

# Collaboration and Partnerships

## Definition of Partnership

Where two or more organisations make a commitment to work together on something that concerns them both, develop a shared sense of purpose and agenda, and generate joint action towards agreed targets. (*Health Education Board, Scotland 2001*)

## Benefits

Working in partnership with local, state and federal governments, the business sector and other community organisations should be central to establishing a well-respected and professional community club.

The committee is generally responsible for partnership development and the President/Chair usually has a significant role in establishing and maintaining these relationships.

There are many benefits to be gained from developing strategic partnerships whether they are for a specific project and/or purpose or a long term gain such as:

### 1) **Space**

By encouraging the sharing of both common and specialised space, building efficiency is improved.

### 2) **Collaboration**

When organisations come together and share lessons learned, the birth of new ideas, methods, and procedures benefits everyone.

### 3) **Employees and volunteers**

Everyone who works at or with the club from volunteers, staff and students employees, administrators to politicians – has the potential to cross over and back, bringing great insight and greater satisfaction to their work, profession, and livelihood.

### 4) **Money**

Financial stability is easier to achieve and maintain as a group than individually. Collaboration can bring increased ability to secure grant dollars, more effective use of agency/government capital dollars, and better spending power of dollars in combined operating budgets.

### 5) **Resources**

Historically, the fitness, sport and recreation industry has operated with limited resources. Developing partnerships with like-minded organisations there will be the possibility of sharing operational and club resources ie photocopier, telephone system, receptionist, training resources, coaches may be able to cross over, first aid officers etc.

### 6) **Club Methodology** – Two heads are better than one; from sharing and collaborating on club ideas in order to improve current practices, to applying for funding.

### 7) **Equipment Technology**

The sharing of specialised and expensive equipment, such as the latest gym /rehabilitation equipment greatly improves the cost per use ratio.

8) **Partners** could include:

- Council
- State and Federal government agencies
- Sponsors
- Local media
- Co-users of the facilities
- Service providers/community organisations
- State and National Association
- Suppliers of club resources and equipment

9) **How to manage partnerships**

- Inform your members of the partnerships and encouraging positive and productive relationships
- Invite partners to functions, give them a role ie trophy presentation, speech, allocate an area where your partner can share their products and services to club members
- Take opportunities to publically recognise and thank them for their contribution, particularly in the media and any public arena
- If possible establish a sub-committee to actively plan and manage relationships with all partners
- Provide your partners with information on how the club is tracking both on and off the field – particularly good news stories
- Use opportunities to involve partners in planning for the future and renewing how the club is performing
- Obtain partners feedback with respect to the relationship and talk about any new opportunities that may have mutual benefit
- Understand problems and concerns partners may have and help them with issues that affect the club
- Always approach any problems as they arise, openly and constructively