaborative delivery and as we enter the second year of our £43bn five-year "Control Period", much of the investment in our infrastructure will be delivered through collaborative forms of contract, including Project 13 Enterprise Models and NEC4. To succeed, we need practitioners across all disciplines who can collaborate. But increasingly we will also need professional collaborators who can promote that perfect blend of art with science. ■

stephen.m.blakey@networkrail.co.uk

Strategic Commercial Director, Network Rail



Collaboration is the key ingredient

ESS

Bob Gray

ESS works in partnership with Landmarc Support Services (Landmarc) and the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) to deliver 24/7 catering and retail services on the UK Defence Training Estate. The services are part of Landmarc's contract to provide facilities management, rural estate management and operational services across the 156,000-hectare estate, where troops prepare for operations across the globe. As Managing Director of ESS Defence, Marine and Aerospace, I reflect in this article on how effective collaboration between our organisations has underpinned the support of key Defence deliverables over the past two years.

When I think about achieving successful outcomes in our business, whether that's mobilising a new contract, managing complex operations for our clients or meaningfully engaging with our colleagues, the key ingredient is always collaboration. ESS is a service-led organisation – our people are our brand, so building great relationships is key. A structured, committed approach to collaborative working supports this and has certainly paid dividends in recent years.

Hugely impactful

Just one example of the benefits of collaboration across our business is a challenging, high-profile and hugely impactful operation being delivered with Landmarc, DIO and the Army across the UK Defence Training Estate.

Partner selection – the first stage of the engagement phase in the ISO 44001 lifecycle – is critical; it's difficult, if not impossible, to achieve great things with partners who aren't well aligned. We've worked with Landmarc for 22 years, together were awarded a new seven-year contract by DIO in 2023 and enjoy a well-established relationship with clearly defined joint objectives.

When it comes to "working together", we've built a culture of trust and transparency, have clearly defined roles and expectations and utilise shared systems and processes for contract delivery, management and governance. All of this drives a collective focus on "value creation" to ensure we provide consistently and predictably great services.

Delivering Operation Interflex

In July 2022, ESS and Landmarc received two weeks' notice from DIO on a critical mission, Operation Interflex, to support the provision of military training for Ukrainian forces on the UK Defence Training Estate. Each Ukrainian soldier was to spend five-to-seven weeks in this country before returning to their homeland and being replaced by a new training cohort.

The initial direction was to mobilise four of the 32 Training Estate sites where we provide catering across the north and south of England. These were quickly followed by two more. We provided three meals a day for 800 to 1,200 Ukrainian personnel on each site from day one, and

recently served our ten-millionth meal under the operation.

Ever since, we've worked closely with Landmarc, DIO and Army Real Life Support to cater for troops at multiple sites, and personnel from nations including The Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Romania and Canada, who are supporting the international training effort.

The Ukrainian personnel eat from our standard Training Estate



Collaboration has been key throughout, particularly when faced with unforeseen challenges and short notice requests. The contract is highly complex, with training areas spread across the whole of the UK which are generally extremely remote, cover difficult terrain and often have just basic infrastructure.

Our labour resource requirements increased significantly, with some sites moving from 100 customers a day to over 1,000, overnight. While we built up the required workforce, we were supported by our Army clients who deployed military chefs to support in the kitchens and other ESS sites, who released team members to assist. Now there is one military chef on each site and they form an essential part of our team.

Gas leaks at one site led to a full kitchen closure and we collaborated with all stakeholders to set up military field kitchens, continuing to cater for over 1,000 customers a day during harsh winter conditions. The Landmarc team works closely with us to maintain the local infrastructure and mitigate equipment issues, providing contingency units with essential

equipment on standby at each site.

During the operation, ESS, Landmarc and DIO have also supported our clients during the most high-profile events in the nation's recent history – the Coronation of Their Majesties King Charles III and Queen Camilla, and the mourning period and state funeral for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. At Longmoor and Brunswick camps, we prepared and served over 60,000 meals to service personnel from nations including the UK, New Zealand, Malaysia, Malta, Ghana, Canada and Singapore, supporting those who were rehearsing for the Coronation procession; and we catered for over 2,000 practising for their role in the funeral procession. Colleagues from ESS and Landmarc were presented with a Coronation Medal at a ceremony attended by ESS, Landmarc, DIO and the Army.

We've received many compliments from our customers and clients about the positive impact of the meals we're serving under Operation Interflex. This praise belongs to Landmarc, DIO and our Army clients too – this is truly a team effort.

When challenged to mobilise the service in July-2022, no one could have predicted how long the war in Ukraine would continue or the number of people who would be involved. We will work alongside our partners for as long as we are needed.

Landmarc Managing Director, Mark Neill, commented: "True collaboration is about more than just teamwork, it's about embracing diverse perspectives, fostering trust and working towards a shared vision. Our partnership with ESS on the Defence Training Estate is driven by a collective mission to provide the best training experience for our Armed Forces, which includes jointly responding at pace to mission-critical operations when they arise. Supporting these operations has seen impressive levels of agility, flexibility and responsiveness from all partners to provide the vital services needed to ensure their success." ■

ess.enquiries@compass-group.co.uk



*"Partner selection – the first stage of the engagement phase in the ISO 44001 lifecycle – is critical; **it's difficult, if not impossible, to achieve great things with partners who aren't well aligned**"*

menu, which is designed to meet the nutritional requirements of individuals undertaking demanding physical training as well as tasting good. We've also designed a traditional Ukrainian menu served to the soldiers at a special event before they return home. These meals are greatly appreciated, often evoking strong emotions from the troops and our colleagues, who have built bonds during their stay.



Cultivating sustainable partnerships

INDRA

Juan Bulacios Keena MICW

ISO 44001 provides a valuable framework for managing business relationships, but its true power lies in how organisations apply it. In this article, I focus on practical considerations to cultivate sustainable collaborative partnerships, moving beyond the idealised concept to reach the critical seventh stage of the life cycle: “staying together”.

Let us move beyond the prevailing myths about collaboration in today’s business environment. While many are drawn to the appealing concept of effortless partnership between compatible organisations, those who regularly navigate complex business relationships understand a more sophisticated truth. The collaboration journey mirrors an orchestrated enterprise that demands precision, strategic patience, and purposeful development.

A crucial step along the way is rigorous self-assessment. This goes beyond the initial Relationship Maturity Index outlined in Annex D of the standard, which should already be in place. Instead, it involves continuous, in-depth analysis of the foundational elements of our partnerships. We must move past superficial declarations of alignment and ask ourselves and our partners these critical questions: Do we have genuine trust, or are unspoken reservations hindering progress? (Reservations are natural but should be acknowledged and addressed through exercises like knowledge mapping). Are shared goals genuinely aligned, or do subtle divergences in agenda create underlying tension? Are our organisational cultures genuinely compatible, or do differences in communication styles and

decision-making processes create friction? Regularly revisiting these fundamental questions is essential for identifying areas for improvement and ensuring our relationships’ longevity.

The ISO 44001 framework provides essential structure and guidance, yet note, this is a compass rather than a complete map. Each organisation will have its own tools or processes, but none can disregard the standard’s emphasis on three critical elements: clear expectations between partners, developing constructive behaviours, and systematic measurement of partnership health. While no framework

Indra Group is a holding company that promotes a safer and more connected future through innovative solutions, trusted relationships, and the best talent

“Establishing shared goals and celebrating joint successes reinforces a sense of shared purpose and trust”



eliminates every uncertainty, the standard structured approach to governance and performance evaluation fosters an environment where collaboration can flourish.

The human aspects

Effective collaboration goes beyond tracking deadlines and deliverables. While metrics such as cost savings and efficiency gains are important, trust, communication, and resilience often determine long-term success.

Building trust

Trust is earned through actions, not declarations. It requires consistent demonstrations of

integrity and reliability. Regular informal check-ins can help gauge the comfort level and transparency between partners. Pay attention to how disagreements are managed: Are concerns raised openly and respectfully, or are they avoided? Do partners share information willingly, even when it's not required? Consistent follow-through on commitments is a strong indicator of trust. Moreover, establishing shared goals and celebrating joint successes significantly reinforces a sense of shared purpose and trust, which is crucial for building a strong partnership.

Fostering open communication

Sustainable partnerships thrive on structured yet dynamic communication channels. Regular cross-organisational meetings, from quarterly business reviews to senior executive reviews, create natural rhythms for alignment and transparent dialogue. These touchpoints serve as vital forums where concerns can be addressed openly, and future opportunities explored together.

Modern collaboration demands a digital infrastructure that matches our partnerships' ambitions. Shared platforms transcend traditional organisational boundaries. When combined

*“The quality of our relationships determines the **depth and sustainability** of our collective achievement”*

with well-defined protocols for escalation and feedback, these digital bridges transform potential friction points into opportunities for growth and deeper understanding.

The key lies in having these channels and cultivating an environment where partners feel empowered to use them effectively, knowing their input is valued and will receive thoughtful consideration.

Building partnership resilience

Every meaningful collaboration encounters turbulence, much like aircrafts navigating changing weather patterns. Just as modern aviation engineering designs planes to adapt rather than resist these forces, resilient partnerships embrace challenges as catalysts for growth rather than threats to stability.

This approach transforms potential conflicts into innovations – where strong contractual frameworks form the aircraft’s structure, while relationship management and responsive communication serve as the sophisticated monitoring systems that detect issues before they escalate.

Organisations that complement ISO 44001’s foundation of clear roles and adaptable processes with regular health checks, feedback loops, and contingency planning effectively transform their partnerships from vulnerability points into strategic advantages.

This systematic approach

becomes especially valuable when confronting inevitable challenges: differences in organisational culture creating misunderstandings, collaboration fatigue reducing engagement during extended partnerships, or personnel transitions disrupting established working relationships.

True partnership excellence comes not from flawless execution but from continuous learning – systematically gathering insights from each interaction and adapting processes based on experience.

The dance of collaboration

As the saying goes, it takes two to tango. Like a well-executed dance, collaboration requires co-ordination, adaptability, and trust. When partners lose sync, they must assess whether they are moving together or merely going through the motions. If misalignment persists despite efforts to realign, it may be time to redefine the partnership – or, when necessary, part ways with professionalism and mutual respect.

A well-managed exit strategy should not be seen as failure but as a strategic pivot. Organisations that part ways gracefully retain the muscle memory of effective collaboration: strengthened capabilities, refined processes, and deeper market insights that extend beyond any single partnership. The resilience cultivated throughout the relationship ensures that the value created endures long after the final bow.

Cultivating collaboration as a strategic advantage

At Indra, we understand collaboration as a sophisticated strategic capability transcending traditional business interactions. By seamlessly integrating partnership health metrics with financial indicators, we create an ecosystem where relationship management is as precisely calibrated and strategically vital as any technical competency. This approach transforms collaboration from a peripheral concept into a core organisational superpower, where authentic dialogue becomes the fundamental catalyst for breakthrough innovation.

Our methodology reveals that the most resilient partnerships are those that treat relationship dynamics as a measurable, strategic asset rather than an intangible soft skill. By creating specialised communication pathways that sustain trust during complexity, and designing cross-organisational review processes that illuminate the deeper currents of partnership potential, we convert psychological safety from an abstract concept into a tangible competitive advantage.

These practices underscore a fundamental business truth: in an increasingly interconnected global landscape, the quality of our relationships determines the depth and sustainability of our collective achievement. ■

jbulacios@indracompany.com



Multi-disciplinary collaboration for innovation

CARDIFF BUSINESS SCHOOL
CARDIFF UNIVERSITY

Prof **Jane Lynch**

Collaborative working and partnering seems well defined in traditional industry-led supply chain relationships, but how effective can they be for managing multi-disciplinary research projects and especially those projects that involve university partners?

It is well documented that innovation and collaboration go hand in hand. However, successful collaboration requires more than systems, processes, and behaviours. Individual organisations in multi-disciplinary teams may move at different paces and have different regulatory requirements that can cause tensions in the early days. Often, technology is reported as the critical linchpin for successful collaboration, especially across disciplines and organisational boundaries.

Others might argue¹

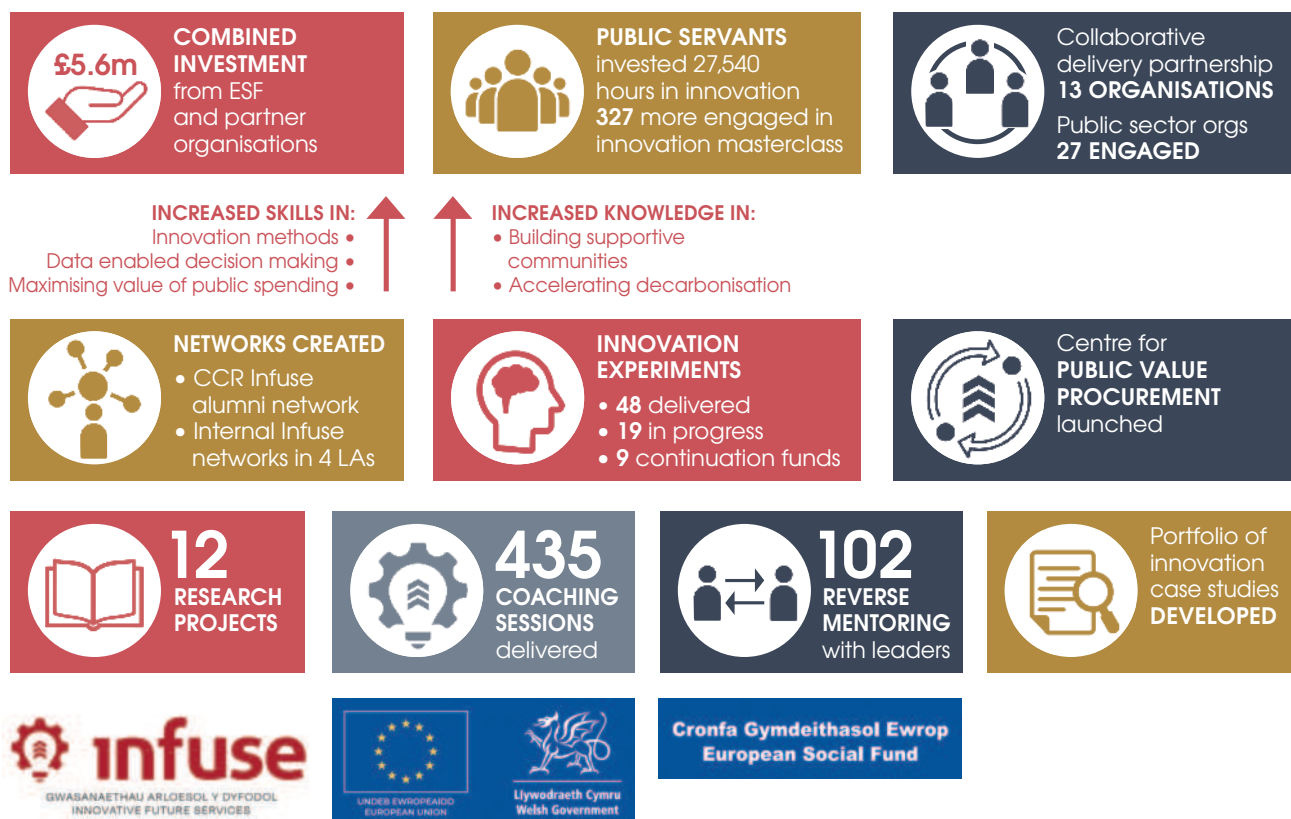
that people make collaboration successful, or not. Two heads are better than one, but that might not always be the case if you recruit people with behaviours that are competitive or simply incompatible. The reality may be that often the delivery team comprises whoever is available rather than who is right for the task ahead.

Academics employed by universities are actively encouraged and incentivised to collaborate. They appreciate the value that collaboration can bring in developing new knowledge and

accelerating innovation. Despite these unrivalled benefits, universities are often the last place where industry considers partnering, but perhaps it should be the first. Most academics practise collaborative working across projects daily.

This article shares collaboration insights of three research projects where the principles of the international standard for managing collaborative relationships have been applied. The article closes with some important lessons learned with managing multi-disciplinary projects successfully.

FIGURE 1



Case study 1:**Infuse**

From 2020 to 2023, Infuse (Innovative Future Services) was a research-inspired collaboration with Monmouthshire Council leading for the Cardiff Capital Region (CCR), working in partnership with Cardiff University and Nesta. Participants across the CCR were equipped with the skills, tools, and confidence they would need to get innovation back on the agenda in their organisations. In so doing, Infuse created a regional network of alumni, embedded in local government, health boards, government departments, and beyond, with a shared understanding of the need for change and the tools to help us get there.

The multi-disciplinary Infuse team delivered three “skills” labs: adaption (which focused on innovation tools and adapting existing solutions), data, and procurement. By the fourth cohort, the adaption lab had grown into the “explore phase”, allowing more time for participants to explore and question their own mindsets and organisational conditions. It also gave them more time to explore collaboration opportunities (see figure 1 on previous page).

Throughout the Infuse programme, participants were encouraged to apply their learning to real-world challenges under two broad thematic areas: accelerating decarbonisation, and building supportive communities.

You can find out more about Infuse at monmouthshire.gov.uk/infuse

Case study 2:**Lifespan multi-morbidity collaborative (LINC)**

Running from December 2021 to November 2025, LINC is a research collaboration bringing together medical and research expertise from the universities of Cardiff, Bristol, Leeds, Exeter, and Queen Mary University of London, alongside the Wellcome Sanger Institute and Capital Region Denmark Psychiatric Hospital.

Supported by £3.6m of funding, LINC is one of six projects funded through the Department of Health and Social Care and UK Research and Innovation to further our knowledge of this health care priority. When the application was reviewed for funding, it was noted that a project with multiple university partners carried high risk, but the principles of the international standard for managing collaborative relationships were presented as a robust and structured framework to mitigate the risks.

The five-year funded project is now in its fourth year and the

principles of the standard have proved invaluable in keeping the large research team aligned with the project objectives. Monthly strategy meetings over the four years provide opportunity to improve knowledge sharing, working together, and value creation, to review the risk register, the communications plan and to keep building in contingency plans when people leave early or join the large project team.

Details about LINC can be found at cardiff.ac.uk/lifespan-multimorbidity-research-collaborative

Case study 3:**Knowledge transfer partnerships**

Knowledge transfer partnerships (KTPs) offer unique collaborative partnerships between businesses, universities, colleges, and Catapults. The purpose is to transfer knowledge between organisations which accelerates innovation, leading to business growth opportunities. Each KTP clearly identifies a specific challenge.

The Adopting Together KTP was a collaboration between three adoption agencies and Cardiff University. In the initial days, there were four agencies involved, but following the application of the principles of the standard for collaborative working, especially focusing on strengths and weaknesses for effective partner selection, one partner decided it wasn't for them and left the project. While this initially set the project team back, it made the remaining partners stronger and more committed in the collaboration journey. We learned from this project that partners may have worked together in a loose coupling for many years but had never formally reviewed why they need to collaborate or the benefits that effective partnering brings.

The international standard for managing collaborative relationships was instrumental in

“Universities accelerate innovation like no other organisation, and there are usually internal support mechanisms in place for managing partnerships”

improving relations, not just with the project partners but with other stakeholder groups, such as contracting authorities and fostering and adoption support agencies. The result was outstanding, with high levels of impact created, winning multiple national awards. Importantly, the collaborative project completely transformed the lives of vulnerable children who, through no fault of their own, were forced into the care system. The project outcomes continue to deliver positive outcomes for these children today.

Project lessons in collaborative working

Universities are a great place to start a multi-disciplinary collaboration, as the multiple discipline experts are close at hand, but knowing how to “open the university door” can take time. Universities usually have dedicated personnel experienced at managing external partnerships. Their details can be found on university webpages

Academics are (mostly) natural and experienced collaborators. However, setting up multi-disciplinary projects can sometimes be delayed due to seemingly bureaucratic systems and procedures for agreeing on intellectual property, signing contracts and setting up budget codes. It is fair to say that university collaborators work at a much slower pace than their industry partners, but the impact of a successful collaboration is likely to be high – making it worth the wait!

Collaboration research partners operate at different speeds to process contract sign-offs, which can delay the project start, so time needs to be built in. Alternatively, as much preparation pre-award will prevent delays.

Friction that naturally occurs when you pull new multi-disciplinary teams together isn't always negative; with professional



Right: Collaborative projects provide opportunities for our future leaders too

Ensure roles and responsibilities are agreed upon and reviewed regularly, as they may change as the project matures.

Build in time pre-

award to work through likely delays with systems and processes to prevent project delays.

Agree on salary thresholds and other incentives across partner organisations at the outset.

When designing the exit strategy, don't plan to work activities right up to the project end date, as fixed-term employees are likely to leave. Think through the project delivery schedule and either explore the possibility of no (overhead) cost extensions, or leave the final weeks for other impact activities that may not depend on the input of every team member.

A structured framework is essential for multi-disciplinary projects or projects involving multiple partners.

Take time to develop the relationship before becoming ready to collaborate and applying for any external funding.

Collaborative working for multi-disciplinary projects is more complex, but the rewards when managed well are unrivalled. ■ lynchj@cardiff.ac.uk

Professor Jane Lynch leads the Centre of Public Value Procurement at Cardiff Business School, Cardiff University, and a member of the ICW Board

facilitation, higher levels of innovation are possible when roles, responsibilities, skills, different ways of working, and knowledge are fully understood. This needs to be exercised at the earliest stage of the collaboration.

Each partner organisation may have different remuneration salary thresholds for research associates, which, if discussed amongst the team, can be troublesome, leading to feelings of less value, demotivation and even resentment by those on the lower end of the pay scale.

Research-funded projects have defined start and exit timelines. Recruitment for fixed-term contracts is temporary and normally fixed until the project end date, but high labour mobility means that sometimes associates may be tempted to leave before the project end, to secure higher salaries or fresh opportunities.

Conclusions

Universities accelerate innovation like no other organisation, and there are usually internal support mechanisms in place for managing partnerships.

Expect and plan for opportunities to work through team tensions and friction.

¹ Photo includes postgraduate students studying MSc Sustainable Supply Chain Management

² Nesta, *Why and how does collaboration drive innovation in the public sector* www.nesta.org.uk/blog/why-and-how-does-collaboration-drive-innovation-public-sector/

³ UK Research and Innovation, *Knowledge Transfer Partnership Guidance* <https://www.ukri.org/councils/innovate-uk/guidance-for-applicants/guidance-for-specific-funds/knowledge-transfer-partnership-guidance>

⁴ Cardiff University News, *Adopting Together wins top award* www.cardiff.ac.uk/newsview/2570475-adopting-together-wins-top-uk-award



The art of the possible at the University of York

GRAHAM

John McDonald

"The art of collaboration", was not merely an abstract concept in the successful execution of the University of York student residential accommodation project. In actuality, "effective collaboration" was fundamental to the multi award-winning purpose-built student accommodation scheme that saw the timely completion of 1,480 student residences stitched together through a mix of social spaces within the picturesque Heslington East Campus. Ultimately, the principles of collaboration informed our strategic approach. The prioritisation of the student experience, composition and outworkings of the delivery team, the essence of the design strategy and the mechanics of our construction methodology were all central components of the collaborative "journey" at York.

Awareness

The overarching vision, or bigger picture, was the University of York's *A Campus for the Future* masterplan. This strategic objective helped to shape the development of 1,480 student residences, with social hubs that act as "front doors" to the accommodation while forming a gateway into the University of York's Heslington East Campus.

York was delivered via a design, build, finance, operate (DBFO) contract. This means that we were responsible for developing the residences and public realm, and managing and maintaining them over the long-term – 50 years. The model ensures that we are providing innovative and energy efficient on-campus residencies to support student growth. The purpose was to provide a lasting, residential-led legacy through:

- expanding the capacity to house students on campus for the duration of their time at York
- improving the accommodation offer to new and continuing students
- enabling more York students to experience the benefits of campus life.

Following early engagement and consultation with both the University and its existing students, a less formal strategy for the development was also adopted in parallel. A focus for the design, construction and operation of the accommodation was to enable students to "walk everywhere in slippers". The student experience was, therefore, prioritised. Student representatives and staff were consistently engaged throughout, particularly during design workshops.

A "day in the life" presentation highlighted a student's journey from the main campus back to the proposed residences, including a walk around the entire campus, and visiting friends in the North Development, all illustrated by eye-level hand-drawn sketches. This way of presenting helped to convey that student experience was at the centre of our thinking. Semi-private courtyards, for example, were designed to be sheltered from the prevailing wind, creating inviting places to relax, while covered walkways, perfect for walking in slippers, further enhanced the connection to the outdoors.

The design arranged 18 residential blocks around interlocking courtyards,

protecting existing vistas and integrating the buildings into the established ecology of the adjacent lakes. Wellbeing is promoted by the student hubs, which foster community and offer discrete pastoral care. Their entrances are brought to the fore with bold canopy overhangs and landscaped plazas. Double-height spaces within the buildings encourage interaction and create an energetic frontage. Furthermore, the project is socially embedded within the community, with local people enjoying the landscape for walking and cycling as well as a programme of summer festivals that are open to everyone.

Knowledge

Evidencing how collaboration was fundamental to the success of York, we conceived a bespoke special purpose company that comprised GRAHAM – developer and contractor; Equitix – infrastructure investor; Derwent FM – operator, and Sheppard Robson – architects. This collective was then branded under the name of Civitas, Latin for "citizenship" – imparting shared responsibility, a common purpose, and sense of community. This name encapsulated our overarching approach to ensuring





that the commercial and reputational interests of stakeholders were aligned while reflecting our long-term placemaking and masterplanning principles for the wider development and its future operation.

“From the outset, we worked collaboratively with the University to devise and implement a design for manufacture approach to complete core elements of the masterplan”

Internal assessment

Collaborative governance and long-term partnership arrangements were embedded at York through the creation of a dedicated York Campus East Strategic Partnering Board that consists of members of both investors, GRAHAM and Equitix, as well as key stakeholders from the client side and its professional team. It met monthly to evaluate programme, quality, the financial model,

planning, costings, proposed decant arrangements and related matters.

Evidencing the success of the partnership arrangements between Civitas and the University, we delivered an above market land value/capital receipt which increased prior to financial close. The funding was a single party bond from Pension Investment Corporation wrapped by Assured Guaranty. The funding, linked to gilt rates, allowed the University to benefit from improved funding terms. In addition, a gainshare provision in the development agreement enabled the University to obtain enhanced returns.

Partner selection

The component parts of the Civitas consortium, namely GRAHAM, Equitix and Sheppard Robson, had successfully delivered a similar DBFO scheme for the University of Salford at Peel Park a few years previously. This knowledge and experience, and the personalities from each organisation who had been instrumental in the success of Salford, transitioned across to

deliver the University of York project. This resource consistency, lessons learned, and the continuous improvement applied collectively, helped to shape the success of York.

In terms of design, with GRAHAM Construction performing the main contractor role, early engagement facilitated the input of key construction methodology advice. Importantly, our key supply chain partners, for example a pre-cast manufacturer and supplier, were also involved early in the design and development process, helping to influence and enhance the construction programme.

From the outset, we worked collaboratively with the University to devise and implement a design for manufacture approach to complete core elements of the masterplan. Embracing modern methods of construction (MMC), the link up with our locally based state-of-the-art off-site manufacturing partner strengthened quality control, drove efficiency within the programme requirements and helped realise considerable positive sustainability benefits. Employing MMC solutions to as high a proportion of the build as possible meant our team committed to an unprecedented level of design engagement and development in the pre-financial close (FC) period. This greatly increased pre-FC resources and supply chain spend commitments, but ultimately de-risked the project by effectively “front ending design”. Based on consultation with the University, we utilised a full sandwich panel and combined several packages in a factory setting. The short, medium and long-term benefits included:

- programme saving and greater programme certainty – we completed 850 residential units to second fix in just 38 weeks at a rate of 1.5 hours per unit
- earlier weather tightness
- health and safety – no scaffolding, reduced deliveries and waste
- improved acoustics, fire and thermal performance
- consistency in quality of delivery.

Working together

As an example of how we actively ensured the commercial and reputational interests of the client were shared and protected, we accelerated the construction programme of Phase 1 to facilitate the completion of 348 units in September 2021 and a further 256 rooms in January 2022, nine months ahead of programme. For context, this was achieved against the backdrop of room capacity challenges on campus for first year undergraduate students. Recognising the urgency, we worked collaboratively in the true spirit of partnership, listening, discussing and responding creatively to identify and implement an effective solution to exceed the key stakeholder's strategic goals and aspirations.

Further evidence of the effectiveness of our commitment to collaboration, was our ability to overcome the varied and unpredictable challenges associated with Covid-19, while keeping our people safe. This robust and intuitive management was heralded by our investment partner, Equitix, with its CEO, Hugh Crossley, publicly stating: "We commend all of our partners at York, GRAHAM and Derwent, for their perseverance and resilience in delivering this crucial residential programme amidst the challenges of a pandemic. It is a remarkable achievement."

An open and transparent approach was taken across the funding due diligence, legal, financial and technical workstreams. The early introduction of a funding partner and a "one team" approach ensured a rapid financial close and confidence in the delivery of the wider development. Further examples of working together include:

- **a long-term partnership:** As a consortium, we employed a cradle to grave investment policy
- **a "no-surprises" approach to commercial negotiation from preferred bidder onwards:** We did not re-open previously agreed legal points and commercial

SOME SOCIAL ECONOMIC IMPACTS

£104m
SUPPLY
CHAIN
SPEND

ZERO RIDDORS
OVER
1.2m
MAN HOURS
WORKED

£16.2m
SOCIO-
ECONOMIC
ROI VALUE



£2m
LOCAL
EMPLOYMENT
INVESTMENT

115
APPRENTICESHIP
WEEKS
DELIVERED

6,760
TRAINING
HOURS AND 681
VOLUNTEERING
HOURS
COMPLETED

principles, ensuring a smooth passageway to financial close

- **A maximised capital receipt:** We recognised that delivering as many of the 1,480 rooms required in time for occupation drove an increased capital receipt
- **Gainshare:** We developed and employed a gainshare mechanism in the project agreement that resulted in commercial benefits to the University.

Value creation

Ultimately, having GRAHAM Construction as part of the consortium and involved from the outset, significantly enhanced almost every aspect of the delivery, from finance and funding, through to design, construction, cost, programme and phasing.

Notably for planning, as the principal planning authority interface, we worked effectively with the University and the City of York Council to resolve planning and obtain a revised consent. The effectiveness of this approach

led to an increase in unit numbers and an improvement in the client's capital receipt. We provided the planning resources and led and managed the planning consultant and design team. As a demonstration of the close collaboration between our team and the client, we made joint representations to the Council. The University spoke on our behalf when the proposals were submitted to Council, and assisted in the successful consent. A further planning challenge, with a portion of the land belonging to a third party, was also resolved collaboratively between the estate, us and the client through dialogue.

In parallel with obtaining planning approval, we implemented a robust programme of community engagement inclusive of town hall style meetings, as well as virtual sessions following the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. Keeping with the digital theme, a dedicated website was also developed, which was regularly updated with

signposting information and news to ensure that the community was consulted throughout the development. We developed a detailed communication plan covering the key client stakeholders and community, and we applied a range of specific measures to liaise with the local community, such as the Heslington East Community Forum. These included workshops and planned meetings, the appointment of a community liaison officer, signage and bulletin boards, newsletters as well as the website.

All public communication initiatives were co-ordinated by our community liaison officer, collaboratively with the University, who was responsible for implementing and agreeing the communication and stakeholder engagement strategy. Further examples of value creation in the community included a partnership with local primary and secondary schools and attendance at local careers fairs. We also supported St Oswald's Primary School's 250th birthday celebration

through the provision of expertise in groundworks, joinery and brickwork. Upon completion of the project, the school welcomed the Archbishop of York to unveil the new artwork that we helped to create.

At York, we delivered a social value economic return on investment of approximately £16.2m as part of the residential-led regeneration programme. The tangible and lasting social economic impacts that we achieved at York using national themes, outcomes and measures, and verified through our social value calculator, are illustrated (see *previous page*). As a social value example, prior to construction, we created a sample room-marketing suite for funders, the University and those interested in renting, to view and provide feedback on the design and finishes. Once construction was completed, the modular units, furniture, kitchens and bathroom fittings were gifted to local community stakeholders and charities.

Evidencing the sustainability best practice implemented at York, the project was

awarded a Green Apple Environment Award. The information (*illustrated below*) highlights some of our key achievements. The design embraced MMC, with the project utilising a state-of-the-art off-site manufacturing facility which helped realise several sustainable benefits, including a reduction in waste, delivery miles and energy.

Staying together

The University of York project is a DBFO scheme with a 50-year concession period. Therefore, staying and working together is pivotal. We appointed Derwent FM to provide the management of the estate, incorporating maintenance and repairs. Derwent was heavily involved from the outset of the design process, informing our lifecycle costs in accordance with BS ISO 15686-5. We considered product lifespan and maintenance costs against construction costs to provide best value and to identify significant economies of scale through an integrated approach. The design features durable low maintenance materials, with the services designed to reduce energy costs, provide standardisation of assets and consider the replaceability of them. Derwent FM, appointed on a long-term 50-year operational contract, takes an integrated approach to the delivery of each of these areas of activity. This delivers considerable advantages and economies of scale throughout the long-term stewardship.

Continued collaboration

Civitas continues to operate and manage the University of York development and will do so for the 50-year concession of the scheme. Notably, GRAHAM, Equitix and Sheppard Robson joined forces once again in 2024 and were named as preferred bidder for, what will be, the largest student accommodation scheme (circa 3,600 beds) at the University of Manchester. The project is currently progressing through the financial close period.

john.mcdonald@graham.co.uk

SOME ACHIEVEMENTS IN SUSTAINABILITY

13m+
LITRES OF
WATER SAFELY
DISCHARGED

8,684m²
OF BIODIVERSITY
IMPROVEMENTS
DELIVERED

97.4%
OF WASTE
DIVERTED FROM
LANDFILL



**USE OF
RENEWABLE
ENERGY**

**PASSIVE
DESIGN**

**EASE
OF MAINTENANCE
FOR FM
CONTRACTOR**



A collective approach to accelerating the upskilling of our future workforce

LEEDS UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL

Prof. David L Loseby

The recognition by the World Economic Forum (WEF)¹ that there will be a 39% disruption (shift) in skills needed to deliver socioeconomic value by 2030 must be a catalyst for action for the three principal parties: academia, business (and society) and professional bodies such as the Institute for Collaborative Working (ICW).

Clearly, technological skills are projected to grow in importance more rapidly than any other skill in the next five years. AI and big data are at the top of the list, followed by networks and cybersecurity and technological literacy. However, close behind are those of creative thinking and **resilience, flexibility and agility, curiosity and lifelong learning, leadership and social influence, talent management, analytical thinking and environmental stewardship**. It also recognised that those in bold can't be achieved without structured collaboration. A massive seven out of ten of the top skills have clear interconnectedness with the technological skills.

Accordingly, the structured collaboration with the triumvirate of parties and the ecosystem it creates (see Diagram 1) is an essential enabler to achieve the scale of the task to support the socioeconomic growth against the backdrop of ongoing market dynamics. Further, academia is rightly challenged by evolving student needs to seek engaging, inclusive and personalised environments for a diverse range of learners. This illustrates the importance of the recent strategic partnership agreed between Leeds University Business School (LUBS) and ICW. This partnership has set out a four-point agenda for future activities:

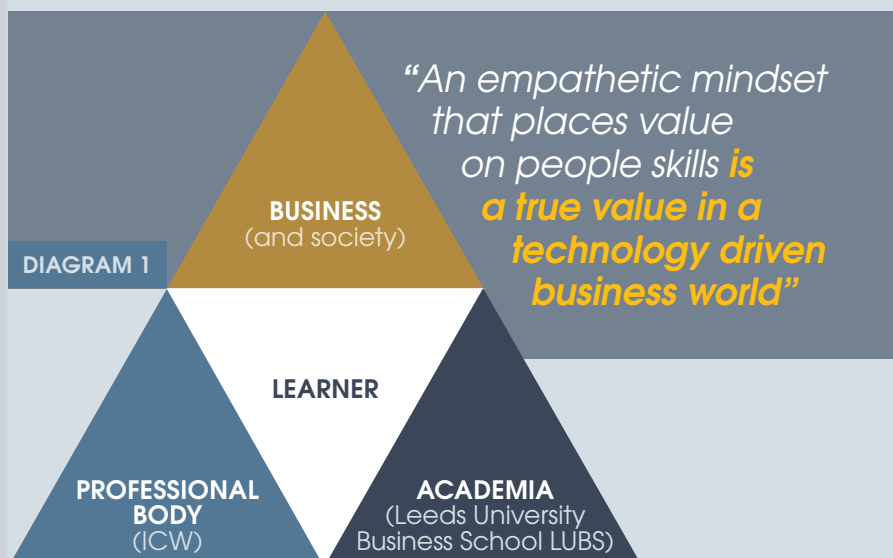
1 Executive education: joint content, post graduate

education, industry insights and experts into the classroom

2 Networking and engagement: joint events, structured introductions to drive research and industry impact

3 Cross discipline impact: joint summits and conferences, Living Lab research on real world pilot projects with ICW member organisations, co-authored research driven content such as policy briefs, white papers and articles

4 Value creation: jointly sponsored grant applications for research and education, National Audit Office recognised value attributes to aid recognition of formal collaboration activity, practitioner-initiated content.



The four-point agenda will enable the creation of quality learning, teaching experiences and impact that can be evidenced through student feedback. Breaking down the artificial barriers between the parties is essential to the *orchestration* of new ways of working, to broaden and enhance our collective skill sets.

At LUBS the shift in the pedagogy to incorporate collaboration and people skills as part of the current MBA programme has been well received by students, initiating and connecting learning journeys that prepare post graduate students for the future of work through skills that

connect with the workplace.

An empathetic mindset that places value on people skills is a true value in a technology driven business world, such as:

- Trust enablement
- Relational benevolence
- Integrity
- Predictability
- Professional competency

Given that the learner is at the centre of the ecosystem, it is important to reflect upon the contribution and influence of all parties to this triumvirate (Diagram 2). This draws upon the structure of standards such as ISO 44001 and the rise in creative thinking as advocated by the WEF. This serves to further underscore the proposition that an open mindset will foster a culture where students are viewed as partners in their educational journey.

All of the above can be influential factors, placing learners' needs at the forefront of the learning journey despite growing and rapid technological advancement and prioritisation.

For academia, this means we must adapt to many factors:

- Diversity of learning needs and approaches
- Listening and responding to diverse and rich sources of new approaches and insights
- Engaging effectively with multiple stakeholders to harvest and refine management practice
- Augmenting and maintaining trust partnerships
- Translating research into real world scenarios
- Ensuring that complementary skills are part of the learning experience:
 - Critical thinking skills
 - Analytical thinking skills
 - Environmental, social and sustainable

- integrated practice
- Assimilating complexity and agility as a norm
 - Adaptability (growth mindset versus fixed mindset)
 - Engage diverse behaviours to align commonalities and constructively manage differences

Therefore, as we navigate through the structure and breadth of collaborative endeavours, be mindful of the timing of initiatives to ensure maximum engagement. Further, avoid periods of high stress, such as exam seasons or the beginning of the academic term, and ensure that initiatives align with the academic and business demands on the individual.

Where necessary, redesign programmes jointly, with emphasis on learners' insights while simultaneously providing the recognition of core modules. In parallel, ensuring that context and assimilation of real world scenarios are underpinned by established research and theoretical and methodological rigour.

Both LUBS and ICW have recognised that investing in quality time can contribute to, and provide real impact beyond each other's singular environment by creating opportunities for communication, such as joint workshops and shared

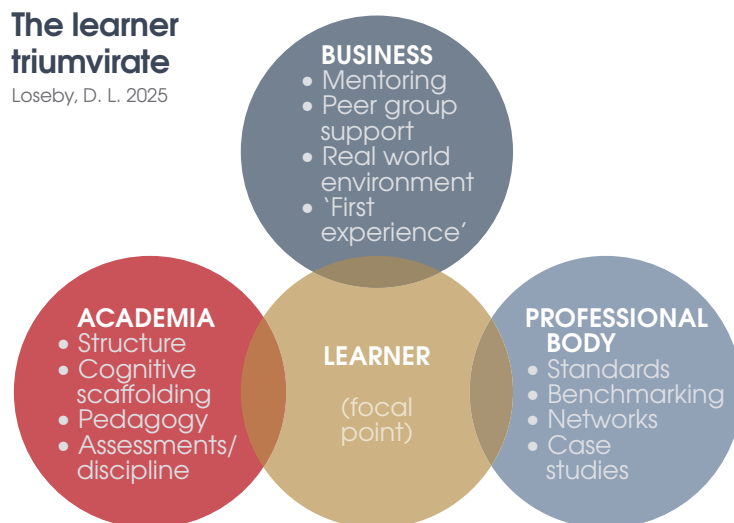
training sessions. This will lead us to explore new opportunities to enhance the way we disseminate knowledge and empirical learning to a wider audience.

More open relationships create the environment to facilitate opportunities for academics and professionals to experience each other's responsibilities, challenges and interests. This could include

DIAGRAM 2

The learner triumvirate

Loseby, D. L. 2025



opportunities for attending live lectures, observing and, or, contributing to the daily demands of each other to provide diverse perspectives in a psychologically safe environment. Such activities can enhance mutual respect and create a sense of shared purpose.

Finally, opportunities to develop leadership models that include voices from both academics and professionals in decision-making processes, through curated or themed discussions, and decision-making forums can help to build a shared sense of ownership and collective responsibility. ■

d.l.loseby@leeds.ac.uk

¹ Future of Jobs Report Insight Report, World Economic Forum, 7 January 2025: <https://www.weforum.org/publications/the-future-of-jobs-report-2025/>



Unlocking the power of collaboration: Bridging academia and industry for a stronger future

DEVELOPING BUSINESS-AWARE ACADEMICS

Kirsty Kelley

The UK stands on the cusp of remarkable opportunities in research and innovation, driven by collaboration between universities, industry, and policy makers. Although there are already some excellent initiatives in place to facilitate this work, significant barriers remain that limit its full potential.

The urgency for collaboration has never been clearer, as highlighted in the government's green paper *Invest 2035: the UK's Modern Industrial Strategy*, published in October 2024.

This strategy identifies global challenges we are all too familiar with: transition to net zero, geopolitical uncertainties and rapid advancements in AI and digitalisation. These are the issues that keep business leaders awake at night, and which demand fresh approaches to problem solving.

However, addressing these challenges requires a profound shift in mindset and workforce skills, and interdisciplinary collaboration across sectors to ensure that benefits for all are easy to understand and to achieve.

The UK is home to world-class research institutions and innovative firms, presenting a unique opportunity to set a benchmark for quality, both domestically and internationally.

The question therefore is simple yet critical: how can academia and industry work together to ensure mutual benefit by tackling these challenges?

Diverse network

Developing Business-Aware Academics is a four-year £5m Research England project based at the University of Exeter Business School. This initiative, partnering with the Chartered Association of Business Schools and a diverse network of stakeholders, brings together academics, industry, non-profits and policy makers to

encourage mobility of people and ideas, boost the economy, and enable a healthier, more sustainable and socially-just future for all.

The project aims to empower early-career academic researchers, across all disciplines, by building evidence-led training provision and networking opportunities that equip researchers with the skills, mindsets, and transferable skills needed to engage beyond academia. Its mission is to transform academic research into action that creates impact and drives economic growth and societal well-being.

The programme focuses on mobility of ideas and people. Whether applying research methods outside academia, informing policy and business strategies, or driving innovation in sustainable practices, researchers are uniquely positioned to create a healthier, socially just, and economically strong future for all.

Recognising the uncertainties faced by doctoral and early-career researchers, Developing Business-Aware Academics aims to build resilience, providing tools and networks that enhance career

Right: Creating networking opportunities between academia and industry is key





Left: Lecturer in medical imaging, Dr Fay Manning: she collaborates with industry to translate her research into life-enhancing clinical interventions, including X-ray software that identifies osteoporosis early

opportunities within and beyond academia, along with addressing policy areas that create barriers to this process.

Driver

Collaboration is key to this vision. As a senior director in the pharmaceutical industry explained: "For me, the motivation to collaborate with universities is the skills gap. I have previously had very positive experiences of working with academics via collaborative innovation projects. Developing Business-Aware Academics is a driver for more like this. It has the potential to enable mobility and to bring new skills into businesses."

These partnerships not only enhance the impact of research but also cultivate the talent needed to address the UK's most pressing challenges. Professor

Paula Whitehouse, Deputy Dean for Engagement and Development at Aston University, emphasises the importance of this mindset transformation: "By building mindsets and skillsets, we give researchers choice and equip them with the awareness and confidence to take their careers, and their research, to new levels in universities and beyond."

Developing Business-Aware

*"The UK is home to world-class research institutions and innovative firms, **presenting a unique opportunity**"*

Academics and the ICW have now come together to strengthen the programme. This partnership aims to further unite academics, businesses and policymakers to ensure cross-sector engagement and maximise the impact of research and researcher careers. Together we are

working with other mutual partner and membership organisations, such as Warwick Business School and Babcock, to pilot a series of events and opportunities for future growth.

So, the call to action is clear: working collectively we can strengthen the bridge between academia and industry. For industry leaders, engaging with academic researchers offers fresh perspectives and innovative solutions to pressing challenges, as well as access to higher level skills. For academics, collaboration opens new avenues for applying research, influencing policy, and shaping business practices.

If you're ready to be part of this transformative initiative, join us in championing a new era of interdisciplinary collaboration. Together we can harness the UK's research talent to navigate global challenges and seize the opportunities of the future.

Please visit our website at business-aware-academics.org or email us for more information and to discuss potential opportunities. ■

k.j.kelley@exeter.ac.uk
dbaa@exeter.ac.uk



Left: PhD student, Jack Jarvis: his research into water quality, and his collaboration with industry, has potential to influence sustainable fish farming practices and the wider water sector



SIGN UP

news from Developing Business-Aware Academics





The art of the assessment: Securing the right collaborative partner

B2B PPM LTD

John Doyle

A key initial step in the art of collaboration is making sure you have the right partner or partners to with which to collaborate. This article summarises key factors to consider in the evaluation of potential partners. It is mainly for those doing the evaluation, but it has insights for work-winning teams into the types of assessment approaches that they should prepare for under the new 2023 Procurement Act.

Assessments of collaborative capability will grow

In 2022-2023 £385bn was spent in public procurements. A comparable level can be expected going forward. As now, most future contracts will not require collaborative working at all, many will not need high levels of collaborative performance such as the discipline of ISO 44001. But many hundreds will! On 24 February 2025, the new Procurement Act 2023 came into force. It will shape how public bodies will buy goods

and services from private sector suppliers. A key emphasis of the Act is to ensure there is a focus on value rather than just cost. Ensuring there is value from a future collaboration will be an increasing focus of evaluations in those contracts where effective collaboration is seen as a critical success factor.

New guidance for evaluation in procurement under the Act¹ recognises that evaluation of the competence of potential partners to collaborate, and evaluation of organisational capabilities and plans to collaborate, will be an increasing focus in future partner selections. Those in procurement will need to develop better ways of evaluating collaborative capabilities and proposed delivery plans of bidders. With an average score of 55% in behavioural and collaborative assessments,² those wishing to win these new contracts will need to be a lot better at demonstrating they have those capabilities and robust plans to deliver work collaboratively.

Does my contract require collaboration for successful delivery?

My previous article in *The Partner*³ used a case study of several procurements in the UK rail sector where different contracts required different levels of collaboration. In the un-published study at least one contract required none. (Chart 1). The article concluded: only invest in an assessment of collaborative capabilities and competence in a selection process if collaborative working is objectively proven to be a critical success factor in collaborative delivery; and, if it is proven to be so, to do it systematically, ensure it is tailored

CHART 1

Segmentation positioning

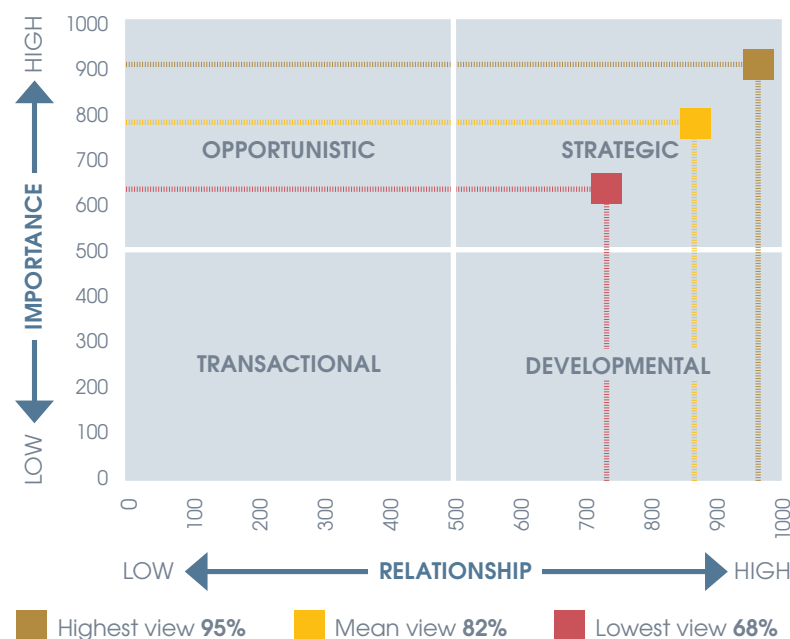


TABLE 1

Assessment criteria

COLLABORATIVE WORKING BEHAVIOURS	
LEADERSHIP OF COLLABORATIVE WORKING	PERFORMANCE AND DELIVERY MANAGEMENT
BEST FOR PROGRAMME/PROJECT DECISION MAKING	ENGENDERING TRUST OF OTHERS
MANAGING CHANGE AND UNCERTAINTY	STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND MANAGEMENT
	ANALYSIS, PLANNING AND PROBLEM SOLVING
	RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT APPROACH

to assess those factors unique to the future contract challenges, risks and opportunities; and conduct the assessment to recognised assessment standards to ensure reliability of outcomes and mitigate risks of legal challenge.

Be clear on the focus of the assessment

People and process

The developing revision to the future ISO 44001 recognises that assessing (or developing) behaviours alone is insufficient and organisations aiming to evaluate a potential partner must focus upon the wider construct of competence (behaviours, skills, knowledge and attitudes). However, even human competence is insufficient for effective collaboration. Back in 1982, *In Search of Excellence*⁴, talking about the delivery of quality, noted that most strategies to achieve quality failed as they either had the passion (behaviours and attitudes), but no system (process and organisational approaches), or the system but no passion. The same is true for achieving excellence in collaboration.



Rangga Firmansyah / Vecteezy

TABLE 2

Common assessment methods in the UK

TEAM BASED

- Team assessments of behaviours only
- Structured dialogue with client team
- Team assessments of behaviours and scored written outputs

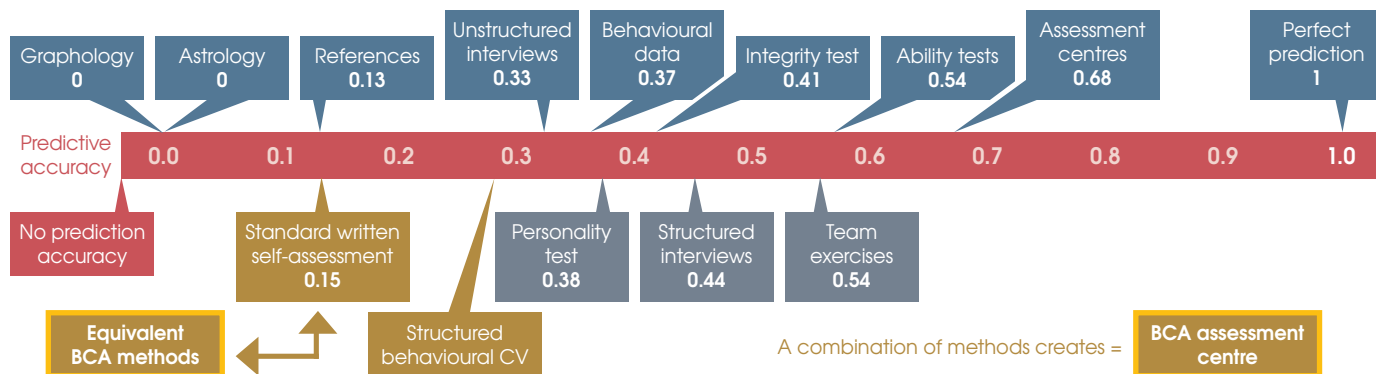
INDIVIDUAL BASED

- Structured interviews – Board and/or operational level
- Structured interviews – Site or Office
- Scored personality/behavioural profile
- Behavioural CV/biography

ORGANISATION BASED

- Tenderer culture assessment survey
- Existing collaborative working practices audit
- Site-based validations
- Main office validations
- Written tender submissions/commitments

Variable accuracy across different assessment methods



Assessment of a potential partner's "approaches" (tools, processes and structures) are also required. In short, a partner assessment, to be complete, must consider both human competence and the readiness and maturity of organisational approaches to use in the contract.

"A partner assessment, to be complete, must consider both human competence and the readiness and maturity of organisational approaches to use in the contract"

Assessment criteria

The Partner article³ mentioned above was clear that the critical assessment criteria must be chosen based upon a rigorous evaluation of the competences and organisational capabilities most required to make the contract delivery a success. There are many possible criteria areas. Some will be common to most contracts but many will be uniquely important to a given contract.

The list of criteria (see Table 1 on previous page) is illustrative of a set being used in 2025 in a UK nuclear sector assessment of potential partners. We selected these through a process to address the specific risks and opportunities identified by the client using the approach described in the previously mentioned edition of *The Partner*³.

Assessment methods

The guidance¹ for partner evaluation under the new procurement Act provides an illustration of the range of behavioural and collaborative assessment (BCA) approaches being used in UK procurements in 2024. (See Table 2 on previous page).

If BCAs are delivered to quality standards for reliability (ISO 10667-2), they are proven, by independent research,⁴ to be more reliable in predicting future behaviour when compared to traditional written submissions (tenders and standard CVs) and presentations. However, based on international academic research⁵, BCA methods vary in their accuracy in being able to predict future behaviour.

Great care should be taken in the selection of assessment methods; they vary in their cost and burden to deliver, and in their reliability to deliver robust assessments. Chart 2 shows the variable accuracy across different methods – with the best reliability being a mix of methods within an assessment centre.

Assessment is just the beginning

The guidance¹ for evaluation in the 2023 Procurement Act notes the need to view assessment results as an input to post-award relationship development and behavioural risk management with the successful partner and those with whom they will work collaboratively. ■

john@b2bppm.com

¹ Construction Leadership Council (2025) *Public Procurement Guidelines: Potential Solutions to Common Evaluation Issues Faced by Clients in the Built Environment Sector*.

² B2Bppm Ltd research on results of behavioural assessments over 2010-2024

³ *The Partner* May 2022. *Focussing Investment in Collaborative Relationships*

⁴ Chemiel, N. (2008). *Introduction to Work and Organizational Psychology: A European Perspective*; referencing Anderson and Cunningham-Snell 2000. Oxford. Blackwell Publishing



Building a collaborative culture in the East Midlands

MAYOR OF EAST MIDLANDS

Claire Ward

It has been almost one year since I was sworn in as the first elected Mayor of the East Midlands, the best job in British politics. There are lots of elements that make it so, notably the beauty, power, and potential of the East Midlands and its people. But also – crucially – because regional Mayors and the organisations they lead are a game-changer for collaborative leadership and delivery, the only approach that meets the challenges and opportunities of the times we are in.



Titivoot Weerawong / Vecteezy

The East Midlands Combined County Authority – EMCCA – is testament to this. Strategic authorities like ours do not just happen – they are brought to life through shared vision, planning, and a lot of hard work. In this case, the region’s local authorities, universities, businesses, and other stakeholders all played a part in bringing EMCCA to life because they saw the substantial opportunity in working together. These opportunities are reflected in my priorities: inclusive growth,

connecting the region to more of itself, more and better homes, climate resilience, and boosting the visitor economy.

Since my election, which took place a couple of months after EMCCA was formed, I have led the organisation, and the partnership that formed it is more important than ever. The leaders and deputy leaders of the four constituent authorities sit on EMCCA’s board and hold important portfolio lead roles for the region. This board also makes space for

*“This is a chance for us to pool our resources, share best practice, **and to create a regional transport network fit for the future**”*

representatives from our districts and boroughs, trades unions, HE and FE, businesses, and the VCSE sector – because their inclusion makes us better. And as the partnership develops and changes, the consensus must be rebuilt.

“This collaboration isn’t only about attracting new resources, though – it is about using the resources we have, better”

Transport investment

Part of that is about attracting more power, influence, and investment. I am proud that since I was elected, transport investment has increased. This matters. Per capita, people in the East Midlands receive well under the national average in transport investment, an inequality that has persisted for decades. In 2023/24 – the most recent year for which we have data – the UK average was **£687 per person**, the East Midlands just **£368**. This inequality translates into the barriers that cut people off from opportunity and inhibit our potential. So, when I see a young person with fewer college options because of poor public transport, I see the consequences of this persistent inequality.

This collaboration isn’t only about attracting new resources, though – it is about using the resources we have, better. Using transport as an example again, one of the things we have done is unite four transport authorities into one: EMCCA. This is a chance for us to pool our resources, share best practice, and to create a regional transport network fit for the future.

Of course – not all the things that affect people, places, and businesses in the East Midlands are contained within a single Mayoralty, so the collaboration between Mayors and other areas is an important feature of this new era of devolved government. Here’s a few examples:

- **East Midlands Freeport:** EMCCA was created after the freeport, and while it is right that it has a role within it, we are working to ensure that any changes go with the grain of the public-private collaboration that has been established and are inclusive of Leicestershire County Council, which sits outside the EMCCA area.
- **Compact between the East and West Midlands:** Devolution isn’t all about the north: the Midlands matters. Together, the East and West Midlands represent a £132.6bn economy, 147,355 businesses, and a population of 5.2 million. We have complementary economic strengths, support each other’s businesses, and even share a river catchment. Mayor Richard

“The collaboration between Mayors and other areas is an important feature of this new era of devolved government”



WMCA

Above: Mayor Claire Ward and Mayor Richard Parker at the launch of the Compact, a statement of collaborative intent from both Mayors

Parker and I believe that these shared strengths are worth building together.

- **The Peak Partnership Summit:** this summer, I have invited Mayor Andy Burnham and Mayor Oliver Coppard to join me in building a shared vision for the Peak District – which sits substantially in Derbyshire but also flows into Greater Manchester and South Yorkshire. An early example of what we can achieve when we work together is the **High Peak Pass**, a bus pass which supports young people living in Glossop to attend college in Greater Manchester.

All three demonstrate the prize of collaboration, in different ways. All early stage, but all demonstrating the sort of politics that people want: consensual, practical, and focused, relentlessly, on outcomes.

What EMCCA is, what it can be, is flexible, driven by collaboration, and that is its greatest strength. ■
themayor@eastmidsdevo.org.uk





Forging a collaborative partnership with ICW



ASSOCIATION FOR KEY ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT (AKAM)

Dr Diana Woodburn

What's key account management got to do with collaboration? The answer is "Everything"! If you're thinking key account management (KAM) is all about sales, think again. You don't sell to your strategic clients; you satisfy their needs through collaboration. So naturally, ICW and AKAM (the Association for Key Account Management) are forging a collaborative partnership.

KAM and collaboration

It shouldn't be news that strategic/key account management and collaboration are inextricably intertwined. Real collaboration involves every aspect of the activity of the organisations involved. It doesn't adopt blinkers and restrict its focus and awareness to just one area or project. It's the same for key account management.

ICW members understand that real collaboration requires structure, frameworks and processes. So does KAM. One of AKAM's roles is the clarification and communication of structures, frameworks and processes to help organisations become more professional in their approach to KAM. It starts with identifying who is – and is not – a key/strategic customer. There's a **process** for **structuring** a view of your portfolio of key accounts, using the Key Account Selection and Management Matrix (KASMM), Figure 1, that provides a **framework** for defining and supporting expectations, decisions and resource allocation. Your selection of key accounts is critical to success – KAM is for the few, never the many.

Selecting key customers

When you choose strategic customers, it's because you are expecting more business in the future (near and/or longer term) than you currently have. It would

be madness to wait for an RTP to arrive on your desk to address that business! Long before then you need to understand what the requirement is likely to be, what's driving it, who's involved in driving it and how do they think, what obstacles do they have to overcome, what can you give to them that they can't provide for themselves, how you can shape the specification, where's the money coming from...

It's a long list which doesn't even include exploring and getting a grip on how the external business ecosystem within

which a key client – and its suppliers – operate. It's a substantial investment in time and resources, human and financial, to build and benefit from the networks that provide such critical insights.

KAM as orchestrator of enterprise collaboration

"The world has changed", says John Bailey of Hiab AB (Director, International Key and OEM Accounts). "Serious business is generated and delivered by team effort orchestrated by key account managers. Customers hold the key

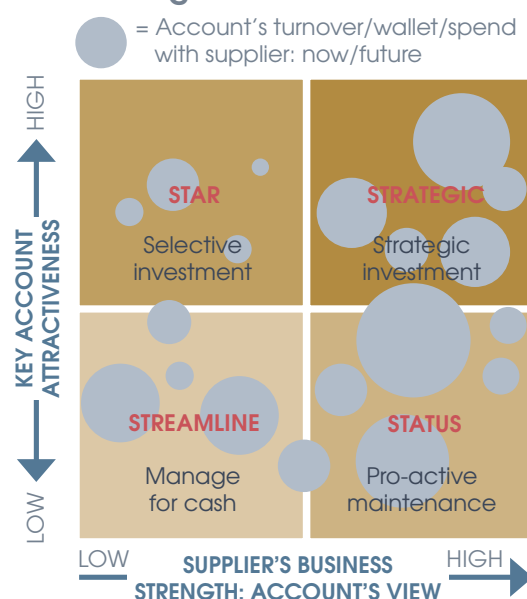
account manager responsible for the whole relationship".

John explains, "In today's hyper-connected, rapidly shifting business landscape, customers no longer seek mere transactional relationships. They want strategic partnerships, proactive solutions, and value that extends far beyond the purchase itself. Partnerships are expected to secure the customer's success as well as our own".

As enterprise-wide orchestrators, key

FIGURE 1

Key Account Selection and Management Matrix



“Key account managers have been disadvantaged by the lack of specific qualifications. So AKAM has begun to fill this important gap”

account managers need to co-ordinate diverse internal resources to create value for the customer. “Customers are experiencing high uncertainty in a changing world and asking whether their supplier is the right partner to guide and support them in the new ecosphere”, says Marco Lippuner of Siemens AG. “Key account managers must bridge the chasm – from value chain interface to ecosystem orchestrator”.

People who have the competencies and attributes to cope and thrive in the role are not too common and, not unreasonably, expect a fair reward for such a demanding role. So careful matching with the client business that will require and reward the investment is important. Figure 2 shows just one

example of the way the KASMM view of your key accounts can be applied. “Business managers” require a wider range of competencies at a higher level to manage a “strategic” client than a “tactician” dealing with a large and tough but simpler and less rewarding relationship with a “streamline” client.

Internal collaboration

Internal collaboration is not a matter of convenience, it is a business imperative. Without it, key account managers cannot present coherent, compelling solutions that address the multifaceted challenges and ambitions of their accounts. It is through their co-ordinated effort that companies demonstrate not only responsiveness but strategic alignment with their customers’ goals.

Key account managers must tap into deep wells of internal knowledge and capability – from legal and compliance to product development, marketing, supply chain management, finance, IT, and customer service. They become the face of the business – its voice, its promise, and its problem-solver. But that presence is only credible when it is underpinned by a robust internal coalition of experts and enablers who are aligned with the account vision. It is a form of internal diplomacy,

requiring influence, insight, and trust.

Clearly, KAM is a big job involving big clients, big business and big issues. However, strangely, some organisations think it can be tagged onto another job – like project manager, product manager, logistics... as if these aren’t substantial and significant roles already. Trying to combine them just ensures poor performance of both.

The essential role of collaboration in KAM

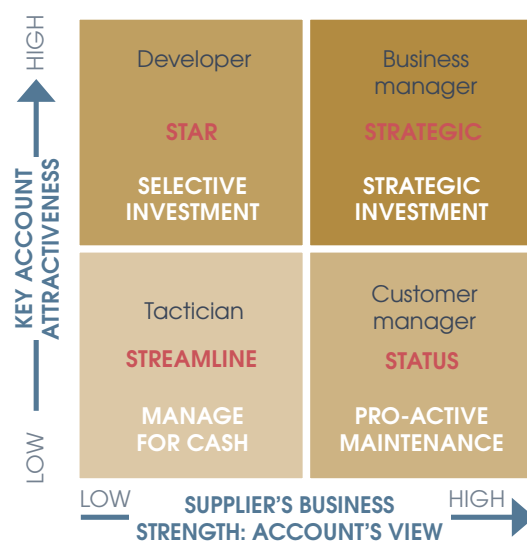
Collaboration lies at the heart of effective key account management. It is not simply a helpful support function – it is a strategic necessity and the defining characteristic of high-performing account strategies. Key accounts want strategic partnerships, proactive solutions, and value that extends far beyond the purchase itself. Collaboration is the critical differentiator that enables organisations to meet these expectations, transforming standard business engagements into enduring, mutually beneficial alliances.

In such a climate, the ability to collaborate cross-functionally, cross-regionally, and across the organisational hierarchy is not optional – it is the core mechanism by which key account managers generate insight, drive alignment, and deliver impact. Without it, even the most well-conceived plans are at risk of falling flat. With it, key account managers can engage customers in ways that are consultative, informed, and deeply relevant.

Modern account management demands a multi-dimensional approach to customer engagement. No longer is it enough to have a single strong contact. Customers are dynamic entities with decision-making units composed of different stakeholders holding diverse and sometimes conflicting priorities. So key account managers need

FIGURE 2

Matching Key Account Manager roles to clients in KASMM



relationships at three critical levels:

- **Corporate level**, where strategic direction is set, and alignment with future vision and organisational transformation is essential.
- **Commercial level**, which includes procurement and finance – functions that are crucial in negotiating contracts, pricing structures, and ROI justifications.
- **Operational level**, where the implementation of solutions takes place, and where satisfaction, adoption, and retention are won or lost.

A deal endorsed by Procurement may falter if Operations find it unworkable. A project beloved by the end-user may be vetoed by leadership without a clear strategic fit. Collaboration across all levels ensures that all critical stakeholders are informed, invested, and aligned.

The key account manager's role is part network-builder, part translator, and part diplomat – constantly navigating shifting landscapes to ensure cohesion between internal capabilities and external expectations.

AKAM: what and why?

Ten years ago, the founders of AKAM realised that KAM and KAM leaders lacked a home that understood the challenges, so they initiated AKAM as:

- a not-for-profit professional membership organisation
- a mission to gain recognition for KAM, professionalise KAM and improve standards of practice
- the establishment of KAM as a professional discipline
- a networking/support/development hub for KAM people

AKAM has much in common with ICW and, like collaboration, KAM's cross functional nature is an issue

in its recognition and application. It can easily drop through the cracks between the silos and departments and get overlooked. Alternatively, trying to operate it collaboratively with others with different ideas and KPIs can cause friction and raise defences.

We offer members a large, online, multi-media resource of KAM reference material, both pragmatic and academic (our Academic Advisory Board sponsors new research projects). Through our website we run webinars, forums and support opportunities.

EMCOR UK gains value from its corporate memberships of both AKAM and ICW. Steve Dolan, Director of Customer Solutions, said: "They are intrinsically linked and complement each other well.

We constantly draw on the insight and activities of both, which has delivered significant benefits to our customers and our business." John Bailey makes great use of Hiab's membership:

"Through AKAM, Hiab now has a network of likeminded professionals, consultants and academics in support of our journey to optimise key account management. AKAM helped me enormously in my endeavours to learn about KAM."

Qualifying key account managers

KAM is a profession as real as HR or marketing – not at all new, but relatively recently validated as such. Historically, key account managers have been disadvantaged by the lack of specific qualifications. So AKAM has begun to fill this important gap.

Through collaborative partnerships with ICW, the Business

Science Institute, the Technological University of Dublin (TUDublin), IÉSEG School of Management (France), continuing professional development (CPD) and more, AKAM hopes to inform, educate and professionalise organisations' approach to KAM, to the benefit of businesses, their customers and their key account managers.

So far, AKAM has developed a Postgraduate Certificate purely in KAM, accredited by TUDublin, now in its fourth year and with over 100 graduates. Self-guided CPD tracks in specific aspects of KAM are open to all members. Newly launched as a Doctorate in Business Administration in KAM (DBA) with BSI. And on the way is an NVQ level 5/HND equivalent.

"Collaboration lies at the heart of effective key account management. It is not simply a helpful support function"

Conclusion

KAM – special treatment for your most strategically important customers – is a concept as obvious and as old as market trading. But many organisations have buried the principle in the complexity and politics of their organisations, and are the poorer for it. However, KAM is a requirement in most B2B companies that is not going away. AKAM's mission is to support and guide businesses and not-for-profit organisations towards successful implementation.

AKAM looks forward to learning from and collaborating with ICW in our respective missions. ■

dianawoodburn@a4kam.org
www.akam.org

Dr Diana Woodburn is President of The Association for Key Account Management



THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Collaboration – more than an ‘art’

ICW

Adrian Miller

Our theme this year for *The Partner*, the ‘art of collaboration’, is to highlight the skills and intuitive aspects of working together effectively – like an artist blending colour and form to create a masterpiece! Collaboration is in fact both ‘art’ and ‘science’, because it involves a combination of creative, people skills and structured, methodical processes that lead to successful outcomes. Here I explore how and why both aspects matter.



TriangleProd / Vecteezy

Collaboration as an ‘art’

The art of collaboration is the creativity, intuition, and emotional intelligence involved in building relationships, fostering trust, and navigating complex dynamics. Collaboration requires people to bring their individual strengths, ideas, and perspectives together. It’s about reading situations, understanding personalities, and knowing how to bring out the best in others, often without

a clear-cut blueprint.

Some key elements to this are:

Building trust and relationships:

Trust isn’t something that can always be quantified, but it’s essential for collaboration. Building genuine, positive relationships requires empathy, communication skills, and the ability to read emotional cues.

Navigating human dynamics:

Every person in a collaboration brings unique perspectives, experiences, and goals. Managing

this diversity with tact, finding common ground, and managing conflicts or differing viewpoints requires intuition and emotional intelligence.

Creative problem-solving:

Collaborating often involves overcoming obstacles or tackling problems in ways that might not have been considered before. This requires out-of-the-box thinking and a flexible, creative approach to finding solutions.



Collaboration as a 'science'

Collaboration is also a 'science' because it can be broken down into structured processes, measurable steps, and data-driven insights that can improve outcomes. Collaboration can benefit from systematic methods, tools, and frameworks that guide teams through different stages, ensuring efficiency and alignment. Here are some of these aspects of collaboration:

Structured frameworks and processes: Models like the eight-stage collaboration lifecycle (ISO 44001), as illustrated in my earlier article in this edition, can help organisations approach collaboration in a structured way. These frameworks lay out clear steps, from planning and assessment to execution and disengagement, ensuring all critical elements are considered.

Metrics and evaluation: Collaboration often involves tracking progress through measurable goals and performance indicators. Whether

it's the completion of tasks, the efficiency of decision-making, or the quality of the relationship, scientific approaches help assess how well collaboration

is working and whether you are getting what you want from it.

Systematic knowledge sharing:

Collaboration thrives on effective knowledge sharing, documentation, and data management. This includes having systems and behaviours that facilitate the effective exchange of information.

Optimisation and continual improvement:

Collaboration benefits significantly from continual evaluation and adjustments, both in performance and relationship building. Teams that review and adjust their strategies and processes based on feedback and results can improve both the current and future collaborations.

*"Finding common ground, and managing conflicts or differing viewpoints **requires intuition and emotional intelligence**"*

Why both matter

Collaboration as an art emphasises the human and interpersonal side, which is vital for engagement, trust, and creativity. On the other hand, the scientific perspective is about ensuring that collaboration is efficient, organised, and consistently producing the desired results. Together, they make collaboration a powerful tool for achieving success – by blending the unpredictable, human-centred dynamics with the dependable, process-driven aspects that ensure things run smoothly and effectively. ■

adrian.miller@icw.uk.com



THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Collaborative state of mind

ICW IRELAND

William Cotter

In today's increasingly complex, fast paced, and interconnected world, collaboration has evolved from a desirable trait to a critical capability. But genuine collaboration goes far beyond simply working alongside others. At its heart lies a deeper, more intentional mindset – a *collaborative state of mind* (CSoM).

Defining the collaborative state of mind

A collaborative state of mind is not a fixed formula. Its meaning may vary between individuals and organisations. For the purpose of this article, CSoM refers to a mental state and way of being that is open, receptive, and committed to working with others toward shared objectives. It is a mindset that fosters environments where people feel safe to contribute, listen deeply, value different perspectives, and co-create meaningful solutions. Individuals embodying a CSoM are often considered team players, and for organisations, possessing a "one team" ethos. They have the capacity

to set aside personal interests, strive towards mutual objectives, and in doing so, communicate collectively and nurture relationships.

Why it matters: Benefits of a CSoM

The impact of cultivating a collaborative state of mind is significant and wide-reaching. At individual, team, and organisational level, the benefits include:

- **Promoting creativity and championing innovation**, by tapping into diverse perspectives and ideas that wouldn't emerge in isolation; leads to increased productivity and efficiency.
- **Improved decision-making**, supported by robust dialogue

satisfaction, as people feel valued, seen and heard.

- **Higher retention**, because individuals stay where their contributions are recognised and respected.

Ultimately, a CSoM empowers people to act decisively and work with purpose, while strengthening the connective tissue that binds teams and cultures together.

How to cultivate a CSoM

Creating a culture where CSoM thrives isn't accidental – it's intentional. Here are some foundational practices to help cultivate it:

- 1 Promote open and transparent communication
- 2 Foster trust, psychological safety, and mutual respect
- 3 Encourage active participation and shared ownership
- 4 Support learning, feedback, and skill development
- 5 Fully recognise and reward collaborative behaviours regularly

It is additionally important to be receptive to new ideas and value them. Be willing to listen to others and consider alternative perspectives beyond our own. Furthermore, demonstrate a willingness to co-operate in working towards the optimum solution, be mindful not to force your own ideas

*"Individuals embodying a CSoM are often considered team players, and for organisations, possessing a one team ethos. **They have the capacity to set aside personal interests, strive towards mutual objectives, and in doing so, communicate collectively and nurture relationships**"*

and inclusive thinking.

- **Enhanced efficiency**, through strengths-based collaboration and a more agile division of labour.
- **Deeper engagement and**



on others. Instead, work together to find a solution that everyone can agree on. It is important to note, once consensus has been achieved, it is essential to fully engage and demonstrate unwavering commitment to the delivery of the agreed-upon outcome.

By fostering an environment that supports the cultivation of a CSoM, individuals and organisations can unlock their full potential, operate effectively at any given moment, achieve greater success, and create a more fulfilling and rewarding work environment and client experience.

Modes of engagement:

Fellow, follower, leader

Nelson Mandela said: "It is better to lead from behind and to put others in front, especially when you celebrate victory when nice things occur. You take the front line when there is danger. Then people will appreciate your leadership."

In collaborative working environments, individuals undertake diverse roles and modalities. These encompass professional attributes,

communication, and interpersonal skills, while adapting and transitioning between positional modes, all while maintaining the qualities associated with a CSoM. An individual can assume the roles, responsibilities, and attributes of a fellow, follower, or leader, irrespective of their title or hierarchical position, as they work towards achieving objectives within the operating environment. The attributes and skills required for each have some commonalities; however, there are also some nuanced differences.

Fellow: From the "fellow" perspective, as an ally to the collaborative endeavour, individuals require certain universal attributes, such as: active listening, clear and concise communication, empathy and emotional intelligence, conflict resolution skills, team and collaborative skills (including open-mindedness, trustworthiness and reliability, shared goals and vision, accountability and responsibility); personal (including growth mindset, positive attitude, flexibility and

adaptability, self-awareness); other considerations (including cultural sensitivity, technological proficiency, time management and organisation, and systemic foresight).

Follower: From the "follower" perspective, when assessing attributes, it is important to recognise that it is not about being a blind follower, more a *proactive* follower, willing to challenge and share ideas. Their attributes should include: openness and curiosity, active engagement, trust and respect, constructive communication, shared understanding, flexibility and adaptability, conflict resolution skills, focus on the collective whole, positive attitude, and continuous learning. These attributes create a foundation for effective teamwork, where individuals can work together to achieve individual and common objectives.

Leader: From the "leader" perspective, when assessing attributes, it is important to recognise that it is not about being

directive in approach, more a *facilitator* of others' success. These should include: strong communication and active listening, trust and empowerment, focus on shared goals, conflict resolution and negotiation, teamwork and collaboration, flexibility and adaptability, emotional and collective intelligence. By embodying these attributes, leaders can foster a collaborative and high-performing team environment where individuals feel valued, empowered, and motivated. However, during times of crisis, it is crucial for leaders to provide clear direction and support to their followers.

The CSoM in an age of diversity

We now live in an age defined by diversity of culture, thought, background, and experience. Engaging this diversity is not a challenge; it is an opportunity. From a CSoM perspective, embracing diversity requires a shift in how we think and lead. It means:

- Valuing difference as a strength
- Fostering inclusion and psychological safety
- Building cultural and collective intelligence

When everyone feels safe, seen, and empowered, collaboration becomes richer, more creative, and more effective.

Communication: Feedback

In a world where effective communication is the cornerstone of successful leadership, the ability to navigate conflicts constructively can transform the dynamics within a team. Nowhere is this more critical than in the way feedback

is delivered and received. When handled well, feedback becomes more than a mechanism for correction; it becomes a powerful catalyst for growth, clarity, and trust. Embodying a collaborative state of mind requires cultivating an environment where open dialogue is encouraged and where feedback is viewed as a shared opportunity for improvement. In such cultures, communication is rooted in mutual respect, curiosity, and the belief that every voice matters. To be effective, feedback should be:

- **Strengths-based:** highlighting what's working, not just what needs improvement
- **Specific and actionable:** focusing on observable behaviours, not personal traits
- **Delivered with care:** grounded in empathy, not criticism

Practising active listening by truly hearing, reflecting, and responding helps build rapport and psychological safety. This, in turn, empowers team members to speak up, take ownership, and collaborate more effectively. Clear communication also requires adaptive styles. Leaders and team members alike must learn when to direct, when to guide, and when to follow, with each style suited to different contexts and outcomes. The language we choose in each mode matters deeply, influencing both perception and impact. By embracing this intentional approach to feedback, teams can move beyond fear of conflict or discomfort. Instead, they foster environments where challenges are addressed constructively, with compassion and care. In doing so, trust is strengthened, resilience grows, and the team evolves together.

A collaborative state of being

Beyond roles and behaviours, CSoM is also a *state of being* – a physiological and emotional state that influences how we show up. This state is governed in part by our vagal nervous system, which regulates our internal environment through two primary pathways:

- **The sympathetic state,** associated with alertness, exertion, and "fight or flight"
- **The parasympathetic state,** linked to calm, creativity, openness, and flow

When we operate in a prolonged sympathetic state, we become reactive and disconnected. But when we engage our parasympathetic system, through breath, presence, and intention, we become more open, collaborative, and grounded. A simple yet powerful practice is slow, nasal breathing in a steady rhythm. It helps activate the parasympathetic system, creating the calm clarity required for genuine collaboration.

In summary

A collaborative state of mind is not a fixed trait – it's a practice, a presence, and a commitment to shared success. While interpretations may differ, its core elements are universal: openness, trust, communication, and purpose. As we move between the roles of fellow, follower, and leader, our ability to embody empathy, humility, and curiosity determines not just our success, but the success of those around us. Great collaboration is not simply about delivering results – it's about elevating the way we relate, engage, and grow. And when we work from a true CSoM, we do more than complete tasks – we build cultures of connection, creativity, and meaning. Collaboration, at its best, is not just what we do. It's who we choose to be. ■
william.cotter@icw.uk.com

The full version of this article with greater details of the requirements that support a collaborative state of mind is on the members' area of ICW's website.

*"Demonstrate a willingness to co-operate in working towards the optimum solution; be mindful not to force your own ideas on others. **Instead, work together to find a solution that everyone can agree on**"*



THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Coaching a collaborative disposition

ICW SCOTLAND

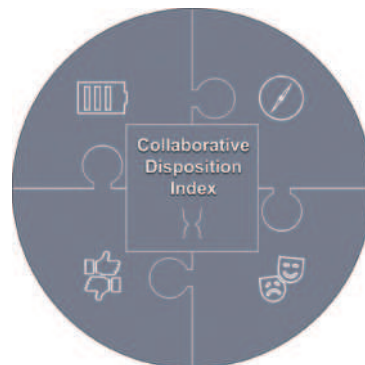
Mike Healy

Have you ever worked on a project that seemed to follow all the processes and procedures but still struggled to achieve the desired outcomes? Sometimes, even the best-laid collaborative working plans fall short without the right mindset.

As a coach, I've had the privilege of guiding leaders and managers through their journey of self-discovery in order to lead and collaborate better. I've witnessed how coaching can help develop a truly collaborative disposition.

What is a collaborative disposition?

A collaborative disposition is more than just a set of behaviours – it's the internal attitude and mindset that drives how people approach working together. It's about wanting to collaborate and actively choosing to engage with others for the collective benefit, *not just knowing*



how to do so. While frameworks like ISO 44001 outline the processes for collaboration, a collaborative disposition ensures that these processes are embraced, followed, and become ingrained in everyday behaviours.

Why a collaborative disposition matters

Processes like ISO 44001 provide clear guidelines for collaboration, but without a collaborative disposition, even the most effective frameworks can fall short. Here's why developing a collaborative disposition is just as critical:

Processes alone aren't enough

ISO 44001 offers a solid framework for collaboration, detailing roles, responsibilities, and expectations. However, without individuals actively embracing these processes, they remain theoretical. A collaborative disposition ensures that people are committed to working together,



fostering a mindset of shared goals. When collaboration is internalised, it's not just about following procedures, it's about actively working with others to create better outcomes.

Collaboration requires emotional intelligence

One of the key aspects of ISO 44001 is relationship management and trust-building. However, these things cannot be mandated by process alone. They require emotional intelligence – the ability to empathise, communicate effectively, and navigate conflicts constructively. A collaborative disposition fosters emotional intelligence, enabling

individuals to understand and respond to the needs of their colleagues. This is essential for the trust and communication necessary in any collaborative process, including ISO 44001.

Processes don't change behaviours – people do

ISO 44001 offers the process, but it's individuals who must change their behaviours to make collaboration a success. A collaborative disposition is about consistently choosing co-operation over competition, embracing shared responsibility, and being open to others' ideas and contributions. This

disposition drives behaviours that ensure processes like ISO 44001 aren't just implemented – they become an integral part of an organisation's culture.

A collaborative disposition fosters accountability

ISO 44001 encourages collaboration through formal roles, responsibilities, and performance measures. But accountability in collaboration goes beyond checking boxes. It's about individuals holding themselves and their teammates accountable for the team's collective success.

SKILL	BEFORE COACHING	AFTER COACHING
Emotional intelligence	Struggled to regulate emotions, leading to reactive behaviour. Limited empathy for others	Calm and emotionally self-aware. Emphasises with team members and understands their challenges
Listening skills	Focussed on expressing own ideas, often overlooking others' input	Actively listens to all perspectives, ensuring everyone feels heard
Communication	Dominated conversations, lacked clarity and struggled to inspire team trust	Communicates clearly and inclusively, fostering open and honest dialogue
Approach to collaboration	Viewed colleagues as competitors; prioritised individual achievement	Sees colleagues as partners and values shared goals over individual success
Conflict resolution	Avoided or escalated conflicts, leading to strained relationships within the team	Confidently resolves conflicts constructively, strengthening relationships and team unity
Accountability	Inconsistent follow-through on commitments, eroding trust within the team	Takes ownership of responsibilities, modelling accountability and building trust
Trust	Limited trust in others; hesitated to delegate or rely on team members	Trusts team members, delegates effectively, and fosters a reliable, supportive environment
Mindset toward challenges	Feared mistakes and resisted change; viewed challenges as obstacles	Embraces a growth mindset, seeing challenges and failures as opportunities for learning
Inclusivity	Operated with unconscious biases, unintentionally excluding diverse perspectives	Acknowledges and overcomes biases, actively valuing and seeking diverse contributions
Collaborative behaviours	Rarely engaged in team decision-making; preferred to work independently	Practises inclusive decision-making and encourages active team involvement in problem-solving
Leadership style	Focused on personal performance, failing to inspire teamwork or collective success	Models collaboration, inspiring the team to work cohesively toward shared goals

A collaborative disposition fosters accountability by encouraging individuals to take responsibility not only for their own tasks but for the team's overall achievements.

The role of coaching in developing a collaborative disposition

While ISO 44001 and similar frameworks provide the structural support for collaboration, coaching plays a crucial role in developing the mindset necessary to make those frameworks effective. The table below shows how coaching can help.

Coaching helps the individual to:

1 Understand how their past successes shape collaboration

People who have thrived in competitive or resource-limited environments often develop habits that focus on personal achievement rather than teamwork. Coaching helps individuals recognise how their previous experiences shape their thinking and behaviour, sometimes making it harder to trust others or share ideas. By becoming more self-aware, they can start to shift towards a more collaborative mindset.

2 Develop emotional intelligence for better teamwork

Success in high-pressure environments often rewards independence and control, but collaboration requires emotional intelligence – understanding and managing emotions to work well with others. Coaching helps individuals recognise when their competitive instincts might be blocking teamwork and teaches them skills to build trust, communicate openly, and resolve conflicts in a constructive way.

3 Learn to listen and communicate openly

In competitive workplaces, people may be used to playing their cards close to their chest or pushing their own ideas forward, rather than truly listening to others. Coaching encourages active listening, helping individuals become more open to different perspectives. This shift ensures that collaboration is based on mutual respect, making it easier to work effectively with others.

4 Take responsibility in a team environment

Personal success often depends on individual effort, but in a collaborative setting, responsibility must be shared. Coaching helps individuals understand that their contributions affect the whole team. By embracing accountability – both for their own actions and for supporting others – they can create a work culture where teamwork is valued and rewarded.

5 Move from 'me' to 'we'

For those who have succeeded in competitive environments, the idea of prioritising team success over personal achievement can feel unfamiliar. Coaching helps

individuals shift their mindset, showing them that collaboration doesn't mean losing out – it means achieving more together. By valuing shared goals over individual wins, they can build stronger, more effective teams.

A collaborative disposition completes the picture

While a framework like ISO 44001 offers a much-needed roadmap for collaboration, it cannot function without the individuals who adopt it. A collaborative disposition is as essential as the process that guides collaboration. It's the mindset that turns guidelines into the effective, meaningful, quid pro quo of collaboration. Without this disposition, even the best collaborative frameworks risk becoming just another set of rules that don't resonate with the people who need to apply them.

If you're looking to maximise the success of your collaborative process, developing a collaborative disposition within your team is the missing link. With the right coaching and mindset shift, individuals can embrace collaboration and unlock greater success – for themselves, their teams, and their organisations. ■

mike.healy@faceoffgroup.com

Mike Healy, BA, MBA, FCIPD, FICW, Associate Director at ICW Scotland, coaches leaders and managers seeking personal and organisational performance improvement. Using the Adaptive Coaching approach, the coaching is tailored to meet specific needs and preferences. www.faceoffgroup.com

*“A collaborative disposition is more than just a set of behaviours – **it's the internal attitude and mindset that drives how people approach working together**”*



THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

The art of the collaborative deal

ATKINSRÉALIS

Richard Holm

I cannot ignore the fact that this year's topic, "the art of collaboration", is intricately entwined with the global narrative and analysis of "the art of the deal". For reference, it is early March, and I have no specific foresight of how the current state of geopolitics will play out. There are some behaviours that are predictable, but that is all I can say at this junction. For those that do not know me, I have been known to describe myself as "an idealist with scars".

The reality is that deals fail all the time, and sometimes the question is: at what point? Was it before the initial deal was made or after the agreement was made? Was it because there was no acknowledgement or assessment of the need or impact of planned or unplanned change? Or was it because any assumptions made before the deal was made were based on anecdotal evidence only?

Begin with the end in mind

The beauty of structured collaboration is that it asks organisations going into any new deal, to come together and be clear of the baseline objectives, goals, benefits, risks, costs, and resources through the evaluation of operational awareness. The approach enables (and at times challenges) us to have difficult conversations very early on, to find the win-win and reinforce the interrogation of win-win deals as new information arises.

As such, the first test is to understand the intent of each party and what they both want out of the deal. This is where you need high degrees of trust to share what is important, even if individually there

are not obvious joint objectives. You can only ever collaborate on purposes that are clearly joint and of mutual benefit.

For example, no public body will want their private contracted company to make excessive profit, they are however interested in ensuring continued commercial resilience, specifically to avoid a repeat of the Carillion or ISG, administration scenarios that leave supply chains struggling to survive in their wake.

So, while a "client-contractor" relationship would never be predicated on a contractor attaining a specified margin, you can both agree that there is mutual value to the contractors continuing commercial resilience and survival. And that additional "value" is created through the skills retention (directly through the people involved and indirectly through the supply chain) over the whole life of the relationship (including any national level interests in skills or sovereign capabilities).

The recent Procurement Act 2023 (a new regime for public procurement), reinforces this, having moved away from "MEAT" (most economically advantageous tender) to "MAT". It recognises also that some of the "most advantageous value" is not directly connected to pure economics, but could also be social, environmental, asset life extension, and potentially even a political desire to uphold the values, and checks and balances of the rule of law.

In such an environment, the art of the collaborative deal is one that points towards joint outcomes and mutual benefit. It is the combination of trust, confidence, skill and clarity that creates the right environment for those win-win deals to be

*"It is the combination of trust, confidence, skill and clarity **that creates the right environment for those win-win deals to be made**"*



CreativeMim09 / Vecteezy

made. It is the structure of revisiting those intended benefits that will endure the win-win, or equally provides sufficient clarity as to when an exit is the right thing by both parties.

A non-collaborative deal is where one party puts their self-interests and their purpose above everything else. While it may succeed in the short term, it is not a sustainable model, unless you only intend to work in one place, with one supply chain in any single given location in a lifetime.

*“You cannot have a collaboration **without** a joint objective with mutual benefit”*

Keep revisiting the business case for collaboration

I have been asked previously to advise on a situation where there was a partnering agreement in place but was being summarily ignored by the words or actions of one of the partners. My first questions were: When did you last check that the original intent

(of the deal made) is still valid? What have you learned since you started working together? How are you still making additional value by working this way?

If we take this scenario, at its simplest level when the two parties came together with positive intent and an understanding of what is important to each other, they were able to articulate what topics were important and jointly agreed at the outset.

What is useful to recognise is that in a lot of scenarios, these joint topics, and their relative importance, change over time.

The point is that you cannot have a collaboration without a joint objective with mutual benefit (the outcome that realises the intended additional value). If you don't have that, then we are not actually collaborating, but, to use the remainder of my five Cs from last year's article

in *The Partner*, we are still either co-operating, or co-ordinating (we might be simply compliant or responding to coercion). These latter options are still legitimate ways of conducting organisational relationships, but it is important not to conflate the two things.

Understand what you both value and at what level it will show up

The art of the collaborative deal is to establish in the first place "who is inside the tent?" and "what is the strategic intent of the relationship?".

"If... one party is purely putting their self-interests first and is attempting to unilaterally leverage a situation for personal gain, then be under no illusion, this is a coercive working relationship"

This is where the approach is a balance of art and science. For example, science says that we as humans have an evolved sense of when there is a dissonance between what someone is saying ("I want us to be collaborative"), and their actions ("I am not willing to have the mirror held up to see if I am part of the problem as well as the solution"). The art is to engage with people in a way that overcomes that dissonance.

The best starting point is to understand the difference between our values – what is important and informs what matters – and the mutual additional value you create when both parties adjust their way of working, in order to attain an aligned benefit or outcome.

If, as we observe currently that one party is purely putting their self-interests first and is attempting to unilaterally leverage a situation for personal gain, then be under no illusion, this is a coercive working relationship. It should be treated with an appropriate due diligence of the contractual expectations of each other.

If, on the other hand, both parties have mutual stated joint values, then the pursuit of a genuine and vested interest in mutual additional value will lead to an enduring deal.

For example, if at the highest level those who represent us are motivated by the fundamentals of a democratic society, preserving the rule of law, or creating a lasting and just world peace, then in those instances maybe these higher values should be what informs all other decisions.

As to our current geopolitical climate, I still believe collaboration is possible if you believe the principle that **"all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."**

And if that principle (or indeed any other equivalent higher principle) is the starting point for any international collaborative deal, when entering in good faith into a collaborative deal, then perhaps that is the best starting point.

The collaborative deal will then endure and will always be more resilient, especially when faced with higher levels of uncertainty.

And no, I am not naïve; I am still an idealist, despite the scars. ■
richard.holm@atkinsrealis.com



THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

The power of shared purpose

SCHELLINGPOINT

Michael Taylor

Fort Collins, Colorado, sits at the foot of the Rockies. A small mining town in 1910, by 2010 it was the size of Oxford. The original Arthur Ditch – constructed to channel mountain water into the town and local farms – struggled to keep pace with the growth. In 2000, city engineers warned it would fail. But no action was taken. In 2005, they repeated the warning, with no response. In 2010, they predicted imminent catastrophic failure.

The state of Colorado, Fort Collins' city government, the maintenance organisations, the ownership trust... no one wanted the responsibility and liability of fixing this vital, fragile irrigation system

Then a consulting firm in Denver suggested they conduct a strategic collaboration. They led a one-day meeting using the SchellingPoint group decision-making process. The state and city engineers and officials, plus bankers and citizen and farm representatives left with a shared purpose, defined goals, and a plan to fund, conduct, and maintain the Arthur Ditch. Over the next two years, the Arthur Ditch was repaired and future-proofed on time and on budget.

Making purpose an active asset in your collaboration

Organisations proudly promote their vision, mission, and purpose. Sports teams rally around the singular objective to win it all. Individuals with a sense of purpose are said to live longer. And collaborations with a clear purpose are said to be more successful. But for purpose to influence behaviour, it must be more than platitudes.

Specificity begins by moving from the idea of a "common purpose" to one of "shared purpose". While common purpose is passive, almost decorative, shared

purpose is active and deliberate. It demands more than agreement that we have a common purpose – it demands acknowledgment. "This is our shared purpose" is not a suggestion; it's a question of membership. Are you in or out?

To accept a shared purpose is to accept interdependence: your actions – and inactions – affect

"Governing a strategic collaboration is not about avoiding failure or acceptable compromise. It is about reaching the collective optimum"

not only your own success but the success of others and the entire collaboration. Shared purpose is not a philosophical ideal; it's a strategic necessity. It becomes the group's anchor, especially when friction arises, and easy consensus disappears.

Understanding the game we're playing

To understand how to create such a shared purpose, we must turn briefly to "game theory". For some, the phrase conjures up dense equations and chalk-covered blackboards, but fear not – there's no maths test.

In game theory, any situation where two or more individuals interact is considered a game. Business collaborations are "serious" games and they are either zero-sum or non-zero-sum. In a zero-sum game, one person's gain equals another's loss. Casinos offer a perfect example: your winnings are their losses.

Business collaborations are intended to be non-zero-sum games, where success is not limited to a single winner. In non-zero-sum situations, everyone can benefit (win-win), everyone can fail (lose-lose), or there is some combination in between. The target outcomes require co-ordination and co-operation, not competition.

To go deeper, strategic collaborations are "mixed-motive", non-zero-sum games. Mixed-motive reflects the reality that people rarely act for just one reason. Each participant constantly weighs personal incentives (Me) against collaborative objectives (We), and they do so repeatedly over the collaboration's lifecycle.

Some of these Me versus We choices are instinctive; others are carefully considered. In each case, individuals assess whether the personal/local gain outweighs the collective/global benefit. The Me motivations usually include individual interests, team priorities, departmental goals, and company needs. The We motivators are the group's shared goals identifying the project's purpose (see Figure 1).

The outcomes of each participant's micro-decisions aggregate into one macro state: from "failure", where collaboration breaks down, and no one wins; through the "lowest common denominator", where the group settles for an outcome that is acceptable to all but optimal for none; to the "collective optimum", where the collaboration achieves a result greater than the sum of the individual contributions – what might be called $1+1+1=4$. Governing a strategic collaboration is not about avoiding failure or acceptable compromise. It is about reaching the collective optimum.

– but pervasive. When there is awareness, the desire to appear "collaborative" usually suppresses frank acknowledgment of this operational reality.

In the collaboration game, every Me versus We decision is a moment of co-operation or defection – the classic "prisoner's dilemma". There is no neutral ground. Acknowledging that your collaboration is a mixed-motive, non-zero-sum game enables you to manage and optimise it publicly. It enables hidden inaction, conflicting unilateral action, and camouflaged delaying actions, for example, to be prevented.

Acknowledge the game

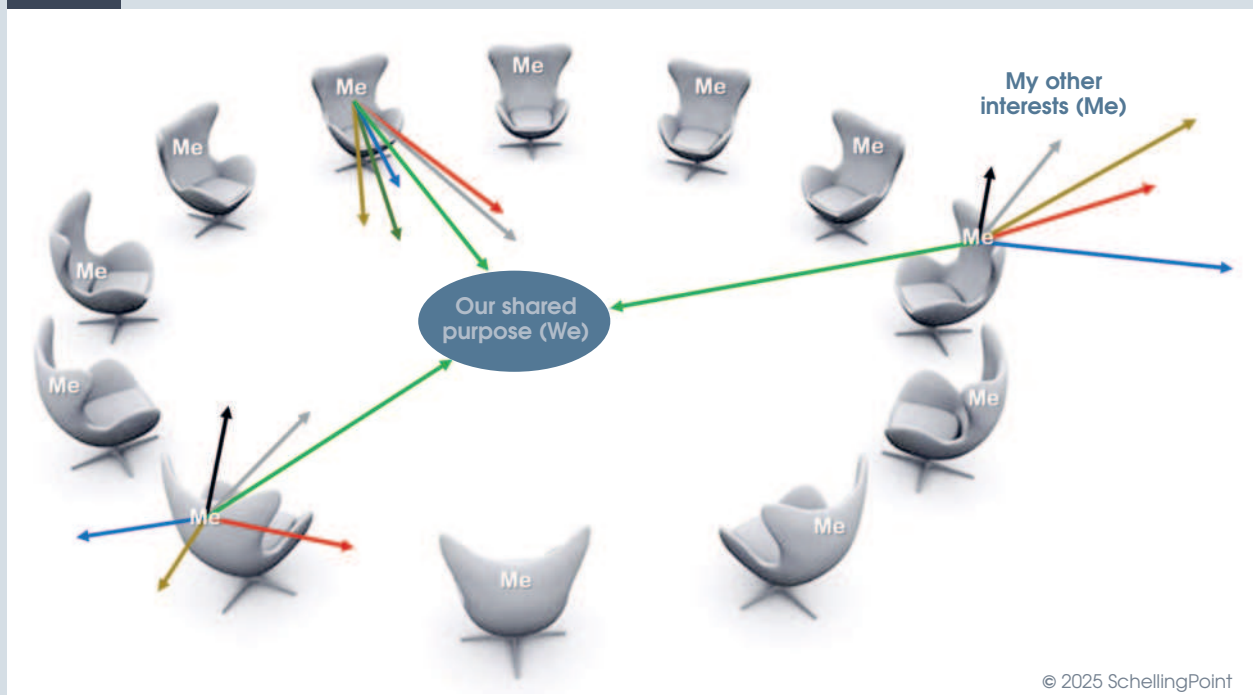
SchellingPoint's research revealed that a foundational flaw in collaborations is the failure to recognise that collaboration is, by definition, a mixed-motive non-zero-sum game. This lack of awareness is unintentional, a failure in managerial development

The missing asset:

The topic title

Few collaborations know to clarify their "We". After articulating the business case, crafting a strategy, and assigning a name like *Project Symphony*, the group may feel their purpose is clear. But these are cosmetic labels – useful

FIGURE 1



© 2025 SchellingPoint

for branding, but insufficient for aligning micro-decisions and guiding collective optimum behaviour.

First, a topic title is needed – a functional asset that explicitly defines the group’s shared purpose in practical, tangible terms. A topic title contains three components:

- a gerund (a noun formed from a verb and ending in “ing”)
- a subject (what the collaboration is about)
- a timeframe (how long the collaboration will operate).

For example: *Determining How to Keep the Arthur Ditch Irrigation System Fully Operational over the Next Ten Years*

That is what *We* are here to do. It becomes the lens through which all *Me* versus *We* micro-decisions are made. The topic title reminds participants of the shared goal when internal tensions arise. Those in a bind use it to find unilateral and collaborative ways out of their bind.

Real-world topic titles

Here are examples from real strategic collaborations:

- *Doubling the Competitiveness and Profitability of BPM Contracts over the next 12 Months*
- *Optimizing the Acquisition Integration’s Impact over the next 24 Months*
- *Accelerating our Innovation Time-to-Market by Half by 2023*
- *Creating a Five-Year Global Pediatric Healthcare Innovation Strategy across our 250 Hospitals*
- *Reducing the Cost of Supply Chain operations by 15% over the next 18 months*

After acknowledging that you are in a serious game and creating your topic title, the next step is

“Shared purpose is not a philosophical ideal; it’s a strategic necessity. It becomes the group’s anchor, especially when friction arises, and easy consensus disappears”

making the end-state outcome defined, specific, and measurable as granularly as possible. Take that list of objectives on the goals slide – that no one could argue with as they all make sense and sound reasonable – and make them unambiguous, and then rank them.

This is essential because in *Me* versus *We* binds, when the shared purpose and the end state are unclear, short-term, personal losses tend to outweigh long-term, collective gains – a phenomenon known as “temporal discounting”.

collaboration disappears. They are replaced by the prediction of prisoner’s dilemmas and how these will be maximised; proactive sharing and joint resolution of *Me/We* binds; and increased trust – upon which all collaborations succeed or fail. ■

mtaylor@schellingpoint.com

Vertical and horizontal alignment

Once mastered, topic titles are a fractal tool. A large collaboration comprises one or more layers of sub-collaborations, each with its shared purpose and measurable objectives. Clear topic titles at each level enable consistent alignment and co-ordination – vertically and horizontally – across the collaboration.

Acknowledging the serious game and giving it a well-formed topic title with defined outcomes increases collaborative action in numerous ways, and the sense of frustration and tension in your

Michael Taylor is CEO of SchellingPoint, an applied research company specialising in group decision-making and strategic collaboration. Our work draws on research and real-world application to equip leaders with the tools to make collective action more intelligent, equitable, and effective



THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

The collaborative journey: Unstructured collaboration to ISO 44000, a research study

GRAHAM

Denis Leonard

The aim of this research was to seek from practitioners the experience of their collaboration journey. This included informal unstructured collaboration, more formal structured approaches and the implementation and management of ISO 44001.

The organisations that were included in the study had, over a period of years, progressed from unstructured to more structured collaboration and had ultimately achieved third party certification to ISO 44001. These organisations were leading proponents of collaboration and had a rich and technical experience of applying collaboration. The senior managers that were involved in

the implementation and management of ISO 44001 were identified due to their expertise in the topic, but also, critically, due to their role in the collaborative journey that the organisation had undertaken, and their knowledge of the reasoning for the decisions made on that journey.

Interviews were conducted with ten organisations from a range of industries that were certified to ISO 44001.

collaboration?

- 5 What impacts have you seen from collaboration?
- 6 What lessons have you learned during your collaborative journey?
- 7 What do you think is the future for collaboration and ISO 44001?

Collaboration was adopted and embraced by two types of organisations: those that had a natural collaborative culture and those that had a transactional approach and were experiencing challenging relationships. Both saw collaboration as a means to improve and develop relationships and performance.

Those that progressed from an unstructured to a structured approach and ultimately ISO 44001, wanted a structure to drive collaboration in a more efficient manner and to have a defined process to manage collaboration and evaluate its performance.

“More clients are asking for collaboration and ISO 44001; it is increasing in importance, and it will continue to play a major role in business”

The demographics of the participating sample of companies were:

- **Turnover:**
£380m-£15bn
- **Employees:**
1,200-9,000
- **Industrial sectors:**
Construction, engineering services, technology, facilities, transportation.

The questions were:

- 1 Why and how was unstructured collaboration introduced to the organisation? What were your views and perceptions of it?
- 2 Why was a more structured approach implemented and why was ISO 44001 certification gained?
- 3 What are the advantages and challenges of unstructured, structured collaboration and ISO 44001?
- 4 What do you consider to be the role of behaviours in

Advantages

The advantages of unstructured collaboration are its organic, open, fast and flexible nature, while its challenges are that it can lack consistency and be vague and fragile. The advantages of structured collaboration are its focus on process which provides a guide, rigor, discipline and consistency that makes collaboration easier to manage, control and evaluate. Its challenge is that if it is too structured it can become restrictive and burdensome.

Behaviours are seen as fundamental to collaboration, and they need to be driven by leadership through strong values to create a true collaborative culture.

There is evidence of significant financial and non-financial positive impacts from collaboration. This includes savings of millions of pounds per year, retention of key clients, improved customer satisfaction, improved behaviours and improvement in productivity.

The key lessons learned were that structure is important in collaboration and the executive team need to be completely supportive of collaboration. It was seen as critical to establish objectives, expectations, behavioural assessments and exit strategy as early as possible and that metrics need to be in place

early to measure the impact of collaboration.

Finally, the ability to be adaptable was considered as key to collaboration and it needs to be viewed as an important investment.

As for the future, more clients are asking for collaboration and ISO 44001; it is increasing in importance, and it will continue to play a major role in business. To develop collaboration there is a need for sharing ideas such as best practices and JRMPs. Meanwhile, ISO 44001 itself needs to develop and adapt and there needs to be more involvement from SMEs.

The Collaborative Journey Model (shown below) helps to articulate the experienced collaborative journey, highlighting the fundamentals

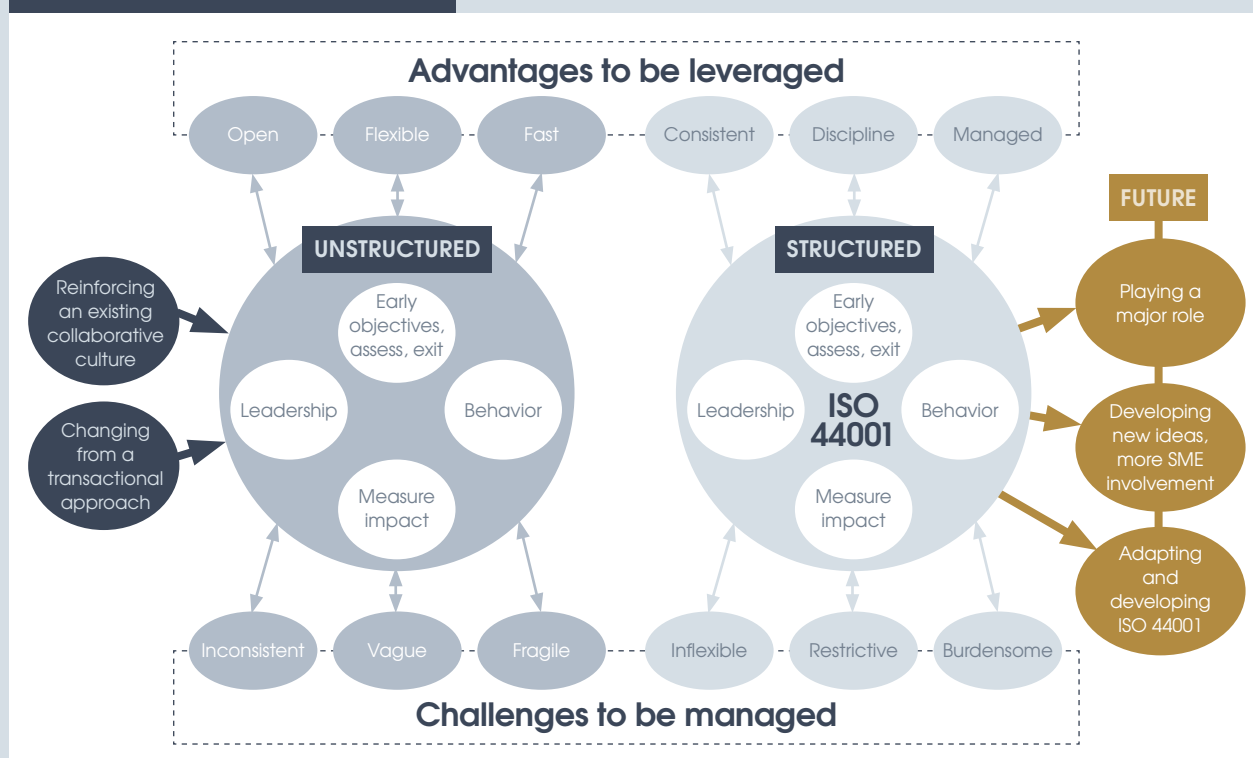
“There is evidence of significant financial and non-financial positive impacts from collaboration”

that can ensure success and the advantages and challenges of each fundamental element that need to be constantly managed.

Every organisation has its own unique circumstances and collaborative needs. For some, unstructured collaboration is the best course, for others it's a structured approach, and for the others it may have to be ISO 44001. For many, it may be a journey through each. ■

denis.leonard@graham.co.uk

THE COLLABORATIVE JOURNEY MODEL





THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

AI: Enriching collaboration

ICW & AFFINITEXT

Bill Taylor
Graham Thomson

AI is poised to have a significant impact on the management of contracts and the development and sustainment of collaboration. Its ability to analyse vast datasets, improve efficiency and automate key processes makes it a powerful tool for enhancing collaborative working. However, it is important to recognise that while AI can improve systems and processes, the human element remains at the core of successful collaboration. Moreover, experience has shown that thus far AI assessments may not contain the full information or understanding, and a degree of validation should be undertaken either by asking a variety of AI questions and, or, from other assessment methods.

Supporting collaboration development

AI can assist in shaping effective collaboration models by analysing past experiences, organisational drivers, processes and procedures, stakeholder needs and cultural factors. It can help assess collaboration maturity, identify potential risks arising from differences in strategic direction, and support teams in structuring partnerships for success.

While AI can offer guidance on collaboration strategies, it does not replace the human behaviours that build trust and alignment. Rather, it provides a data-driven

foundation to help organisations make more informed decisions on how, when and where to apply collaborative approaches.

Data-driven decision making

We live in a data age where organisations have access to vast amounts of information that, if used effectively, can transform collaboration. AI enables organisations to harness this data in meaningful ways, offering insights into:

- Survey results, stakeholder feedback and behavioural assessments

- Project, contract, collaboration, and asset performance over time
- Risk mitigation impacts, cost efficiency and benefit realisation
- External and internal factors impacting collaboration success

With AI-driven analysis, organisations can develop collaboration strategies that are built for longevity – identifying patterns, learning from past experiences and ensuring that partnerships remain adaptive and resilient in an ever-changing environment.

Improved contract, project and asset management: ensuring long-term success

Contracts, projects and assets are no longer static; they must evolve to align with new technologies, regulatory changes and emerging risks. AI strengthens management processes by helping organisations:

- Detect emerging risks and trends before they escalate
- Maintain up-to-date, digitised, conformed contract versions
- Automate tracking of obligations, performance and interdependencies
- Structure contract, project and asset data for real-time validation and insight
- Ensure asset lifecycle data – spanning maintenance, compliance and handover – is captured and structured for long-term operational efficiency

With AI, organisations can shift from *reactive to proactive* management, embedding resilience and adaptability into their contract, project and asset strategies.



“AI cannot replicate the human elements that drive successful collaboration – trust, leadership and cultural alignment remain paramount”

Automated compliance and auditing

AI enhances compliance and auditing by automating checks against contractual, regulatory, management system and product standards, and asset management obligations. This is particularly valuable in complex, high-governance sectors such as infrastructure, defence and government collaborations. By improving efficiency and minimising human error, AI frees up teams to focus on strategic decision-making rather than manual oversight.

Enhancing, not replacing, the people component

AI cannot replicate the human elements that drive successful collaboration – trust, leadership and cultural alignment remain paramount. While AI can map collaboration models and potentially even act as a “digital twin” for process optimisation and decision making, it is people who ultimately shape relationships, resolve challenges and foster alignment within partnerships.

Practical AI applications in collaboration

AI is already transforming how organisations work together, with applications including:

- **AI-powered training and development:** personalised learning modules tailored to meet the required collaboration skills and competencies, and the collaboration policies, processes and procures.
- **Enhanced stakeholder engagement:** AI-driven analysis of communication patterns to improve engagement strategies

- **Innovation in collaborative technologies:** AI-enabled platforms facilitating knowledge sharing and best practice transfer
- **Exit, handover and asset data management:** AI-assisted assessment of contract changes, asset handover readiness, lifecycle status and personnel impacts at project closeout

Conclusion: AI as an enabler of smarter collaboration

AI can equip organisations with data-driven tools to refine and enhance collaboration. It strengthens decision-making, improves efficiency and supports the design of effective collaboration models – while keeping people at the centre of success.

By recognising that data is the currency of the digital age, organisations can harness AI to *future-proof* their collaborative efforts – ensuring that contracts, projects and assets remain agile, resilient and aligned with evolving challenges. ■

bill.taylor@icw.uk.com
graham.thomson@affinitext.com



“With AI, organisations can shift from reactive to proactive management, embedding resilience and adaptability into their contract, project and asset strategies”



Strengthening internal collaboration as a core capability for change and innovation

ICW

Henry Pavey

Across the UK, senior leaders are increasingly recognising the importance of internal collaboration as a core capability for driving change and innovation, ultimately accelerating organisational success. Recent research by Frost and Sullivan found that companies that actively foster internal collaboration are 30% more innovative and 36% more productive than companies that do not.

INTERNAL COLLABORATION: BOTTOM LINE BENEFITS



What do we mean by "internal collaboration"? At ICW, we define it as *a process for engaging staff from different parts of the same company; to work together on a shared goal or project that no one part of the company can deliver on its own.*

Critically, undertaking internal collaboration well brings clear demonstrable bottom line benefits to a company – something all senior leaders should take to heart.

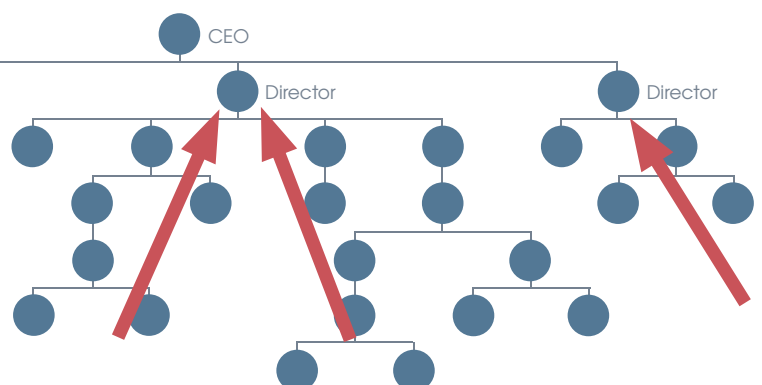
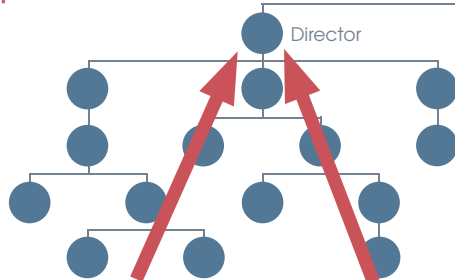
Besides these demonstrable bottom line benefits, it goes to say that companies that foster their internal collaboration capabilities

are also far more effective and successful at external collaboration.

For senior leaders, the challenge they face is how to extract maximum value – such as innovation and change – from their company's internal collaboration activities. But why is this a challenge? Surely nothing could be easier than

WHY IS INTERNAL COLLABORATION SO CHALLENGING? (1)

Hierarchical structures (silos) aligned around professional functions



getting staff from different parts of the same company working together? If only that were true.

The majority of staff sit in departments with people from the same profession as themselves such as lawyers sit with lawyers; marketing people with marketing people; procurement people with procurement. They understand the culture of their own department and their hierarchical reporting requirements. It could be said that they understand the rules of the game.

However, when it comes to internal collaboration activities, staff – in many cases – do not actually know the rules of the game.

They can feel vulnerable and uncomfortable. This, in turn, can raise barriers such as professional and departmental silos, conflicting priorities and deadlines, accountability and information hoarding that can and do hinder effective, efficient and engaging

internal collaboration activities. These lead to the internal collaboration promise underperforming and struggling to deliver, and ultimately leading to senior leadership frustration.

Given this, the big questions facing senior leaders are:

- 1 How can we measure and understand our internal collaboration capability – strengths and development needs – in order to baseline where we are today?
- 2 How can we develop our internal collaboration capability and unleash our collective potential ensuring we take our staff with us in a safe, fully confidential and non-confrontational way?

This is where the ICW's internal collaboration evaluation and action road map service can help senior leaders across the UK.

Through an online questionnaire, staff are encouraged to rank 12

best practice statements and are also invited to leave comments as to why they ranked statements as they did. All responses are totally anonymous and confidential.

The quantitative scoring data and the qualitative rich picture data are collated and analysed by ICW and then presented in a dedicated senior leadership workshop.

At the workshop facilitated by ICW, the company's senior leaders consider the internal collaboration evaluation findings and collectively identify strengths and development needs; agree their key priorities for action; and agree an internal collaboration action road map to strengthen the company's internal collaboration capabilities. Implementation then follows with agreed monitoring arrangements. ■ henry.pavey@icw.uk.com

To find out more, email Henry Pavey, Associate Director, ICW, to arrange a no obligation strategy meeting.

WHY IS INTERNAL COLLABORATION SO CHALLENGING? (2)

Working across silos (departmental and professional) can feel uncomfortable and vulnerable



ICW INTERNAL COLLABORATION EVALUATION AND ACTION ROAD MAP IMPROVEMENT SERVICE

Confidential questionnaire = quantitative 'scoring' data

Internal Collaboration Evaluation - Top 10 Issues									
Issue	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Lack of communication	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2. Lack of resources	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
3. Lack of training	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
4. Lack of motivation	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
5. Lack of time	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
6. Lack of information	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
7. Lack of support	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
8. Lack of recognition	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
9. Lack of feedback	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
10. Lack of accountability	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21

Confidential responses = quantitative 'rich picture' data



Internal collaboration senior leaders workshop



- 1 Consider IC evaluation findings
- 2 Agree IC priorities for action
- 3 Agree IC action road map

Internal collaboration action road map



- 1 Staff communication
- 2 Implement IC action road map
- 3 Monitor delivery and impact



Healthcare and collaboration rooted in evidence-based practice and human behaviour

ICW

Trevor Gore

When I was invited to contribute to *The Partner*, it was with the understanding that my perspective would be rooted in healthcare – a field where the question of “art versus science” is far from settled. That tension offers a fitting analogy for exploring collaboration itself.

In medicine, we often ask: is it an art or a science? Those who lean toward the “art” side argue that every patient – and every clinician – is unique. From this perspective, no single approach is universally correct; clinical intuition, experience, and empathy are seen as essential to delivering truly personalised care.

In contrast, the “science” camp believes in evidence-based practice. These clinicians rely on

data, research, and standardised protocols to inform treatment decisions. To them, medicine is a discipline rooted in predictable outcomes, not gut feeling.

At ICW, we take a similarly structured approach to

collaboration – what might be called the “science” of working together. We emphasise process, frameworks, and clarity. Yet we also recognise a fundamental truth: collaboration only works when people make it work. And people, as any behavioural economist will tell you, do not always behave predictably.

This brings us to Nobel laureate Daniel Kahneman, whose 2011 book *Thinking, Fast and Slow* drew widespread attention to the field of behavioural economics (BE). Although Kahneman’s Nobel Prize



was in economics, his background in psychology reshaped our understanding of human decision-making. As author Michael Lewis put it, BE revealed that “humans aren’t the rational creatures we imagined”, with implications across sectors – from medicine and governance to finance and, yes, collaboration.

One of the central assumptions in both healthcare and collaborative work is that people will do the right thing – if only they know what that is. But we have all seen how often that is not the case. Whether it is a negotiation where someone acts against their own interests, or a project derailed by poor communication, good intentions

“The frameworks and structures we build are essential, but understanding and shaping human behaviour is what truly makes collaboration work”



Shirwood Weerawong / Vecteezy

frequently fall short. This gap between intention and action lies at the heart of behavioural economics, which helps us understand why people behave one way – even when they intend another.

influence

In BE, a bias is a systematic error in thinking – a tendency to make decisions that deviate from logic or evidence. There are more than 100 documented biases that influence our choices. Understanding just a few of them can improve how we collaborate, communicate, and make decisions.

Here are three biases that I find particularly relevant in both healthcare and collaboration:

1 Loss aversion

People fear losses more than they value equivalent gains. In collaborative work, this means framing conversations around what both parties stand to lose by not co-operating can be more motivating than highlighting potential benefits. In healthcare, it explains why patients might resist change – even when the change is clearly positive.

2 Commitment devices

These are pre-agreed mechanisms, like written pledges or shared goals, which help people follow through on intentions. In team settings, small, consistent commitments

can build momentum and accountability. This approach is increasingly used in patient care too, where behavioural “nudges” can improve adherence.

3 Social proof

People are more likely to co-operate or behave ethically when they see others doing the same. Highlighting case studies, positive team behaviours, or successful examples from peers can reinforce collaborative norms and increase buy-in.

Authority bias

Another bias worth mentioning is “authority bias” – the tendency to overvalue the opinion of someone perceived as an authority. In healthcare, this can have dangerous consequences, as junior staff may hesitate to challenge senior clinicians, even when they spot an error. In collaboration, it can lead to groupthink or silence dissent, especially if the most senior or vocal member dominates discussions.

Ultimately, successful collaboration – like effective medicine – requires more than good intentions. It requires awareness of the behavioural forces at play. Many of these biases are unconscious, which means we are not always aware of what is driving our decisions – or how our behaviour affects others.

So, is collaboration an art or a science? At its best, it is both. The frameworks and structures we build are essential, but understanding and shaping human behaviour is what truly makes collaboration work. ■

trevor.gore@icw.uk.com



Advancing collaboration: ICW Leading Edge Scheme

ICW

Adrian Miller
Bill Taylor

The Institute has introduced its Collaboration Performance Validation Scheme (CPVS) known as 'Leading Edge', as a strategic initiative designed to support organisations and collaborative programmes by validating and improving their collaborative strategies, enhancing their operational efficiency and effectiveness.

Objective and structure

The primary objective of the Scheme is to assist in embedding collaborative working principles into core operations. By providing a structured framework, the scheme enables organisations to assess their current collaborative practices, identify areas for improvement,

and implement strategies that promote effective teamwork and partnership. The scheme extends beyond the collaborative framework of ISO 44001 by seeking more granularity of implementation and additional topics for leading edge collaborations with an enterprise-wide focus.

Benefits of participation

The scheme emphasises and reinforces the strategic advantages of collaborating, including:

- **Enhanced efficiency:** Streamlining processes through effective collaboration leads to improved productivity and reduced operational costs.
- **Innovation:** Collaborative environments foster creativity and innovation, enabling organisations to develop new solutions and services.
- **Risk mitigation:** By working together, organisations can identify potential risks early and develop strategies to mitigate them.
- **Improved relationships:** Strengthening partnerships and teamwork enhances relationships with stakeholders, clients, and suppliers.
- **Confirming excellence:** Endorsing an organisation's excellence as proof for existing and future customers, and with partners and suppliers, and to contribute to team morale.

Recognition and validation

Upon successful completion of the scheme, organisations may receive an ICW validation that acknowledges their commitment to and achievement in collaborative excellence. This award serves as a testament to their dedication to continual improvement and can enhance their reputation within their industry.

Success stories so far...

TRANS PENNINE ROUTE UPGRADE – WEST

The Trans Pennine Route Upgrade (TRU) West Alliance had the privilege of becoming the first recipient of the Leading Edge Award following an initial pilot in late 2023.

Brian Walton, Operations Director Civils at BAM and for TRU West stated: "When ICW invited us to join the pilot, we saw it as more than just an opportunity to support a great initiative. It was a chance to truly challenge ourselves – to demonstrate and validate our collaborative credentials and maturity beyond ISO 44001. Our goal was to benchmark ourselves as a 'leading edge

*"The team was acknowledged as a benchmark integrated delivery team, **demonstrating consistent, high-value collaboration, delivering financial and operational benefits**"*

MODUS SERVICES LTD (MSL)

A collaborative team within the Ministry of Defence received the prestigious award in 2024, recognising their excellence in collaborative performance. The award celebrates the success of the **MOD Main Building PFI Team** – a partnership between **MODUS Services Ltd (MSL)**; led by **Vercity** with FM contractors (**Amey & Skanska**), and the **DIO Contract Management Team**.

Through ICW's Collaborative Performance Validation Scheme, the team was acknowledged as a benchmark integrated delivery team, demonstrating consistent, high-value collaboration, delivering financial and operational

benefits. The team operates to the standards of ISO 44001, with MODUS having been certified since 2017.

This achievement highlights the team's commitment to structured collaboration for maintaining MOD Main Building – a critical asset serving ministerial and military functions. Their success sets a new standard for other PFIs and showcases the power of

effective teamwork in delivering value to the MOD, its personnel, and the taxpayer.

The PFI lead for **MODUS** is **Jon Brazier (Vercity Group)**, for **DIO** it is **Stacey Woodley**, and for **FM contractors** it is **Kelly Dixon (Amey)** and **Bill Smythe (Skanska)**, whose collaborative ethos and focus have been key to their success. ■



organisation' in collaborative working."

The process was led internally by **Sarah Barnes** and supported by **Rebecca Atkinson**, who worked closely with **Bill Taylor**, the lead assessor from ICW. Sarah said: "Being part of the pilot has not only reinforced TRU's commitment to collaborative working but has also provided clear, actionable direction for continual improvement. We are proud to have achieved this recognition and to be part of a movement that's raising the standard of collaboration across the industry." ■

"This award serves as a testament to their dedication to continual improvement and can enhance their reputation within their industry"

Leading Edge provides organisations with the tools, resources, and support needed to cultivate a culture of collaboration. By participating in this programme, organisations can enhance their operational effectiveness, drive innovation, and build stronger relationships with stakeholders, ultimately contributing to their long-term success.

*For more information please contact
adrian.miller@icw.uk.com or
bill.taylor@icw.uk.com*





ICW empowering SMEs with structured collaboration guidance

ICW

Adrian Miller

SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises) are pivotal to the UK's economic landscape, driving innovation, employment, and community development. ICW wants to enhance their potential to collaborate with a suite of initiatives designed to help harness their innate capability to work better together with their potential partners. The aim is to enhance business performance, foster innovation, and improve competitiveness in an increasingly interconnected market.

Structured collaboration for SMEs

ICW's approach to collaboration is grounded in the principles of the International Standard for collaboration for SMEs (ISO 44003). This structured methodology provides SMEs with a clear framework to engage in collaborative partnerships effectively. By adopting this approach, SMEs can build stronger relationships with partners, customers, and stakeholders,

leading to enhanced trust and mutual success.

ICW toolkit:

A comprehensive resource

To support SMEs in their collaborative endeavours, we offer a comprehensive toolkit that includes:

- **How-to guide:** a step-by-step approach to covering the key aspects of structured business collaboration. It covers essential topics such as preparing for collaboration,

selecting the right partners, establishing effective working arrangements, managing relationships, and when necessary, disengagement.

- **Self-assessment tool:** a tool that allows SMEs to evaluate their readiness for collaboration. By answering a series of questions based on best practices, they receive a one-page summary highlighting their strengths and areas for improvement.
- **Training:** a one-day online training session that delves deeper into the principles of collaborative working. The course equips SMEs with the knowledge and skills necessary to implement collaborative strategies effectively.
- **Expert validation scheme:** for SMEs seeking formal recognition of their collaborative capabilities, ICW offers an expert assessment service. Successful businesses

"Successful businesses receive a validation certificate and the right to use the ICW SME Collaborator logo, which can be showcased to potential customers and partners as evidence of their collaborative competence"

FIGURE 1



receive a validation certificate and the right to use the ICW SME Collaborator logo, which can be showcased to potential customers and partners as evidence of their collaborative competence.

Benefits of collaboration for SMEs

Engaging in structured collaboration offers numerous advantages for SMEs, including:

- **Improved efficiency:**
Collaborative efforts can lead to streamlined processes, cost savings, and better utilisation of resources.
- **Enhanced innovation:**
Collaboration fosters the exchange of ideas and resources, leading to innovative solutions and improved products or services.
- **Increased competitiveness:**
Working together with others

allows SMEs to pool resources, share risks, and compete more effectively in the marketplace.

- **Access to new markets:**
By partnering with other organisations, SMEs can expand their reach and tap into new customer bases.

Getting started with ICW

Members that want to encourage the SMEs in their supply chains to explore collaborative opportunities can begin by visiting ICW's website at instituteforcollaborativeworking.com/SME to access the toolkit and resources.

Engaging with the self-assessment tool is an excellent first step to understanding one's readiness for collaboration. Following this, businesses can participate in training courses to build their collaborative skills and consider applying for expert validation to gain formal

recognition of their capabilities.

The Institute is providing SMEs with the tools, guidance, and support needed to embark on successful collaborative ventures. By embracing structured collaboration, SMEs can unlock new opportunities, drive innovation, and achieve sustainable growth in a competitive business environment. ■

adrian.miller@icw.uk.com

"The Institute is providing SMEs with the tools, guidance, and support needed to embark on successful collaborative ventures"





ICW BRANCHES INTERNATIONAL

More offers to members while supporting international ties

ICW AUSTRALIA

Brett Ackroyd

It has been another busy year for ICW Australia. In the last 12 months we have built on our strong foundation with enhanced membership offerings, ongoing research, engagement with our community of practice and delivering training throughout Australia.

We have delivered a number of Collaborative Leader courses and Introduction to Collaborative Work Courses, with the number of Australian MICWs nearing 40. We have also developed our Capability Provider network with the addition of Metaphic and Providence Consulting to strengthen our ability to provide specialist support to community members in deploying business relationship

application of business relationship management principles to the supply chain engagements with Babcock and the Australian Industry Defence Network (AIDN). We are also working with ICW in the UK to build connections between AUKUS-impacted members in both countries – and helping lay the foundation for AUKUS collaboration at the industry and national level.

We have also continued to engage with our community of practice across a number of forums including webinars, community of practice drop-ins, Special Interest Group events and our first Members Day.

Our Members Day covered a range of topics important to our community including:

- a roundtable focused on the paradigm shift involved in transitioning to collaborative working relationships
- case study panel discussion into the practical application of collaborative working
- Facilitated discussions ranging from project management and collaborative contracting to enabling the development of a collaborative working culture and how to communicate ISO 44001 principles to different personalities

The Members Day was a huge success and a great foundation for future community of practice events, with over 40 attendees

and a range of industries and organisations represented.

Our ongoing research project has also continued to grow, supported by our small and medium enterprise SIG Lead, David Pender, who has run a number of workshops and roundtables with our SME manufacturing sector, an important area of the economy in the current environment. We also have a number of pilot research projects launching, including research into the application of collaboration to the wealth management and aged care sectors led by our Professional Services SIG Lead, Michael Perkins, and including development of a training course for deployment of business relationship management systems in the private wealth space.

Many thanks again to our members and supporters, in particular our Executive Network Members Babcock, Ventia and Gamuda for their ongoing support and vision. Thanks also to our SIG Leads, David Pender and Michael Perkins, our Capability Providers and volunteers for their drive and contributions as we've expanded our range of activities. We are continuing to build and mobilise our community of collaborative working practitioners here in Australia, and contributing to the global body of knowledge on business relationship management. ■

brett.ackroyd@icwaus.com.au

“We are working with ICW in the UK to build connections between AUKUS-impacted members in both countries”

management systems and collaborative working principles in a wide range of environments. We've also expanded our training offerings in to include additional courses supporting implementation of business relationship management systems and collaborative culture and behaviours.

We have been particularly focused on supporting Australia, UK and United States (AUKUS)-related initiatives in recent times. This includes developing a pilot project for the



SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

SOCIAL VALUE

Creating impactful social value requires collaboration

LINK UP UK

Michelle Lawrence

As members of ICW, we already understand the benefits of collaboration. We know it can result in projects being completed faster, with better results and more cost effectiveness and value. But the collaborative principles that we follow in our business dealings are hardly ever seen in the creation of social value.

Talking to fellow members, procurement departments, local authorities, and voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) organisations – it is clear that social value works best when time is invested to ensure it is a structured collaborative effort.

To create impactful social value, we need to:

- **Collaborate with our clients:** we need to work together to create mutually agreed goals.
- **Collaborate with communities:** we need to understand what social value activities will really benefit both them and our organisations.
- **Collaborate with the VCFSE sector:** we should be working



Konstantin-Changin

*“It is clear that social value **works best when it is a collaborative effort**”*

with the organisations who can deliver the impact and access to the communities.

- **Collaborate with our supply chain partners:** we should be working to harness the combined skills and resources that we have.

In fact, could it be said that collaboration is, perhaps, most at home when deployed in a

community setting. In responding to an understood need, you can harness the collaborative time, skills, resources, good will and positive impacts of engagement with the community as well as with your staff.

With the growing importance that is being placed on social value, now is the time to ensure that collaboration is considered as not just a *nice* way of going about social value, but as the *only* way that really meaningful, beneficial and long-term value can be created.

Collaborative efforts take work; and particularly when looking

at cross sectoral collaborations – knowing how to, as well as how *not* to do it – is vital. For that reason, ICW’s Social Value Special Interest Group wants to help its members and their stakeholder interests, by creating a toolkit/how-to guide. It will look at how collaborating can help you right through from needs identification to legacy creation.

We will be reaching out to our members to understand their experiences and issues, and create a resource that puts the collaborative principles at the heart of social value. ■

michelle.lawrence@greatbritishcommunity.org



Appropriate and inappropriate behaviours for collaboration

ICW

Jill Clancy

We talk a lot about behaviours and how our behaviours can influence how well we collaborate. Are we all aware of how our appropriate or inappropriate behaviours influence others and have an impact on outcomes?

First, are we all agreed on the definition of “behaviour”?

Behaviour is a response to a stimulus. Some are innate (we do these without thinking, like breathing), but most are learned, and we are the only ones who can control our own behaviour. We can be provoked into our responses to others’ actions (stimuli), but we are in control of our own behaviours and the action we decide to make in response.

And why do we talk about “appropriate and inappropriate,” not “good and bad”? It is because it depends on the situation. For instance, shouting in a meeting would probably be considered

communications, and so on. But what do these actually mean in reality? What do we do that is collaborative behaviour? How do we act in response to something or somebody. When we are in a meeting or conversation, what would be classed as appropriate or inappropriate? We have all been in meetings when we thought at least one person acted inappropriately, and possibly more than once.

Inappropriate behaviour

Why is inappropriate behaviour unwanted? It can be damaging, sometimes permanently, to business relationships. It can cause equally inappropriate behaviour in others and cause meetings to deteriorate rapidly and spiral out of control, causing high levels of conflict and potentially withdrawal from a business relationship, making it difficult to deliver effective outcomes. It can also be taken personally and be very hurtful, and as a result destroy trust that is

essential in any good relationship. Trust is made up of a variety of behaviours. Trust means that:

- a You are reliable:** you deliver on promises, you do what you say you will do or provide a good reason not to, and communicate that well; you can be depended on, take accountability and responsibility.
- b You are credible:** you are believable, you share your

knowledge and experiences freely; you keep up to date with your learning and development; you have some expertise in your field, you have made appropriate decisions in the past; you have shown that you are reliable.

- c You create an atmosphere around you where others feel comfortable:** not only to give of their best but to feel comfortable asking questions, raising concerns, knowing that they will be listened to; where people will take risks, knowing that they will be supported and be able to make mistakes in order to learn and move forward
- d You create a balance:** understanding that there is a balance between your own needs and those of the others with whom you work.

Provoked

Have you thought about what might have provoked any inappropriate response or behaviour? It may be one of more of the following:

- Passion about something and wanting to get that passion and belief across when others do not appear to think the same or don’t appear to be listening
- Poor listening: listening to respond rather listening to understand
- Lack of understanding of a subject, culture or situation
- Frustration
- Not taking time to think

*“Try to understand the motivation behind the behaviour, **in an open way, to elicit more information**”*

inappropriate behaviour if it were simply to try to get others to agree to your opinion. However, shouting out “fire” in a meeting in order to ensure others take action to avoid being hurt, would be considered appropriate.

We can find numerous lists of what is classified as collaborative behaviour. Most have similar themes like acting with integrity, being honest, having open

before responding

- Filling silences while others think or take in another point of view
- Not agreeing with others or being willing to listen or compromise
- Not recognising that others have different language preferences from you e.g. they may be more visual, more process oriented, have a higher auditory brain or work better with feelings.

How might you respond to inappropriate behaviour? The key is not to spiral downwards, so the meeting or conversation does not become a battle that is unconstructive and without collaboration at its heart.

- Listen really well: listen to understand, not to respond
- Take time to think about your

own response or action: a long silence is better than another inappropriate action

- Ask questions: try to understand the motivation behind the behaviour, in an open way, to elicit more information
- Try changing the words you use: if you would normally use phrases like: "I can see that you are upset, can you show me what you mean?", try "It sounds like this is really important to you, please talk me through it in more detail", or "I can't really follow the path you are taking, can you help me?", or "this feels really important to you and I want to understand this more fully".
- Take a time-out for everyone: consider what is causing the problem, and perhaps change the agenda to either focus on

this area now or put a specific time in diaries to allow for a more in-depth discussion when everyone has the information they need.

Working collaboratively is proven to result in better outcomes for everyone involved. Key to working collaboratively is recognising appropriate and inappropriate behaviours and, or, actions. Next time you bring a group of people together, think about how you might promote appropriate behaviours yourself and as a team. Think about what you might do or not do in order to promote collaboration and endorse appropriate behaviours. Remember, the only person in control of your behaviours is you. ■

jill.clancy@icw.uk.com



DotShock / Vecteezy



SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

ICW Collaborative Playbook

ICW

Valerie Elliott

The ICW Public Procurement Special Interest Group is progressing well to launch its key deliverable, the *Collaborative Playbook for Procurement Practitioners*, near the end of summer this year.

The *Playbook* has been developed in close collaboration with a diverse group of stakeholders with knowledge and connections in public sector procurement, ensuring it aligns with the evolving needs of professionals and public service providers. With a focus on efficiency, innovation, and long-term value, the *Playbook* offers a comprehensive guide to leveraging collaboration in procurement to achieve better outcomes for government, business, and society at large.

Alignment with the UK Procurement Act 2023, in law from February 2025

At the heart of the *Playbook* lies one clear message: collaboration is the key to unlocking procurement success. By working together, public and private sector organisations and suppliers can foster more efficient procurement processes, driving innovation and ensuring value for money outcomes that benefit all stakeholders, including communities. The *Playbook* emphasises that collaboration isn't just a "nice-to-have" – it's a necessity for tackling complex challenges, critical delivery and creating greater value.

With the launch of the UK Procurement Act 2023 in February this year, the intention of the *Playbook* is to align to the principles of the Act and provide a complementary guide to build on its principles relating to collaboration as an enabler.

Below is a summary of what that means.

resources, sharing expertise, and aligning objectives across stakeholders, procurement can be streamlined and made more cost-effective, ensuring the best possible outcomes for public funds. Collaboration, in this sense, is a tool for greater accountability, and ultimately, for building a more resilient public service.

Beyond the immediate benefits of procurement, the *Playbook* highlights a broader economic perspective. Every procurement decision is an investment in the UK economy. Collaborative procurement models enable organisations to harness collective buying power, which not only benefits larger suppliers but also supports SMEs, drives innovation, and fosters a competitive, sustainable marketplace. By building stronger relationships between public and private sectors, the *Playbook* creates a pathway for procurement to contribute to the UK's long-term economic growth.

"The Playbook is more than just a guide; it is a resource designed to empower procurement practitioners to adopt and lead collaborative approaches"



Empowering procurement professionals and helping to change behaviour and mindsets

Perhaps one of the most significant shifts the *Playbook* advocates is the transformation of procurement from a transactional function to a more collaborative, trust-based model. Traditional procurement often involves rigid, one-dimensional relationships with suppliers. The *Playbook* urges procurement professionals to view suppliers not just as vendors but as strategic partners, essential to achieving broader societal and economic goals.



Best value and public procurement as an investment in the UK economy

Public procurement is, at its core, about managing taxpayer money responsibly. With collaboration as the central pillar, the *Playbook* demonstrates how procurement professionals can ensure that the investment of public funds in procurement delivers the maximum value. By pooling



This mindset shift is essential for unlocking the full potential of collaborative procurement, leading to better outcomes for communities and society.

As we move toward a more collaborative future, ICW is committed to supporting procurement professionals with the tools, training, and resources they need to succeed. The *Playbook* is more than just a guide; it is a resource designed to empower procurement practitioners to adopt and lead collaborative approaches. Through expert insights, practical frameworks, and case studies, it equips professionals with the knowledge to navigate the evolving landscape of strategic procurement.



Enabling and encouraging cross departmental/cross sector advantage

The *Playbook* also emphasises the importance of breaking down silos. In today's interconnected world, procurement success is increasingly dependent on collaboration across sectors. By working with government agencies, SMEs, large businesses, and academia, procurement professionals can access a wider pool of ideas, resources, and innovations. This holistic approach results in smarter procurement decisions, more effective risk management, and solutions that are more responsive to the needs of local communities.



Ensuring sustainable and ethical procurement

Sustainability and ethics are at the forefront of the collaborative procurement agenda. The *Playbook* advocates for

procurement practices that not only drive efficiency but also align with broader societal values. By working collaboratively with diverse stakeholders, procurement professionals can tackle pressing issues such as climate change, social inequality, and economic instability, ensuring that these challenges are addressed within the procurement process.



Collaboration: A strategic advantage and achieving more

The *Playbook* stresses that collaboration is not just a strategy; it's a competitive advantage. By embracing collaboration, procurement professionals can unlock innovative solutions, strengthen supplier relationships, and ultimately drive greater value for public funds. This collaborative philosophy, when embedded within procurement culture, drives success across the entire procurement lifecycle, resulting in long-term benefits for public service delivery.



Playbook launch timing

The timing of the *Playbook*'s publication has needed to be carefully considered, to allow time for some of ramifications of the Procurement Act 2023, launched in February 2025, to be embedded. A significant amount of communication, training and change has been taking place with procurers, buyers and contracting authorities to understand the Act's key changes and apply its principles. This change

Valerie Elliott, FICW, is Strategic Partnerships and Collaboration Director, Interim, at Mitie



MINDSET SHIFT

- 1 With a focus on efficiency, innovation, and long-term value, the *Playbook* offers a comprehensive guide to leveraging collaboration in procurement to achieve better outcomes for government, business, and society at large
- 2 The *Playbook* creates a pathway for procurement to contribute to the UK's long-term economic growth
- 3 The *Playbook* urges procurement professionals to view suppliers not just as vendors but as strategic partners, essential to achieving broader societal and economic goals
- 4 Sustainability and ethics are at the forefront of the collaborative procurement agenda. The *Playbook* advocates for procurement practices that not only drive efficiency but also align with broader societal values



and training will continue for the coming months, therefore the plan is to publish towards the end of summer, after the greater impact of The Act have been embedded,

As we prepare for the official release of the *Playbook*, we invite procurement professionals across the UK to engage with this enabling guide and join us on the journey toward a more collaborative and impactful procurement future. Together, we can achieve more. ■

valerie.elliott@mitie.com

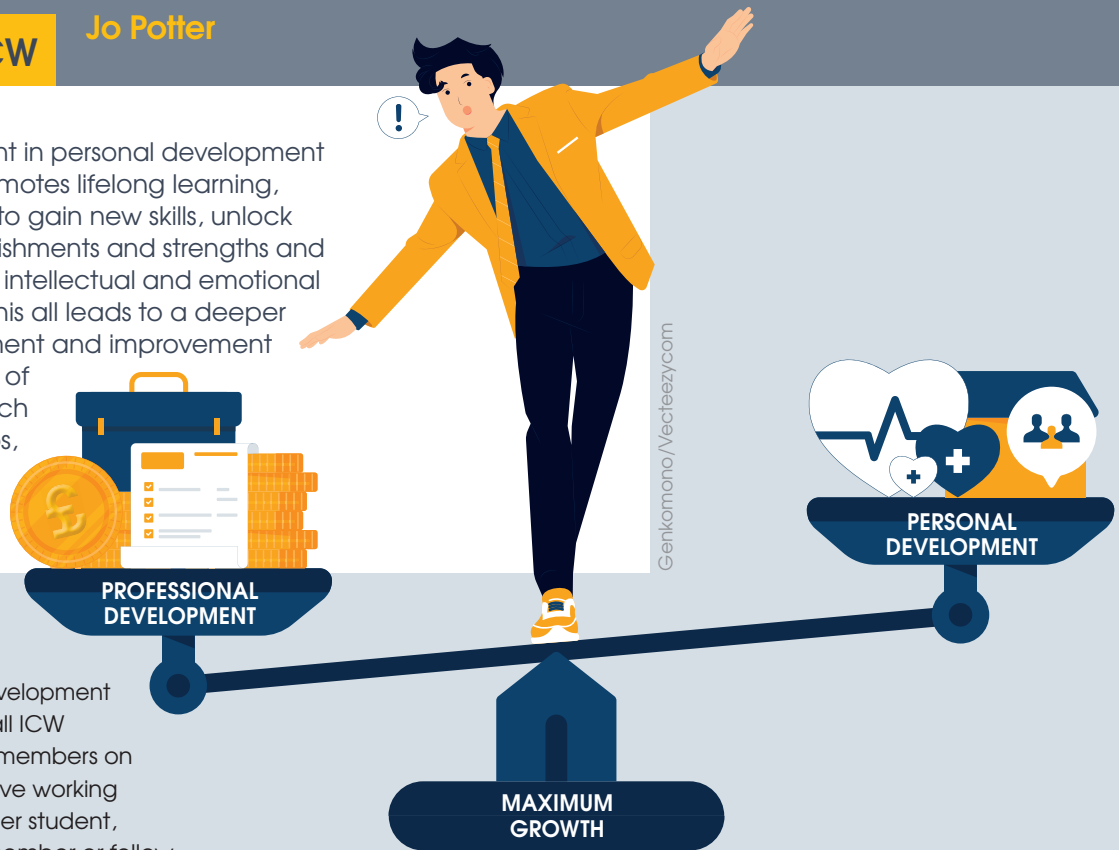


Why personal development matters

ICW

Jo Potter

Your investment in personal development matters. It promotes lifelong learning, enabling you to gain new skills, unlock your accomplishments and strengths and enhance your intellectual and emotional capabilities. This all leads to a deeper sense of fulfilment and improvement in your quality of life in areas such as relationships, career and wellness.



Personal development can help all ICW individual members on your collaborative working journey – whether student, associate, full member or fellow – to become more self-aware, overcome obstacles, realise aspirations and build confidence.

Since all ICW members have unique and diverse careers, experiences, hopes and goals in the field of collaborative working, your commitment to personal development also provides valuable contributions to ICW's vision to build a global community of thought leaders that recognise the development of skills and knowledge of collaborative working practices.

Continuing professional development (CPD) is aimed at ongoing improvement of knowledge and skills related to an individual's career and current job role; personal development and CPD are interconnected and mutually beneficial. By enhancing personal traits not directly tied to a specific job role, workplace behaviours and performance

TABLE 1 MEMBERSHIP JOURNEY

AICW

Associate entry level membership is for individuals wanting to engage with the ICW community and with the aim to migrate to full membership within 2 years, and therefore, personal development is important right from the start of your membership journey

MICW

To become a full member of ICW, either on successful completion of the ISO 44001 Collaborative Leaders course or via the direct online entry route, you will need to evidence your strategy for ongoing development of personal knowledge and skills, as well as demonstrate your understanding of the management of collaborative relationships

FICW

If you aspire to fellowship, you must have been a continuous member of the ICW for a minimum of five years. Candidates' professional and personal skills are scrutinised by demonstrating that:

- they are a peer-acknowledged expert with acclaimed contributions to the field of collaborative working
- they have developed and supported the careers of others, especially less experienced professionals, in the field of collaborative working
- they have made voluntary contributions in the field of collaborative working and to ICW

*“Increased confidence gained through personal development will encourage you to **seek new opportunities and challenges, further enhancing your collaboration skills and levels of success**”*

can be significantly improved. This, in turn, fosters growth in your personal and work life and empowers you to focus on what it means to be a collaborative professional (see figure 1).

Focusing on your personal development will help you develop stronger connections and find commonalities as foundations for lasting relationships. This personal growth will allow you to understand better, and value the viewpoints of others, which in turn improves collaboration and conflict resolution. Increased confidence gained through personal development will encourage you to seek new opportunities and challenges, further enhancing your collaboration skills and levels of success.

You can utilise and exploit your individual ICW membership benefits as part of your personal development, while also contributing to ICW’s vision and thought leadership community (see table 1).

Networking

You can develop your personal skills in the field of collaborative working by attending and participating at ICWs various face-to-face and virtual events, taking the opportunity to exchange ideas with supportive people for the benefit of individuals and organisations.

Knowledge and support

You can support and share ideas with other members by attending ICWs Share and Learn events and drop-in sessions. You can also take advantage of your membership benefits by joining the ICW Mentoring Scheme:

Skills development

You can undertake ICW courses designed to build and

enhance individual collaborative capabilities and other training to improve your soft skills that characterise how you interact with others. You could nominate yourself as an individual member of the ICW Advisory Council, which would give you the opportunity to practise your leadership and influencing skills.

Special Interest Groups

You could join one of the ICWs Special Interest Groups, working with other individual members to explore and develop future thought leadership in the area of collaborative working.

Don’t forget to add your personal development objectives and goals to your ICW CPD record.

FIGURE 1





LOIS LOVE

Mentoring Scheme

One of the ways you can help support your personal and professional development to grow is to get involved with the ICW Cross Company Mentoring Scheme. The scheme was established in 2020, and we are continuously on the lookout for people to sign up to get involved as either a mentor or a mentee. The scheme is open to all our members, and we can provide you with help and support in establishing and structuring the mentor-mentee relationship. This is a great way to get more involved with the Institute, but it is also an amazing opportunity to have a mentor or mentee outside of your own organisation, which could lead to a wealth of benefits both personally and professionally. To find out more about the scheme and how you can get involved, please visit the Members Hub on the ICW website. ■

Personal development matters because it plays a pivotal role in enhancing your cognitive and interpersonal skills and unlocking your full potential. It allows you to gain a clearer insight into

your strengths and weaknesses, enhance your involvement within your teams, develop new and existing skills, and contribute more effectively to the goals of ICW by being a more versatile

and flexible individual; this can also lead to personal and career advancement and increased exploitation of your ICW membership benefits. ■
jo.potter@airbus.com

MOLLY RICHARDS

BABCOCK

“Engaging in continuous personal development improves my overall wellbeing, both in a personal and professional sense. My confidence has grown thanks to the development opportunities I’ve been presented with in my job role and through the ICW. This has contributed to a happier, more fulfilling life as it has enhanced self-awareness, emotional intelligence and resilience. In the world of collaboration, personal development has been key in improving my interpersonal relationships. Overall, personal development matters to me as I believe it is about becoming the best version of oneself.”

BRIAN WALTON

BAM

“We can often take for granted what we do at work, how we are seen by others and how our behaviours can affect others. Personal development enables us to look at ourselves and continually improve what we do personally. Significant development happens without us noticing it. I always recommend to staff members that they stand back, take stock and look at what they’re doing, how people see them and what they can do better. You can then make small adjustments through training, mentoring and self-coaching, always recording via CPD and on your CV to ensure that no opportunity, however small, is missed to make personal development improvements. ICW is a perfect place to support you in achieving your goals and giving you the tools and tips to improve.”

DENIS LEONARD

GRAHAM

“Personal development impacts all aspects of our professional and personal non-work life. While we often see professional development only from a technical aspect of our work or on a more managerial perspective, so much of that development applies directly to our personal development at work, but also, crucially, to our personal life. While training on behaviours, time management and how to work with challenging people may be examples of collaboration training to work better with our collaborative partners. In the application of ISO 44001, they will also help us deal with how we manage our role as volunteer with the scouts or chair of the local golf club or our to-do list at home! Ultimately, personal development is about growth, and I enjoy it because, as Stephen Covey would say, it keeps the saw sharp.”

**GROUPS****MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION**

The art of collaborative marketing – by members

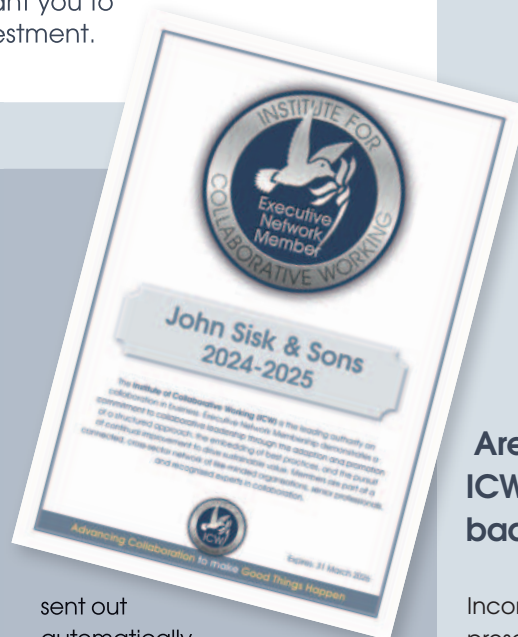
ICW**John Osborne**

Your membership of ICW is an investment that we value, and by working together we want you to maximise the return on that investment.

Membership certificate

We know that demonstrating your membership to others, particularly during the contract winning process, is an opportunity to gain a return from that investment. This is why we are introducing a new specifically designed membership certificate for you to add to your bid submissions, as demonstration of your commitment to collaborative working. These certificates will be

sent out automatically, from now, as part of the membership renewal process.



Are you using your ICW membership badge to the max?



Incorporate the ICW logo into presentation materials and include a section on the benefits of collaboration to your customers in your presentation. You could mention the expertise you have gained through development training, the exchange of good practice you have experienced through networking and the ongoing professional support you have from your ICW membership.

Encourage your key contract personnel to become individual members and use the prestigious ICW postnominal on their profile, further enhancing their credibility and your own bids.

We expand your social media reach

Another way for us to support you through marketing is when you add ICW to your media distribution lists to advise us of your collaborative contract wins. We will promote this through our social media, significantly expanding your own promotional reach.



Links between websites

Working collaboratively with your marketing team we can promote your organisation and your membership via the ICW website at instituteforcollaborativeworking.com

Please make sure we have up to date details, including your logo. Setting up links from your website to the ICW website and vice versa will improve your

rankings and visibility with search engines, enabling more organisations to find your company details and identify you as being serious about collaboration.

We understand and appreciate your investment, and so we'd like to hear from you if you'd like to explore further the ways in which we could collaborate on marketing activity. Please email Adrian Miller, Membership Services Director, ICW at adrian.miller@icw.uk.com



Your partner
in progress

Net Zero Pathway



Make your pledge to reach net zero stand out with BSI's credible assurances of your carbon inventory, reduction methodologies, targets, and system controls.



**Discover
more**

ICW Collaborative Awards



2024



The 10th Institute for Collaborative Working Awards took place at the House of Lords on the evening of 20 November 2024. It was an opportunity to celebrate and congratulate the winners and runners-up for their exceptional work and showcasing the value of collaborative working in action. The volume and diversity of organisations that submitted their applications highlighted how

working together can address and overcome many key business challenges and exemplified the power of high performing collaborative teams.

Sincere thanks to BSI for its generous sponsorship of the event and a special thank-you to all attendees and speakers for supporting the celebration of another successful year of collaborative excellence.

The judges:

Thanks go to the panel of judges: ICW Honorary President, Lord David Evans of Watford; Simon Healey, Operations and System Certification Director, BSI; and Dr Mehmet Chakkol, Warwick Business School Professor of Operations Management, University of Warwick.



Thank you to ICW Ambassador member, **BSI** for their sponsorship of the 2024 Awards and the upcoming 2025 Awards.

For details of the timeline for the 2025 Awards submissions, see instituteforcollaborativeworking.com

PUBLIC SECTOR AWARD

NETWORK RAIL

Network Rail's procurement initiative, the

Train Control Systems Framework, marked a transformative step in delivering better outcomes through a new approach to signalling.

Valued at approximately £4bn, this 10-year framework introduces a long-term partnership aimed at revolutionising Britain's railway infrastructure. By integrating both traditional signalling and digital train control, it will enhance reliability and performance across the country.

Designed to encourage new ways of working, the framework fosters stronger collaboration



between Network Rail and its signalling delivery partners. Greater transparency, such as increased visibility of our work pipeline, enables partners to invest confidently in skills, innovation, and long-term planning. Together, they are building a signalling ecosystem that prioritises early engagement, shared learning, and joint problem-solving, all contributing to a shared industry-wide vision for improvement.

Collaboration was at the heart of the procurement process. A cross-

functional project team brought together stakeholders from across Network Rail's devolved teams. They worked in close partnership with external organisations including suppliers, the Office of Rail and Road, the Railway Industry Association, and the Rail Sector Deal team to co-create the procurement strategy and deliver the tender.

This initiative represents a culture shift in how Network Rail approaches signalling procurement. Regional teams aligned their strategies, presenting a unified front to the market as a single, strategic customer, leading to tangible benefits across the board for Network Rail, our partners, and their supply chains.

All parties are committed to ongoing joint initiatives, reshaping the industry. ■

www.networkrail.co.uk



Chairman's Award

SELLAFIELD LTD & DESIGN SERVICES ALLIANCE

The Design Services Alliance (DSA) is a 15-year contract delivering engineering design and safety case services to Sellafield Ltd, operator of one of the world's most complex nuclear sites, in Cumbria. The DSA has pioneered a collaborative approach that has become a template for the way Sellafield directs its procurement and runs projects.

Since it began in 2012, the DSA has built a sustainable capability of 1,500 engineering roles including specialist skills, many of which Sellafield previously experienced problems procuring. DSA has delivered £1.5bn in work, made savings of more than £250m and achieved project years of schedule savings. Before 2012, procurement had been characterised by hierarchical, short-term, transactional arrangements, with engineering designs "handed over the fence" to contractors. This led to inadequate ownership of plant outcomes, unmet expectations, excessive rework, and little design innovation.

Sellafield wanted to establish a new kind of relationship with key suppliers, replacing a culture of compliance with one of collaboration for mutual benefit.

The DSA's objectives were to achieve an improved safety performance, sustainable resource capability, a 5%-10% improvement in delivery efficiency and schedule savings in high hazard risk reduction.

The DSA partner companies – AECOM, Amentum, Assystem, Cavendish Nuclear and Mott MacDonald – were selected for their commitment to a collaborative culture, access to capability, reach-back for innovation from wider industry, and desire to develop integrated team working. To reinforce



this latter aim, Sellafield Ltd is itself a member of the DSA, enabling integrated teams comprising suppliers and the client organisation.

This structure has encouraged the further adoption of innovative design tools and solutions – to reframe or develop alternative solutions – resulting in achieving efficiencies and savings.

The DSA has also delivered greater integration with delivery frameworks, earlier engagement of the supply chain in studies and trials, and a threefold reduction in the time taken to mobilise project teams.

DSA input has resulted in enhanced outcomes on a range of projects including the demolition of the landmark Pile 1 Chimney, which involved the first use

of a tower crane on the Sellafield site.

Awards won by DSA projects include from the Institution of Chemical Engineers, the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents. These results were despite obstacles, such as initial resistance to change, and the DSA partners also

being competitors.

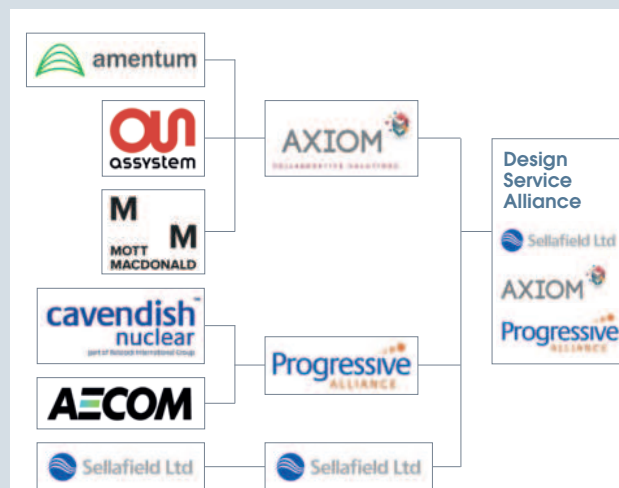
Externally, a changing regulatory backdrop, skill shortages and Covid-19 pandemic posed more challenges.

An important outcome of collaboration is that the DSA has sought and disseminated learning from experience

(LFE). The DSA has also seeded LFE across the wider supply chain.

Lessons learned include the importance of setting up projects in the right way from the start, establishing collaborative leadership; being open to continuous challenges, adjustments and independent benchmarking; and induction of "new to nuclear" employees and practices. ■

karolina.kosik@sellafieldsites.com



Social Impact Award

FORESTS WITH IMPACT

As an industry-led collaboration, Forests With Impact is changing the face of social sustainability through establishing commercial tree nurseries in prisons. This groundbreaking social enterprise has pioneered a transformative approach to rehabilitation.

Officially launched in 2024, operating initially from HMP Haverigg, Forests With Impact is on a mission to reshape lives, revive ecosystems, and help meet the UK's net zero goals. The programme has sparked immense interest, with many prisons across the country eager to collaborate and participate. Its impact is significant. It delivers a full cycle of meaningful lasting change through collective impact, whether through the trees it plants, or the prisoners it employs and helps rehabilitate, or the local community who will benefit from training programmes it delivers.

The programme is built upon its comprehensive Collaborative Charter, which helps the 30-plus partners build a culture of transparency, trust, and shared responsibility. Developed by leveraging SchellingPoint's Alignment Cycle process, it enables partners from industries of all sizes to work towards the shared purpose of driving lasting change. Driven by ISO 44001 specialists who facilitated a joint effort from all partners, Forests With Impact was able to formalise principles and strategies that make for good business.

The social enterprise builds strong partnerships between industry leaders, government bodies, prison staff, prisoners, and local communities. It leverages the low



barriers to entry into the forestry industry for ex-prisoners and provides them with valuable skills that extend beyond prison. Prisoners gain hands-on experience in tree nursery operations, receive formal horticultural training, and earn industry qualifications (City and Guilds Levels 1 and 2) that significantly enhance their employability.

Beyond the training, by collaborating with local authorities, community organisations, and industry experts, Forests With Impact is creating a robust network of support that empowers prisoners, strengthens their communities, and accelerates positive changes needed for rehabilitation. Prisoners not only gain the technical skills they need but also a profound sense of purpose, pride, and hope. Prison staff and prisoners have shared positive feedback, thanks to the collaborative nature of the project, which nurtures a spirit of teamwork, accountability, and personal growth.

The impact reaches even

further. By reinvesting surplus revenue into skills development and creating training pathways in the forestry industry – an area facing a skills shortage – the programme strengthens local economies. Through collaboration with industry partners and stakeholders, it also ensures that skills training meets local demand, creating career opportunities for prison leavers and providing them with the tools for resettlement into society.

With the first commercial tree nursery in a UK prison already operational and growing 250,000 seeds to saplings, Forests With Impact is expanding its reach through collaboration with prisons across the UK. The programme plans to establish commercial tree nurseries in multiple prisons, generating more employment opportunities for prison leavers, and contributing to the UK's climate and sustainability targets – all while strengthening the social fabric of communities nationwide. ■

email hello@forestswithimpact.org.uk
forestswithimpact.org.uk



Social Impact Award

BABCOCK

Babcock's Devonport Facility is an important asset in supporting the Royal Navy and Plymouth's local economy. As the largest employer in Plymouth, working on multiple publicly funded projects, Babcock recognises the importance of social value in creating shared and equal benefits for the whole of society.

We launched the Submarine Waterfront Infrastructure (Futures) (SWIF) social value and sustainability strategies with an ambitious vision to be the first of a kind in defence infrastructure project delivery. We recognise the huge potential for this once in a lifetime programme of infrastructure upgrades to deliver benefit to a cross-section of the community locally, and set a benchmark for future investments.

Our strategy for supporting a more resilient, sustainable, and inclusive society in Plymouth resulted in us taking a collaborative approach. This enabled Babcock, the Ministry of Defence and suppliers, comprising 50 organisations operating across nine countries, to collaborate across social value related opportunities.

Before setting our SWIF social value strategy, we completed research to understand the local socio-economic landscape and identify the priorities for the future of Plymouth. This intelligence was aligned with the government's Social Value Model, with metrics selected that would maximise social impact through collaboration across the SWIF projects.

Monitoring, measuring, analysing and evaluating social value data was essential for us to improve our collective impact continuously, and so we used the Thrive platform. Defence projects are familiar with



formal technical and commercial reporting, but it is understood that the use of a digital reporting platform for social value was a new approach. Thrive helped us ensure efforts are targeted to where they are expected to have the greatest impact, and to date, we have empowered all our Tier 1 supply chain partners and their teams to collaborate to the benefit of the local community.

Our use and continuous development of Thrive has also enabled quantified social value reporting on an individual project basis and at programme level, which enables a comparison of quantified social value delivered against contract value and commercial targets. In this way, formal, quantified reporting of social value through data collated in a digital environment has allowed a consistent and recognised format to be presented, bringing social value to the forefront of the business.

Complementing our digital

reporting, the SWIF Social Value Working Group was established as a collaborative forum for the SWIF Social Value Team and select supply chain partners, to discuss social value delivery and associated data capture. The working group has convened monthly since the programme began and has served as an important mechanism for ensuring we are achieving maximum impact through collaboration.

Investment in the Thrive tool alongside the development and maintenance of close working relationships has helped us drive collaboration across the SWIF projects, with our teams recognising their shared responsibility to maximise the positive social impact for Plymouth residents and our workforce. ■

beth.mcdade@babcockinternational.com

International Collaboration Award

BABCOCK POLSKA, UK EMBASSY WARSAW, DEPT FOR BUSINESS AND TRADE

Babcock's market entry into Poland began five years ago with our involvement in the new Miecznik frigate programme as the ship design provider and technology partner. Since then, we have established a local business entity enabling the delivery of the Miecznik programme and supporting further business development initiatives.

Babcock Polska continues to expand and has been identified as a strategic growth opportunity for both Babcock and UK Defence and Security Exports. We have established strong governmental, armed forces, industrial, and academic links in Poland with a firm focus on building relationships with a diverse stakeholder base.

The success of Babcock Polska in driving reciprocal benefits is an exemplar of industry and governmental collaboration, which has enabled the successful entry of a British business into the saturated Polish defence market. The collaboration, which started as a concept, now supports the build of highly capable, multi-purpose Polish frigates, and will significantly increase the capacity of the Polish Navy.

Several initiatives were applied to accomplish the objectives of the collaboration strategy. Effective relationship management, innovative approaches, and open communication were critical in collaborating across borders, public and private enterprises, and diverse stakeholder groups consisting of many levels and



members of multiple organisations. Despite a constantly changing stakeholder landscape, we were able to exchange information with our government partners to streamline interactions with key stakeholders, which allowed us to learn about customer challenges and to make their mission our mission. This was further supported by efficient briefing of new members entering the collaboration team, which created a safe and friendly environment for planning and idea exchange. The joint efforts of two small teams with big objectives created fertile ground for collaboration resulting from the pooling of governmental and industry capabilities and resources.

The collaborative relationships between Babcock, the British Government and the broader stakeholder landscape have resulted in tangible success including the extension and

growth of the Miecznik frigate programme, the establishment of Babcock Land operations in Southern Poland, and a pipeline of pan-domain opportunities in the country, including in land, marine, and aviation.

Reciprocal benefits have been accomplished in transfer of knowledge and delivery of social value. Our shared efforts have resulted in the creation of jobs, development opportunities for graduates, and new apprenticeships and internships for British and Polish students in support of the Babcock Polska business.

The unique government-industry relationship has contributed to supporting continuity through changes of government in Poland and the UK, elevating the position of the British defence industry in Poland. The Miecznik frigate programme is heralded a success by both Governments and has provided a platform for further industrial support in Poland.

We have learned the importance of transparent and free flowing communication, trust when taking even small decisions, and leveraging established networks to achieve shared objectives. We also managed to apply collaboration as an enabler for innovative approaches to challenges. This approach allows us to break down boundaries that can often exist with different organisational and national cultures. ■

adrian.mclaren@babcockinternational.com

Defence and Security Award

BAE SYSTEMS, MORGAN SINDALL INFRASTRUCTURE & MARCH

In 2020, the National Audit Office report identified the Primary Build Facility at BAE Systems' Barrow Shipyard as one of three projects on the critical path for the Continuous At Sea Deterrent (CASD). This project creates the foundations to deliver the Dreadnought Alliance over the next thirty years, constructing a world class facility that meets Dreadnought requirements in an operational site environment. A project to construct new facilities at the site had been launched in 2016 so the Dreadnought-class nuclear submarine can be built using a modular technique. The report highlighted the importance of the project to the nation's security.

The facility is a highly complex series of structures including a Class 1 nuclear structure and material stores, workshops, assembly areas, offices and welfare facilities. The project adjoins the building facility, Devonshire Dock Hall (DDH) and includes significant alterations to its structure. The construction process had to retain the structural integrity of DDH, accommodating uninterrupted operational use of the facility, in order to maintain the Dreadnought delivery schedule.

This was facilitated by the collaborative partnership between the Ministry of Defence, BAE Systems, Integrated Project Team (IPT), supply chain partners, regulators, the wider community, and other stakeholders. A transition to a collaborative model was undertaken, creating an Integrated Project Team (IPT). The IPT needed to create an efficient delivery relationship to work through the complex uncertainties related to the delivery of a nuclear structure, and to develop a safe and efficient delivery model with partners and the supply chain.

The collaborative approach included a safety-first culture; "beat the boat" to maintain the



Dreadnought delivery programme; a "Best for Boat" ethos, making decisions that benefit the delivery, not individual organisations; a unified team with a transparent culture, collaboratively handling significant technical challenges associated with a Class 1 nuclear structure and the weather challenges in the coastal environment.

The critical change to operate as an integrated team, together with the re-baselining, became the pivotal point in the project's success.

Morgan Sindall Infrastructure and the Edwin James Group (now 'March') applied their certified ISO 44001 principles in the approach to collaborative leadership, governance

and behaviours for relationship management. Working with an independent facilitation and behavioural specialist, the capabilities and behaviours were developed in workshops.

The IPT developed the project delivery team with a unified

approach, identity and IPT Charter, with high-level support gained through the building of trust between BAE Systems, Atkins, supply chain partners and the MOD stakeholders. The collaborative model was informed by structured workshops and robust and accurate

progress reporting, helping to build the trust and confidence that is vital between partners.

The team had to accommodate significant changes to the design during construction, resulting in changes to our construction method, plant, and materials. This involved close collaboration with our supply chain partner EFCO.

A strong IPT culminated in producing a single project report for all stakeholders simultaneously, an approach that differed from similar projects. A major cultural and efficiency shift resulted in project delivery success and the Dreadnought Alliance award. ■

emma.bevillacqua@morgansindall.com

BAE SYSTEMS

MORGAN
SINDALL

MARCH
Engineering Group

Sustainability Award

NATS

The devastating impact of climate change worldwide is not an area where working in isolation brings the best results. At NATS, we are putting a lot of focus on what we can do as a company to achieve our “target zero” promise, and we see the important role our suppliers play in reducing carbon emissions. We explored how we could best engage with our supply chain on sustainability, and in April 2023 our Sustainability Forum was born. Its purpose is to help us collaborate and learn from one another, share experience and best practice, and generate ideas that will have positive impact.

At our first meeting with 20 companies we laid out the purpose and hopes of bringing together like-minded people. We are now a community of 40 companies, from those starting on their sustainability journey to those that have reached net zero. Ranging from well-known brand names through to small and medium sized enterprises from across the globe, we share and learn from one another.

What was important to us was that the forum was not seen as a NATS hosted event with suppliers just “attending”. We have always been keen to ensure this is a truly collaborative forum, and as such, it can be chaired by any one of the companies present. In 2024 the first quarterly forum was hosted virtually (this is about reducing carbon, after all) by two forum members, bringing a fresh perspective to proceedings. By the end of 2024, forum members had presented on 17 subjects including carbon budgets, AI and sustainability, and shared case studies, insight into Corporate



Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) legislation, and reflections on COP27.

Through support, such as one to one master classes from our Sustainability Team for companies who are at the less mature end of the sustainability scale, we are seeing tangible results, such as SMEs signing up to the Science Based Targets Initiative (SBTi). Collaboration and transparency have increased with suppliers, with better visibility of scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions, and environmental, social and governance (ESG) plans are now built into contracts too.

We have built a community over the last year, and it

is encouraging to see the interactions between our attendees, with the offer of offline discussions and support between companies. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with some starting their own forums. Each session brings new information and perspectives; sustainability remains at the forefront of the forum, and collectively we will continue to evolve and adapt the sessions to include other ESG topics.

The icing on the cake was winning the sustainability category in the ICW Awards. We are delighted the forum was recognised as truly collaborative. ■

claire.cole@nats.co.uk

jake.goble@nats.co.uk

NATS

Supply Chain Award

J MURPHY AND SONS LIMITED

Our experiences from the Batch 4 works and Woodford schemes illustrate the transformative impact of a collaborative approach, revealing the benefits of uniting diverse perspectives for enhanced project outcomes.

Initially, we struggled with poor collaboration, leading to an “us versus them” mentality. This fragmentation resulted in misunderstandings and coordination issues, ultimately hindering project success. Recognising these challenges, we shifted our focus to fostering collaboration during the Woodford schemes. This decision was pivotal, enabling us to bring together stakeholders, suppliers and local authorities, under a shared vision. By creating an inclusive environment where creativity flourished, we harnessed diverse talents to tackle problems innovatively.

The benefits of our collaborative approach were substantial. One of the most significant outcomes was improved decision-making. By breaking down silos and encouraging open communication, team members contributed valuable insights, resulting in more informed decisions. This collective intelligence reduced errors and optimised workflows, allowing us to exceed productivity targets and averaging 44 meters per week compared to an initial goal of 27 meters.

Fostering a sense of community among team members was also crucial. Establishing a dedicated site office facilitated face to face interactions that strengthened relationships and trust. As team members became personally acquainted,



a cooperative spirit emerged, enhancing communication and problem-solving capabilities. This collaborative culture led to higher job satisfaction, as individuals felt valued and connected to the project's success.

A key aspect of our collaboration involved the proactive engagement of suppliers and stakeholders. By including them in planning discussions and decision-making processes, we built rapport and mutual understanding. Regular structured meetings ensured alignment with project objectives, significantly reducing the likelihood of conflicts.

Daily coaching and mentoring created a shared learning environment. This not only enhanced team dynamics but also empowered team members to take ownership of their roles, driving productivity and innovation.

To maintain and improve our collaborative approach, we established open communication channels through weekly meetings, ensuring that feedback was sought

and incorporated. Lessons learned from past projects informed future strategies.

We recognised the importance of community engagement and organised initiatives that allowed us to give back. Involvement

in local charities and community projects strengthened our relationships and demonstrated our commitment to social responsibility.

The transition from cooperation to collaboration has been enlightening. By adopting a collaborative mindset, we overcame isolation and misunderstanding, leading to improved efficiency and enhanced problem-solving capabilities. The lessons learned from our Woodford schemes are documented for future application, ensuring collaboration remains a cornerstone of our ethos.

We are dedicated to fostering a culture of collaboration where diverse perspectives are valued, and each team member feels empowered to contribute. The success achieved through collaboration serves as a testament to its potential, guiding us toward sustained excellence in future projects. ■

theresaconnell@murphygroup.co.uk



Infrastructure Award

STANTEC & YORKSHIRE WATER

The collaboration between Yorkshire Water (YW) and Stantec is a shining example of how strategic partnerships can address industry challenges and drive innovation. This partnership was formed to tackle issues such as climate change, aging infrastructure, and water scarcity, with the goal of achieving a cleaner environment for customers and communities. We aimed to deliver this through constant innovation, sustainable practices, improving efficiency, optimising YW's Asset Management Plan 7 (AMP7) business plan, and achieving significant carbon savings. These drivers were aligned with the vision and ethos of both organisations.

The YW and Stantec partnership emphasised programme efficiency, customer affordability, and sustainable practices. Key initiatives included the nature-first and TOTEX Hierarchy approaches, resolving the multi-billion-pound AMP7 programme holistically, to reduce carbon, improve biodiversity, deliver cost savings, and implement digital transformation tools that optimised project management.

The partnership also focused on building a capable workforce through staff integration and embedded learning practices. These efforts ensured adaptation to new methods and technologies, enhancing project delivery and efficiency. Significant innovations, such as the Clifton Integrated Constructed Wetland – the first integrated constructed wetland in the UK and Ireland to treat all flows – were achieved through this collaborative effort, demonstrating the potential of the strategic partnership to drive sustainability and efficiency.



Despite challenges like resource allocation and integrating new processes, the strong relationship and mutual trust between YW and Stantec enabled us to navigate these effectively. Leadership from both organisations played a crucial role in supporting the collaboration, fostering a culture of transparency, innovation, and safety. Overall, the collaboration resulted in a substantial reduction in carbon used in solutions, improved environmental outcomes, cost savings and enhanced customer service.

The partnership leveraged a multifaceted approach to maintain, sustain, and improve collaboration that had been developed over a thirty-year relationship. The shift to a strategic planning partner (SPP)

role in AMP7 signified a deeper integration into YWS's operations, emphasising collaborative innovation and efficiency. Due to the partnership's success, the SPP has been extended until the end of AMP8.

Leadership integration was the first and most important focus, whereby management from respective organisations agreed how this would be a success and developed a SPP charter. This outlined the

behaviours and leadership needed to embed collaboration as the approach required to deliver AMP7 successfully. The approach included extensive integration of Stantec into YW's capital delivery cycle and their departments, supporting, in

conjunction with YW, the need identification phase to the progression of outline solutions. This partnership model ensures the right solutions are co-created, while respecting the things that each organisation needs to undertake to make those solutions succeed.

The model, however, needed all facets of each business to change how they worked to make it a success. To let the collaboration prosper, many integration workshops and wider town hall sessions were held where all resources came together to share the ethos and approach of the strategic partner model. These sessions and information sharing led to deeper collaboration at all levels. ■

ross.anderson@stantec.com
louis.quartly@yorkshirewater.co.uk



Alliance, Enterprise and Ecosystems Award

METIS: MOTT MACDONALD & ATKINSRÉALIS

Metis, a joint venture (JV) between Mott MacDonald and AtkinsRéalis, exemplifies how effective partnerships can deliver exceptional results in high-stakes, complex environments. Formed to execute a £500m, ten-year defence nuclear infrastructure programme, Metis has integrated over 350 staff into a unified and resilient organisation, becoming a benchmark for collaborative success.

From its inception, Metis's senior leaders employed a strategic alignment process to identify 81 goals, focusing on delivering benefits for the client, industry, and the JV itself. This strategic clarity facilitated the creation of an operating model grounded in ISO 44001 principles, which ensured alignment in governance, skilled resource allocation, and decision-making.

To overcome the inherent challenges of merging two global engineering powerhouses, Metis adopted SchellingPoint's methodology to enhance collaborative behaviours and improve alignment. This approach accelerated the JV's readiness, enabled efficient mobilisation, and fostered a shared culture. Additionally, a secure virtual operating system was implemented, enabling seamless collaboration across teams.

Metis's leadership has prioritised a model-based systems engineering (MBSE) approach to enhance project predictability and confidence. This innovative framework streamlines prioritisation and scheduling, resulting in more consistent outputs for clients. Through MBSE, Metis is engaging with other programme partners, sharing insights to drive system-wide improvements.

Collaborative leadership remains



central to Metis's ethos, with three of its four strategic objectives focusing on relationship-building. Regular business-to-business meetings and strong ties with organisations like the Major Projects Association (MPA) and the Institute for Collaborative Working (ICW) showcase Metis's commitment to sharing lessons learned and fostering industry-wide collaboration.

A core component of Metis's success is its robust social value strategy. By championing diversity, equity, and inclusion, Metis has delivered STEM outreach events to over 1,700 students, including a four-day work experience programme supported by 19 volunteers. Initiatives encouraging sustainable practices, such as flexible working policies and reduced travel, underline Metis's commitment to environmental responsibility.

Despite the challenges of forming a JV during ongoing

delivery, Metis achieved rapid alignment through ISO 44001's structured collaboration frameworks. Early adoption of secure, shared systems allowed Metis to create a cohesive working environment and foster a sense of identity and

purpose among staff. Continuous well-being interventions, including leadership tours and observation reporting, have bolstered staff resilience in the face of project complexities.

Metis's journey demonstrates the transformative power of collaboration in overcoming obstacles and delivering excellence. By blending technical innovation with people-focused strategies, Metis has set a new standard for partnerships, driving meaningful value across the nuclear sector and beyond.

This achievement underscores Metis's position as a thought leader in collaborative working, proving that with the right foundation, even the most ambitious goals are within reach. ■

andrew.lewis@mottmac.com



Innovation and Transformation Award

ATKINSRÉALIS

The Feltham and Wokingham Area railway re-signalling programme was a collaborative effort between our client, Network Rail, AtkinsRéalis and multiple supply chain partners. A one-team culture was developed, which resulted in best-for-project outcomes, and delivered the largest re-signalling programme in the country during Network Rail's Control Period 6.

The route was operated by two signal boxes and more than 500 separate pieces of legacy signalling equipment. This was becoming increasingly challenging to maintain and suffered from reliability issues in the heart of the 80-mile route serving London commuters.

In 2019, Network Rail commissioned AtkinsRéalis to deliver the signalling for a £185m multi-year programme with the aim of improving signalling reliability performance and upgrading the route to a cutting edge digital-ready signalling system using the AtkinsRéalis Advanced Signalling Method (ASM).

The programme involved deploying ASM, renewing all signalling equipment, including 21 interlockings, 16 level crossings (LX), and 275 signals, and migrating control to the new Basingstoke rail operating centre.

AtkinsRéalis, as the principal contractor for signalling, brought together expertise from partners, including Global Rail Construction Ltd, RJ Power, MPI, Cleshare, Alstom, Resonate, CHG, Sunbelt, Unipart, Southwest Railway, and South Rail Systems Alliance. Co-located from

the outset, the team established a collaborative



culture focused on best-for-project outcomes, guided by the AtkinsRéalis principles of safety, integrity, collaboration, innovation, and excellence.

Selecting partners was based on their ability to deliver a high quality, right first-time product collaboratively rather than adopting a transactional lowest-cost approach. Selection included assessing company values, behaviours, and commitment to the multi-year phased programme. The team implemented a behavioural safety programme for all partners, focusing on creating a fair culture and encouraging open discussions on safety, wellbeing, and operational improvement.

The introduction of ASM on a project of this scale proved the capability of a pioneering signalling system, improving performance and reliability safely, on time, and within budget. The reliability performance target was exceeded by a further

50%, creating overall reliability improvement of 37.5% over the legacy asset. The new level crossings increased ongoing reliability by around 40%.

Commitment to innovation and collaboration led

to new methodologies and efficiencies. The off-site build and testing of LX reduced time on site by up to 20%, minimised rework, and resulted in earlier hand back. Use of 3D and 4D modelling in AtkinsRéalis' Lava Lab enabled the team to collaboratively review designs, identify potential issues, and rehearse activities in a virtual and safe environment.

The programme delivered social value by building relationships with local communities. The team improved accessibility for a water sports charity, built a greenhouse for a community café, repurposed a primary school IT room, donated to foodbanks, and taught schoolchildren level crossing safety. These initiatives nurtured a collaborative culture and high performing team, and a sense of unity and trust, boosting morale and productivity on the infrastructure project. ■

james.hammond@atkinsrealis.com

Industry to Industry Award

BALFOUR BEATTY

The Strategic Design Partnership (SDP1) brings together Balfour Beatty, the largest contractor in the UK, with top-tier design firms AtkinsRealis, Mott MacDonald and WSP. SDP2 has the addition of Jacobs. This collaboration aims to enhance innovation, efficiency and productivity in the construction industry through a well-coordinated, strategic approach.

- Regular pipeline interaction among business teams
- Conflict of interest boundaries
- Best practices shared through expert groups and initiatives like hackathons or network events.

For collaborative behaviours and resources, the SDP focuses on:

- Partner selection based on cultural alignment
- Competency and capability assessments
- Joint purpose and mission
- Governance through a steering committee.

The SDP governs itself through a steering committee aligned with ISO 44001 certification and focuses on:

- Improving health, safety, and wellbeing
- Enhancing delivery efficiency
- Promoting sustainable outcomes
- Ensuring best value for clients
- Expanding core markets
- Establishing itself as the preferred collaboration model.

Significant milestones include over £1bn in spend with the initial three partners: AtkinsRealis, Mott MacDonald and WSP, an 89% allocation of design spend to the SDP1, and a 92% customer advocacy rate. The aim for SDP2 with the addition of Jacobs is to surpass these achievements.

The SDP addresses longstanding productivity issues primarily caused by disconnected project scopes and siloed operations. By merging designer and contractor efforts, the partnership has reduced friction and created efficiencies, leading to substantial productivity improvements. Approaches include standardising construction elements and ensuring early buildability input.

For customers, benefits include expedited design and construction processes and seamless team integration from inception to completion. For designers, the SDP assures a steady workload pipeline



and integrated process efficiencies. For Balfour Beatty, the collaboration provides access to premier global expertise and standardised contracts and processes.

One notable achievement is the M25 Junction 10/A3 Wisley scheme. By integrating the SDP's design partner, AtkinsRealis, early on and focusing on collaboration, £5.07m in savings were realised for the client, National Highways.

The thorough partner selection process focused on alignment with performance, modern methods of construction, sustainability, and core market capabilities. Rigorous assessment ensured partner alignment in values and behaviours, supported by ISO 44001 relationship management standards. Post-selection, a six-month mobilisation period helped establish the partnership's mission and objectives.

To maintain and improve collaboration, the SDP uses:

- Relationship development through clear business interactions

regular meetings, KPI development, data standardisation, and semi-automated pipelines for efficient project management. Innovations like the SDP Process Integration Group and the Design Decisions Log are key outcomes of collaborative integration.

Sustainability is integrated from procurement through project execution. Themes include lifecycle carbon management, waste reduction, and social value. The sustainability working group develops design-focused KPIs, exemplified by the Thames 2100 Canvey Island Project, which achieved significant carbon savings.

The SDP is backed by leadership at the highest level, with sponsorship from Balfour Beatty's CEO and Executive Committee, which ensure the partnership aligns with Balfour Beatty's strategic goals and collaborative behaviours. ■ graham.martin02@balfourbeatty.com

Balfour Beatty

Internal Collaboration Award

GRAHAM: THE TIGER TEAM

Finding innovative solutions to challenges as they arise is part and parcel of how we deliver all our projects. The introduction of our more intentional approach to innovation resulted in the Tiger Team. A new way of working, it is collaborative, inclusive and encourages thinking outside the box. Tiger Teams were originally developed by the US Military and made famous by NASA and the Apollo 13 Mission recovery. The aim is to innovate and find solutions that remove waste and reduce cost and carbon while still improving customer satisfaction.

The GRAHAM Tiger Team process introduced cross functional teams with the necessary skills and knowledge to solve agreed challenges with agility and innovation. By aligning the objectives across the different stakeholders, all could see the value creation for their company. Further support for adopting a collaborative approach was the fact that GRAHAM are members of the GIRI Strategic Leadership Group working on the Getting It Right Initiative, whose approach to reducing errors advocates working in collaboration.

The Tiger Team has a four-stage process:

- 1 Client expectations and corporate strategy to identify high impact areas
- 2 Define challenges, identify opportunities and establish metrics
- 3 Select opportunities in which to invest
- 4 Develop innovative and best practice opportunities, implement solutions and review lessons learnt.



The Tie Rod Tiger Team established an integrated and collaborative team that included Anker Schroeder, Expedition Engineering and GRAHAM and, therefore, the delivery team, the tie rods manufacturer, the design team and the tie rods installers. We aligned the objectives across the different stakeholders to ensure that the project would lead to a common value creation. Once stakeholders were identified, it was also important that the individual was the right person. This was aided by learning from the initial GRAHAM Innovation Strategy Tiger Team, which identified the type of person, including taking into consideration their ability to work in collaboration, think outside of the box without dismissing others' ideas, and deliver changes to tie rods rapidly. The GRAHAM experience of using

DiSC and other COM-B methods such as IBIP allowed us to recognise the need for an understanding and alignment of behaviours of the collaborative partners.

The experience of Expedition Engineering and their independent facilitation aided the process, and behaviours were respectful, inclusive and delivered the objectives sought by all.

The benefits were a 51% improvement in productivity, £230,000 cost savings, 14 days time savings, 18 days plant use reduction, 47.6 tonnes carbon saving, a 38% reduction in activities installing the tie rods and 31 equivalent working days saved of hazard exposure per worker.

The enthusiasm from those involved in the Tiger Team carried with them when they transferred to other projects, leading to the formation of other Tiger Teams continuing the innovation, learning and helping to deliver the strategic aim of a cultural change. ■
emer.murnaghan@graham.co.uk



ICW members

ICW AMBASSADORS

babcock™

Balfour Beatty

bam

bsi

COSTAIN

EMCOR^{UK}

GRAHAM

leidos

LEONARDO

NATS

NetworkRail

Raytheon UK

Sellafield Ltd

CORPORATE MEMBERS

AIRBUS
DEFENCE & SPACE

amentum

Amey

**ASSOCIATED
ASPHALT
CONTRACTORS**

AtkinsRéalis

AWZ NUCLEAR SECURITY
TECHNOLOGIES

BREEDON

BT Means
Business

BTTC

CGI

CHEVRON
A WORK-JOB SAFETY COMPANY

COMPASS
GROUP

CB Currie & Brown

ESS

EQUANS
EMPOWERING TRANSITIONS

FREQUENTIS

INDRA

Jacobs

KBR

KEOLIS amey
DOCKLANDS

LOCKHEED MARTIN

LRQA

MARCH
Engineering progress

Mastek
Trust. Value. Velocity

mitie

**MORGAN
SINDALL**

M M
MOTT
MACDONALD

MURPHY
WORLD-CLASS INFRASTRUCTURE

**national
highways**

**PEGASUS
GROUP**

QINETIQ

serco

SISK
CONCRETE SOLUTIONS

SKANSKA

sopra **steria**

SPENCER WEST

POWERLINES
AN EQUANS COMPANY

Tt **TETRA TECH**

THALES

U S T

Vercity

YOKOGAWA

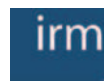
GOVERNMENT



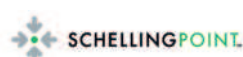
ACADEMICS



INSTITUTES & TRADE ASSOCIATIONS



AFFILIATES



THE
PARTNER
2025

EDITORIAL SERVICES · Dawn Chamarette · 07769 654147
DESIGN · Smart Monkey Design · 07421 041984
PRINT · Wested Logistics Ltd · 01474 361615



Institute for Collaborative Working

Promoting and encouraging collaborative working and its advantages, to address the challenges facing all types of organisation, people & communities

We are a purpose driven, not for profit organisation, with a mission to demonstrate the vital role structured collaborative working plays in delivering key outcomes



ICW AMBASSADORS

babcock



GRAHAM

NATS

Balfour Beatty



leidos

NetworkRail

bam

EMCOR^{UK}

LEONARDO

Raytheon UK

Sellafield Ltd