

Promoting equal partnerships

What do we mean by equal partnerships?

- Equality is very important as it means that partners can share power and have equal influence.
- Partnerships come in many shapes and forms - a partnership is when two or more organisations work together for a shared goal.
- Partners come with different resources, gifts and skills. Each partner should be valued and respected for their contribution.
- Any equal partnership must truly represent the communities it is working with to make sure that the partnership makes decisions appropriate to all sections of the community.

Proving equality

- All partners can set agendas.
- Everyone can contribute to the debate.
- Everyone can have an influence on policy.
- The partnership must represent the community it serves.
- The partnership includes the right organisations and people that can contribute to its aims.

Benefits of working in partnership

Partnerships:

- bring together partners with different interests, skills, resources and experience;
- share ideas and resources;
- share skills and experiences;
- draw together the talents of everyone involved;
- support each other;
- can secure funding;
- have the opportunity to reach wider audiences;
- develop an understanding of how different partner organisations work;
- can take actions more likely to meet local community needs; and
- help to create communities where people can get along with each other.



Barriers and challenges to a successful partnership

- Policy and law
- Lack of trust and a suspicion of others
- Unequal balance of power and control
- Failure to recognise different personalities and communication styles
- No time to develop relationships and realistic plans
- Lack of clarity about purpose, roles, responsibility and leadership
- A lack of appropriate representation



How to build a successful partnership

- Set a clear role and purpose.
- Agree your membership.
- Represent your community or group.
- Make sure there is appropriate representation.
- Recognise power structures.
- Consider the ability of all partners to take part.
- Set out responsibilities and roles for the partners.
- Set up structures and procedures.
- Consider the resources each partner can bring.
- Behave professionally and build relationships.
- Share power and involve minority groups.
- Help partners to develop skills.
- Use a wide range of communication methods.
- Set out who is responsible for what.
- Monitor activities and progress.
- Review from time to time how effective the partnership is.

For more information contact the following organisations:

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