

Incubate Collaboration Model Pilot

Final Report

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Prepared for Incubate Group by Relate Strategic

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1. INTRODUCTION

Incubate is a group established through participation in the SKYCITY Auckland Community Trust (SACT) Collaboration Incubator in 2015. It was one of the groups the SACT Board chose to continue through the programme and received support funding to further explore the collaborative process and to pilot an innovative pathway towards effective collaborative practice. Incubate's vision is to champion cross sector collaboration through creating collectives of efficient and purposeful organisations that are 'better together'. We believe such groups can maximise and sustain positive social and environmental impact for ensuing generations.

The current pilot project has sought to observe and support a small number of real-world collaboration projects where participating organisations were guided through a Best Practice Collaboration Model by experienced facilitators. The Model has been organised around the idea that collaboration is a journey made up of four progressive stages, with specific tasks to be completed at each stage along the way. Ultimately, while the pilot did not progress as planned due to a variety of factors, useful learnings were gained throughout the 18 months of the project. Our findings and conclusions are provided in this report.

2. METHODOLOGY

Purpose

The current phase of Incubate’s ongoing Collaboration work sought to test the efficacy and usability of the draft Best Practice Collaboration Model developed during the previous phase, and to identify where modifications should be made.

Methodology

In total, the research involved 15 separate organisations and four facilitators across three pilot collaborations. Recruitment took place using Incubate’s and the researchers’ networks, and earlier phases of Incubate’s research programme were also a useful source of potential participants.

Ultimately, the three pilots were undertaken on a ‘rolling’ basis, with participants entering the Pilot at the appropriate time for them in late 2017/early 2018.

Monitoring of the pilot collaborations involved attending group collaboration sessions to observe how the Model was applied and how it impacted on group dynamics. Ongoing qualitative check-ins with participating groups and their facilitators were also undertaken to gain further insight into how the Model was perceived and how it was contributing to the collaboration process. The Model was improved iteratively throughout the process based on observations and feedback.

Because this pilot study was qualitative in nature, it has been possible to gather illustrative quotes that provide further insight into how the collaborators, facilitators and observers (individuals who had a connection to the collaborations but cannot be classed as either direct collaborators or facilitators) experienced the process; these are provided throughout the report.

A total of 27 individuals across 21 organisations were involved during the course of the Pilot.

Organisation Type	Number of Organisations
Not-for-profits/iwi	11
Corporates/Business	3
Government	4
Funders	3
Facilitators	4
Other	3
Total	21

Table 1: Organisations Consulted During the Pilot Research

NB: The Number of Organisations column does not add up to the total as some wore more than one hat, for example, a government funder.

3. The Pilot Collaborations

Collaboration #1 - Pacific Employment Support Service (PESS)

PESS confirmed their involvement in October 2017. Individual organisations were:

- In-Work NZ Limited
- SENZ Training and Employment Centre
- Skills Update
- Solomon Group

Funded by the Ministry of Pacific People (MPP), PESS helps young Pacific people aged 15-29 living in Auckland and Hamilton to find sustainable employment, education or training opportunities. The providers work together to motivate, train and match young people to jobs or education that best fit them.

Inwork and SENZ had been working in the programme for the previous four years, whereas Skills Update and the Solomon Group joined in September 2016. MPP agreed to provide a facilitator who had been working with the four organisations since January 2017; this person could incorporate piloting the Collaboration Model into their general facilitation role.

The group was working well in the lead up to coming onto the Pilot, albeit at the light end of the collaboration spectrum according to participants, which mainly involved monthly meetings to share information. However, all the members could see potential for a higher degree of collaboration which would allow for a greater level of trust around sharing data and referring clients to each other. It was very much the expectation of MPP that the group work collaboratively and so they were very supportive of PESS's involvement in the pilot.

This collaborative completed the least in terms of Incubate Model material, leaving the pilot relatively early due to internal administrative reasons as well as concerns over the amount of time required by the Incubate Model process.

At the close of the Pilot study, three of the original organisations are still working within the collaboration (with two of the groups exceeding their program targets), although only one of the initial senior personnel are still involved.

No significant increase in collaborative integration was reported by participants between the beginning and end of the Pilot timeframe. However, in terms of achievements, MPI regards this as a very successful collaboration. To date, the scheme has assisted over 2240 young Pacific young people to find sustainable employment, education or training, including over 1000 employment placements and over 700 training placements. Although the cost of the PESS programme was around \$8 million, its return on investment is estimated at just over \$25 million.

Pilot #2 - Randwick Park Collective

Randwick Park confirmed their involvement in September 2017. Individual organisations (all not-for-profits) were:

- Urban Neighbours of Hope
- Te Awa Ora Trust
- Randwick Park Residents Association
- Randwick Park Sport Community Trust

The Randwick Park Collective had worked together previously to successfully establish a Community Centre in their local community, and won Community of the Year at the Kiwibank New Zealander of the Year Awards in February 2017 for teamwork. They were committed to exploring further ways they could enhance their local community through taking a neighbourhood development approach to identifying and facilitating various local initiatives. Further, they had support of the Department of Internal Affairs in terms of funding and other resources that they wished to fully leverage through more effective collaboration. An independent facilitator was co-funded by Incubate and DIA.

This collaborative discontinued their use of the Model during the Set-Up phase when their facilitator withdrew from the Pilot. Given the rapport that had already developed, participants decided to continue working with them in preference to introducing a new facilitator to continue applying the Model. The group continued to provide feedback about their experience of the collaboration process.

Through their work with Incubate and the facilitator, this collaborative reported having learned more about each other, developed a vision for how they will work with their community, developed a set of internal processes and protocols for working with each other, engaged a community development worker using DIA funds, and begun the work of identifying community projects. Since their involvement in the Pilot concluded, the group has experienced forwards and backwards movement as they continued to develop the collaborative.

Collaboration #3 - Pūkoro Community Wildlife Reserve Management Trust

This group confirmed their involvement in the Pilot in November 2017. The purpose was to form a strong Trust that would develop and manage a Living Memorial and Wetland in Pūkoro-Miranda.

Participants in this collaborative were diverse and included local iwi, not-for-profit organisations, business interests and government:

- Ngāti Paoa
- Dalton Hapu Trust
- Te Whangai Trust
- Pūkoro Miranda Naturalists' Trust
- Department of Conservation
- Fonterra
- Living Water - While not intending to be part of the formal Trust formed, this group have been key enablers/stakeholders and it was agreed it would be beneficial for them to go through the early phases of the collaboration journey
- Western Firth Catchment Group Trust - a late-comer to the process
- Plus: a community liaison person, who did not fit exclusively into one of the other groups but has a relationship with several.

Not all groups intended to be part of the Trust group, but rather they wanted to at least begin the process and then potentially continue their involvement in some other capacity such as an Advisory Group.

Participants were keen to make progress in bringing together a reasonably disparate set of organisations with differing levels of connection to one another. They knew it would be a challenge, and yet the potential benefits to the local community and environment were significant. This project came with funding to contribute to the costs of independent facilitators and reimbursement for costs associated with session attendance.

This collaborative worked through the Pre-collaboration phase of the Model and had begun the Set-Up work at the Pilot's conclusion, although as with the other groups, the Model was somewhat loosely adhered to.

At the conclusion of the Pilot, the collaborating groups had learned about each other and built considerable trust, modified the original proposal in order to meet the variety of organisational needs and concerns, created a shared and agreed vision, confirmed the purchase of required land, secured some ongoing funding for furthering their initiative, and prepared a draft Mana Enhancing Agreement and a draft Trust Deed. The group subsequently experienced forwards and backwards movement as they continued to develop this collaborative.

4. CONTEXT

SKYCITY Auckland Community Trust research to date confirms collaboration is central to efficient social change that addresses the cause of social issues. Incubate seeks to impact effectiveness and productivity challenges in the social enterprise sector head on. While collaboration has a cost attached to it, successful collaboration also has the potential to enlarge outcomes.

The Incubate Group has found that collaboration has to be multi-sector across Corporate, NGO, academic and social ecosystems to achieve systemic change. Incubate has developed into a cross sector association that consists of like-minded not-for-profit, NGO's, Corporates and Government Agencies who are actively collaborating to be 'Better Together'. The ultimate goal is to facilitate multi sector collaboration in order to create 'purpose-full' organisations that address the root cause of burgeoning social need rather than simply addressing symptoms. This has been the focus of the research to date.

Investors and funders are increasingly looking for opportunities for auditable, socially impactful outcomes that can be self-supporting and/or generate a financial return. Additionally, direct engagement between not-for-profits and private sector organisations has the potential to bring social to the heart of companies and help create 'purpose-full' companies.

The current pilot research is part of an overall programme of work, which started in 2015 with research seeking to understand the barriers to collaboration; in 2018 (and in addition to the current pilot research) the group moved into a phase of actively bringing together diverse groups to work on society's big problems; this is called The Big Shift.

Incubate's Earlier Research

Earlier research utilised a literature review, in-depth interviews and Customer Journey Mapping to better understand what it is about the community services sector that prevents more effective collaboration. One of the key conclusions was that there is an opportunity to develop a Best Practice Collaboration Model that could guide all types of organisations through the process of creating strong working relationships with others, and in so doing, encourage successful collaboration within New Zealand:

NGOs

- to help them identify when to collaborate, how (e.g. level of integration) and with whom
- to assist with joint funding applications (e.g. creation of an NGO-funder developed form)
- to guide them through each stage of collaboration in a way that supports best outcomes

Funders

- to help them better understand collaboration, including time and costs involved
- to help them better assess funding applications that involve collaboration
- to help them increase the likelihood of positive community outcomes, through identifying opportunities for collaboration and providing assistance to collaboration projects
- to facilitate better use of a limited funding pool

District Health Boards/Government Organisations

- in their role as funders (see above)
- to inform internal policy around collaboration
- to guide internal units through each stage of collaboration in a way that ensures positive outcomes are achieved when working with NGOs

Commercial Organisations

- to provide a clear pathway for them to engage in collaboration with not for profit organisations
- to guide them through each stage of collaboration in a way that ensures positive outcomes are achieved when working with NGOs

Community/Whanau

- to provide a clear pathway for them to engage in collaboration with not for profit organisations
- to inform them of collaboration best practice in a way that enables them to engage positively at various stages thereby ensuring positive outcomes are achieved

The initial research into collaboration barriers indicated several themes that impacted attempts at collaboration, these were:

1. Networking reaps significant benefits, both in itself and as a precursor to more integrated collaboration. Findings suggested there is room to educate both collaborators and funders about how lower integration collaboration helps to support more complex future partnerships. For example, research participants tended to be collaborating 'at arm's length', with the benefits of greater integration not being fully recognised, while working more closely with other organisations carried more perceived risk; both of these factors reduced the likelihood of close collaboration.
2. More integrated collaboration involves a rockier journey; organisations are not necessarily prepared for, or confident they could mitigate, specific difficulties in terms of resourcing, know-how, and cultural IQ.
3. There is currently a disconnect between funders and the NGOs trying to collaborate in terms of understanding the realities of collaboration. NGOs were more likely to understand how difficult and potentially risky close collaboration is, while funders tended to focus on the potential benefits of successful partnerships. This funder-NGO disconnect leads to problems of immaturity in understanding and actioning of collaboration, which can be seen in the lower integration collaboration we observed.

4. A key to removing current barriers to collaboration in the community services sector may be to reach sector-wide agreement on realistic processes and resourcing.

Further, the research provided a higher level representation of the collaboration journey. Unlike much of the literature, which visualises collaboration as a set of connections, Incubate’s research suggested that there is a series of steps that build on one another, starting with Pre-Collaboration, and followed by Set-Up, Implementation, and finally, Maintenance.

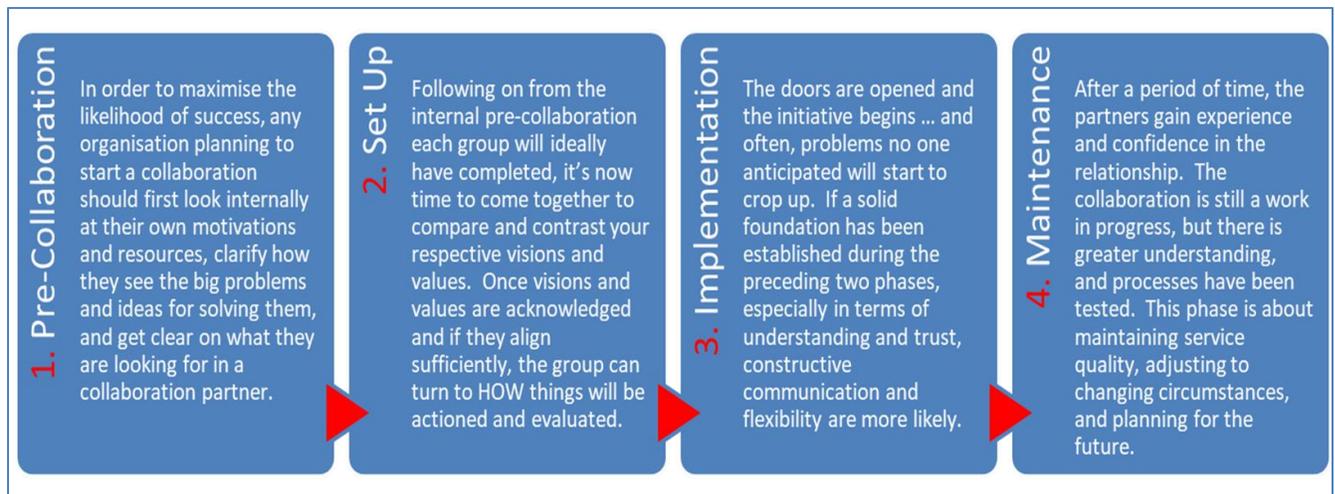


Diagram 1: Phases of Collaboration (Source: Barriers to Collaboration within the Community Service Sector; an Exploration, 2016)

Our initial thinking was that the Model would be accessed via a website (rather than using a facilitator), and include a set of checklists containing required tasks for each of the four phases. Additional resources were either included or proposed, such as contract templates, a Deep Dive section to help people better understand the art of collaboration in general, case studies of real world collaborations, and opportunities to connect with others trying to form collaborative relationships. While there was positive support for these functionalities, the consultation indicated that independent guidance from a facilitation professional would likely increase the uptake and full use of the checklists themselves.

Ultimately, findings from the first round of research enabled the researchers to develop a draft Best Practice Collaboration Model that could be applied by a professional facilitator to support groups to work through each of the phases in the collaboration journey.

5. IMPORTANT FACTORS IN COLLABORATION

The Pilot research has refined our understanding of the collaboration process through observing what did and did not appear to enhance collaborative relationships. While the initial aim was to faithfully apply and test the Best Practice Model developed during the earlier phase of research, the process applied to the pilot collaborations was a mix of the Model and facilitators' own, participant-led processes; this enabled a broader evaluation of the collaboration process as experienced by both the participants and facilitators.

Five specific factors are considered important in supporting or obstructing collaborative relationships:

1. Pre-collaboration as a foundation
2. What happens outside group collaboration sessions
3. Individuals' roles
4. Managing business-as-usual (BAU)
5. Facilitation

We do not present this as an exhaustive list. As already noted, none of the three sets of organisations worked through all four collaboration phases, so it is not possible to comment on critical factors that may be important later in the process.

5.1. Pre-Collaboration as a Foundation

Why is Pre-Collaboration so Important?

Collaborations, whether in the not-for-profit or commercial sectors, often skim or skip over introductory pre-collaboration work because participants want to get into the action as quickly as possible: they are already busy with business-as-usual, they are excited about the potential benefits of working with others, and/or there may be funding constraints or other external deadlines that require formal agreements or contracts to be finalised as quickly as possible.

Nevertheless, scene-setting pre-collaboration is arguably the foundation for successful collaboration where the goal is to 'thrive' rather than simply 'survive', because:

- It is a time for establishing trust and forming relationships
- It is where shared values are identified and prioritised
- It is when shared goals for the collaboration are interrogated and agreed

- It enables early identification of potential pitfalls that may threaten the collaboration and allows for mutual understanding and problem mitigation before irreversible damage is caused to relationships
- It enables group resilience to become established
- It starts to show relative aims, knowledge, resources and competencies of each of the groups

“We spent a lot of time talking about values and what they look like in practice. We don’t normally do this, but values are fundamental to most things we do.” (Facilitator)

“It is easy to talk about collaboration, and it always seems like a good idea, but in the end it is way more complex than it appears on the surface - there are so many moving parts and shifting currents that continue to pull organisations back to their own ways of doing things.” (Collaborator)

“After the last meeting, I felt we were coming together as a group, putting differences behind us. There was a general vibe at the table – we were chatting together rather than being suspicious.” (Collaborator)

“Enthusiasm grew as time went on.” (Funder)

How Were the Pre-Collaboration Aims Achieved?

The Incubate Model assumes that in order to achieve the benefits of a pre-collaboration phase, groups should be guided through a series of tasks and questions. These include self-reflection, correct tikanga (including whakawhanaungatanga), and establishing the collective’s Vision and Mission.

Iterative improvements were made to the initial version of the Model to reflect what was observed during sessions and what facilitators and participants shared about the experience (as well as specific recommendations for improvement). The experience of the facilitators and their tendency to incorporate their own approaches into the collaboration sessions enabled new learnings to be gained from the Pilot process.

“I’m grateful to Incubate for creating momentum, and for giving the rationale and the recommendation to spend time focusing on the Pre-collaboration content. It gave us a structure and foundation, and a sense of a way to proceed.” (Funder)

Self-reflection

A key task during Pre-collaboration is for groups to spend time considering their own motivations, both personally and as an organisation. There is the opportunity to do this during the individual Pre-collaboration sessions where participants discuss their organisational context with the facilitator: their business-as-usual and goals; their collaboration experience, and what worked well and not so well; their

own cultural practices and philosophies; their views on potential risks in collaborating; and the extent of internal permission and buy-in for the collaboration.

“It’s not just about exchanging information, it’s also learning about each other and each corner of the organisation.” (Facilitator)

“The dynamics of the group were strengthened – they shared history and stories that some hadn’t heard before so it increased the understanding of others in the group.” (facilitator)

“It was useful to feel understood by [the facilitator], especially the fabulous work we’ve achieved. We also talked about potential barriers and it allowed people to get that off their chest.” (Collaborator)

The reason for this purposeful self-reflection is to recognise what participants’ own values and practices actually are (rather than making assumptions), and from that foundation, interpret and reflect on other organisations’ ways of doing things. This is intended to help identify areas of commonality and where potential rubs may arise.

Further, the act of preparing the organisational whakawhanaungatanga presentation (where individual groups provided an introductory description of their organisation to the wider collective) was experienced by some participants as a useful way of learning how co-workers understood their purpose and internal processes; they didn’t always align.

“We talked about our history for the PowerPoint to really dig out the right stuff. We each thought different things were important so it was a difficult process.” (Collaborator)

“If we had just launched into the whakawhanaungatanga it would not have been as effective as having gone through those questions first.” (Collaborator)

For some, the self-reflection was a good reminder that collaborations are not simply agreements between leaders; they will ideally involve people from all levels of an organisation, and for this to happen, there needs to be concerted effort to bring everyone on the journey. It was clear that the individual Pre-collaboration sessions were more beneficial when a higher number of personnel attended. Feedback suggested that intra-organisational understanding was enhanced, that is, teams were not always aware of their own organisation’s structure or history, and often had different perspectives about their culture and goals. Pre-collaboration enabled clarity and agreement within the organisation, and equally, a shared appreciation of how the proposed collaboration aligned with their own BAU.

The self-reflection element of the Model was not appreciated by all, however. There were times when participants felt insufficient progress was being made when there was so much real world work to be done. One funder found that in spending time focused on their own relationships, emphasis was taken away from the original idea and purpose of the collaboration.

“The mistake in this case was that they just worked amongst themselves. They focused on their relationship and working together rather than their partnerships [with external organisations] and the wider community. It made my job harder.” (Funder)

Tikanga and Whakawhanaungatanga

Correct processes are important in any group setting, and even more so when the aim is to establish relationships. Practices such as mihimihi (greeting), karakia (prayer) and whakawhanaungatanga (process of establishing trust) were used by the pilot groups, and were key for inviting Māori into the process. These were important additions not initially included in the Model.

“It was humbling to open the meeting in a way that we are comfortable with – karakia and acknowledging everyone. It made me feel at home.” (Collaborator)

Whakawhanaungatanga was especially beneficial for building trust. An organisational whakawhanaungatanga was initially introduced at the request of one group, and subsequently a personal ‘round’ was added after being used by one of the facilitators.

“The opportunity for them to talk about their own organisations worked well - they wouldn’t normally do this. It helped to clarify points of friction, discuss their bottom lines, and describe the strengths they bring to the collaboration.” (Facilitator)

“It’s long overdue to talk about the things we’ve just talked about. It’s priceless because you start to understand others, and their passions and what they think of their organisations.” (Collaborator)

“We’re so busy doing stuff that we haven’t had time to just talk to the others about what we do – I would only have that kind of conversation with a funder.” (Collaborator)

“We have to know each other – our values and where we’ve come from – so we can walk together into the future.” (Collaborator)

Despite the generally positive feedback on this part of pre-collaboration, not everyone was universally positive, and there were some suggestions made for improvement, particularly about sharper timekeeping and general organisation:

“I would have liked to have heard from the people who aren’t the leaders, the little people.” (Collaborator)

“We spent a lot of time on the introductions when we all know each other, and when it came to discussions, we didn’t have much time left.” (Collaborator)

“This was good, but it seemed like a few people weren’t really prepared.” (Observer)

An interesting point made during one of the collaboration sessions was that using Māori terms such as kaitiakitanga is useful for this kind of exercise as they are concepts that encompass a number of values,

and they help disparate groups of people more easily find areas of agreement in relation to the project at hand.

Establishing the Collective's Values, Vision and Mission

During Incubate's earlier research it became evident that a very clear shared vision is the vital 'glue' that holds together successful collaborations.

"Incubate has helped us pull out the values and why we're doing this stuff together – it knew the right questions to ask. It's good for the foundational stuff, but not so sure about the practical stuff." (Collaborator)

"The most important thing Incubate gave the group was a structure to work to. It was vital for them to have a process to use to work through issues and help in decision-making. The Values identified acted as a reference point to come back to for decision-making." (Observer)

There was a clearly observable and natural tendency at the beginning of the process for groups to view the situation from their own perspective and to look after their own interests. However, this mellowed as the groups spent more time working together through pre-collaboration tasks to come to a point where they could shift their focus to the collective (although some issues may be ongoing).

The process of successfully determining collective values, vision and mission, was a precursor to establishing shared rules of engagement. These include how to deal with new additions to the group, for example: who might usefully be invited in (what can they offer and what's in it for them), what process will be used, and when is it appropriate to add new parties.

"We need to get everyone on the same page and supporting each organisation." (Collaborator)

"Until we got to the shared values we were really going around in circles with the unknowns." (Collaborator)

"The Goal and Mission and Vision somehow solidified the group and appeared to be a turning point. We'd talked about our Vision earlier, but maybe it was just timing and luck and a combination of things on the day." (Funder)

"We were surprised by the amount of time this took. It sounded so good at the beginning – Better Together – but there's all this stuff underneath. But we're all there for the community, we know that." (Collaborator)

"Going through the values helped them to really understand what they shared, and then it was difficult to deny there was common ground." (Facilitator)

Insight:

The Model recognised the importance of establishing commonalities during Pre-collaboration but did not include a process by which groups regularly revisit the shared vision as a reminder for why they are working together. This is an important amendment that could be made in the future.

5.2. What Happens Outside the Group Collaboration Sessions

While the original intention was for the bulk of the Pre-collaboration and Set-up work to take place during facilitated sessions, we found a significant amount of collaboration-focused communications was taking place in between our formal sessions amongst subsets of the full collaborative. While most of this contact involved the various organisations talking to each other, it could also centre on conversations between collaboration participants and funders or other third parties. This had both positive and negative implications.

Side Conversations

Often, participants wanted to further explore and work through particular issues that came up for their collaborations. Sometimes all groups were involved in these meetings, and at other times a subset of the wider group came together separately. Some groups had connections to each other that were in addition to (and predated) the collaboration itself, and feedback showed that external meetings between these participants would often still touch on the collaboration, even if this was not the primary purpose of gathering.

“It is more the moral support that I value – this is a tough gig and getting tougher and so it is great to be able to talk things through with other members.” (Collaborator)

We found no standard number of hours or a typical purpose for these side conversations. Certain individuals/organisations spent significantly more time than others depending on how committed they were to the outcome, and how much influence they wished to exert.

Interestingly, while there were delays in scheduling group meetings because of time constraints, the side conversations were often experienced as time-consuming (but necessary).

“We’re getting so many emails at the moment it’s not funny! There are conversations and big decisions, which take a lot of attention away from my job, which is already busy.” (Collaborator)

There were a small number of instances where an organisation had reportedly made negative comments about another collaborating organisation within a wider community context; this was discovered during researcher-collaborator ‘check-ins, but not dealt with openly during formal collaboration sessions. It was noted by one of the facilitators that their usual practice would be to

ensure any non-session communication would be explored with the whole group when they met, although this was not done during the pilot.

External Pressures

External pressures tended to come from two sources: business-as-usual/internal targets, and funders.

The constant pressure for groups to meet their own targets first before working towards common goals for the collaboration caused stress at times.

“It is stressful at the moment and everyone is going hard out to fulfill their contracts between now and June. People need to make their own numbers first before looking to share with others.” (Collaborator)

“Once we realised we had to get our butts moving to get it done, it put pressure on us, but it’s worth it. Hopefully we can keep up this momentum.” (Collaborator)

Funding requirements and dates were never far from consideration during collaboration sessions and were also mentioned during the Pilot ‘check-ins’ with the researchers. This was a two-edged sword because on one hand, the need to meet deadlines was at times a distraction from working through inter-group trust-building, while on the other hand, external reference points helped create momentum at times when the groups were experiencing roadblocks. Interestingly, the funders involved at times also reported feeling pressure from their own organisations to show outcomes.

“There is some anxiety at the pace of progress. This came from our own parent organisation – we have limited time and need to get runs on the board.” (Funder)

“We didn’t understand what becoming a collaborative could do until our funding was turned down.” (Collaborator)

“If we want to be in line with [our funder] and their requirements, and if we want to get things moving, we have to set times.” (Collaborator)

5.3. Individuals' Roles

We observed significant differences in terms of individual contributions to collaboration development.

The Collaborators

Participants varied considerably in terms of what they were contributing to collaborations; some would only turn up for group sessions, while others took leadership roles in organising and behind the scenes relationship building. The emergent champions, peacemakers and solution finders were impactful in creating momentum and helping to build trust within the group, often behind the scenes. Some have greater resources they can bring to bear, while others have more time.

“Perseverance and keeping your eye on the prize is so important – you have to stick with it to keep things moving along.” (Funder)

It was interesting to note the shifting power dynamics that played out throughout the process. The groups dealt with these undercurrents in different ways, with some preferring to ‘wait and see’ if things would resolve, while others favoured a more direct approach to addressing power.

“We need to have more conversations about power – who has it. Some groups think they don’t have any but they do. It’s important for us to acknowledge what groups do contribute.” (Collaborator)

The Funders

The Pilot provides some evidence of the benefits of having funders actively participate in the collaboration process. In the first instance, close funder involvement helped secure funding for the act of collaboration. Secondly it revealed to these influential decision-makers the complex process of collaboration. Further, during formal collaboration sessions, attendance of a funder allowed administrative questions to be answered immediately and considered by the group.

“Having the funder involved is both a dream and a risk. [The funder involved] holds a lot of responsibility for the group and now the group relies on them. If they leave, the group may be in trouble. But they were the right person for the job, with the right attitude.” (Facilitator)

5.4. Managing Business-as-Usual (BAU)

There is frequently a conflict between the work of the individual organisations involved, and the work they are attempting to do together. There was evidence that the process of establishing trust and rules of engagement helped (or offered the potential to help) reduce this tension, but at the conclusion of the Pilot, this issue remained important.

“We are doing this on top of what we’re already doing in our own organisations, and we wondered last night if some should be paid for their time. [One collaborator] is taking on a lot of work and I worry that they need to receive money or some other benefit for her time.”
(Collaborator)

“Timeframes are important. We all have short term needs but what are the medium and long term goals and implications – this is where we’re at odds. I don’t like looking long term because I don’t know who’ll be around next year, (this group) thinks very long term, and (that group) is in the middle. And then (the funder) can’t give us a straight answer.” (Collaborator)

Enabling Participants to Meet Regularly to Focus on the Act of Collaboration

Initially, the Model was conceived as a way of helping groups work together in an orderly and quick fashion without missing vital steps along the way. We envisaged that the whole process (all four phases of the collaboration journey) would take no more than one year, with more time spent during the first three months for the Pre-collaboration and Set-up phases. In practice, this work has been stretched out, in large part because of the difficulty experienced in bringing busy people together at the same time to go through the process – this was frustrating for all involved.

“From the start it would have been useful to agree to a timeframe to keep moving on. It’s frustrating when we lose momentum due to delays and we forget where we got up to.” (Collaborator)

“We’re struggling to get two individuals to meet and we can’t work out why they’re not engaging.”
(Collaborator)

“We weren’t backed up by senior management to spend the time or to maybe put our own organisation’s needs on the back burner.” (Collaborator)

It was certainly more difficult to get people to make time in the beginning of the process. Business-as-usual tended to take priority, and there was not necessarily confidence that holding early trust-building conversations would be a productive use of their time. Later in the process, however, once collaborators started to realise the benefits, scheduling ongoing meetings became easier.

“I’m itching to get to that next bit.” (Collaborator)

A barrier to putting early effort into the collaboration process noted by some participants was uncertainty about whether the proposed project would go ahead (due to both internal and external factors); others thought the risk was worth it.

“Why put all this effort into collaboration if it’s not going to be possible.” (Collaborator)

“The sooner we dive in the better – these reservations aren’t going to go away.” (Collaborator)

There was great variability in terms of the number of people from each organisation who took part in formal collaboration sessions. For some, only one staff member/volunteer was involved (and they could not always attend), while for others, two or three representatives participated.

Managing Risk and Uncertainty

Participants often fed back that they didn’t understand the overall collaboration process and this added a level of uncertainty. There was enthusiasm to learn more about what other groups were doing, and to learn from a collaboration expert. Risk was an important factor, particularly in terms of ensuring one’s own organisation was protected from collaboration-specific risks. For example, what might be the implications of saying ‘yes’ to a particular sub-project that one was not confident about.

“We would have found some examples of how other groups have worked really useful because we aren’t sure what we’re doing!” (Collaborator)

“I don’t know what the implications of saying “Yes” to something is, and so I want someone to help guide us through a collaborative conversation. We’re all interpreting things differently, and there are a lot of unknowns.” (Collaborator)

“There is a fear of losing our own purpose and being distracted rather than mission drift in the collaboration.” (Collaborator)

Setting up basic rules of engagement for the collaborative, for example, a Trust document, MOU or Mana Enhancing Agreement, was a key way of reducing perceived risk. This was not necessarily an easy process for groups, but it did allow them to progress even though no consensus had been reached on some matters.

“In spite of being in disagreement, we all agreed on a process to meet difficult situations. That’s been the biggest breakthrough to push us forward.” (Collaborator)

“Early on, the groups thought it would collapse, but we reached a point where continuing unsurety was accepted.” (Facilitator)

Degree of Alignment Between BAU and the Collaboration

When individual organisations’ BAUs are oppositional or not closely aligned, intergroup trust could be impacted from the outset. This was evident in one of the Pilot groups where there was considerable variance in organisational aims and culture.

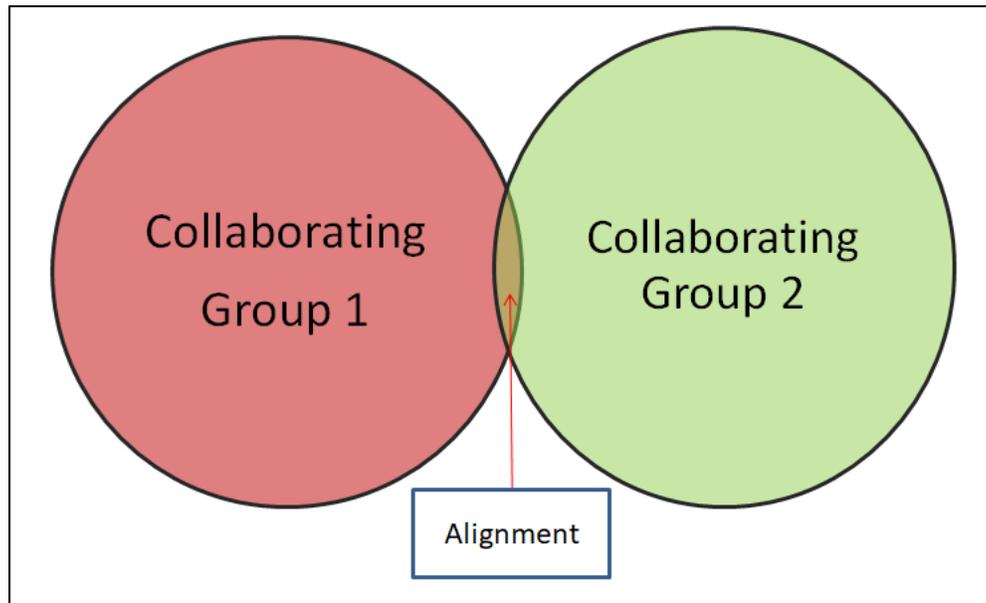


Diagram 2: Low Alignment Between Diverse Organisations

The specific ways of working used by different types of organisations was noted by many participants, particularly when commercialisation or the financial focus of one organisation appeared to clash with the ideology of others. While this scenario created a perceived risk, particularly if one group appeared to exert more power over the whole project, there was an overall desire to explore where common ground could be found. Finding shared values and purpose, as already discussed, was a key task for groups wanting to collaborate.

“It’s important to learn about the different cultures that drive each organisation. It takes time, and therefore costs, to understand these differences.” (Collaborator)

“It currently feels potentially unworkable because of the different working cultures, legal complications and [project] complications.” (Collaborator)

Interestingly, the opposite scenario can also create problems: when participating organisations’ BAU and the collaborative initiative’s purpose are very closely aligned it can be difficult to establish boundaries.

In this case, the collective should determine when it is okay for an individual organisation to act for itself, and when can they be expected to create benefit for the whole collective.

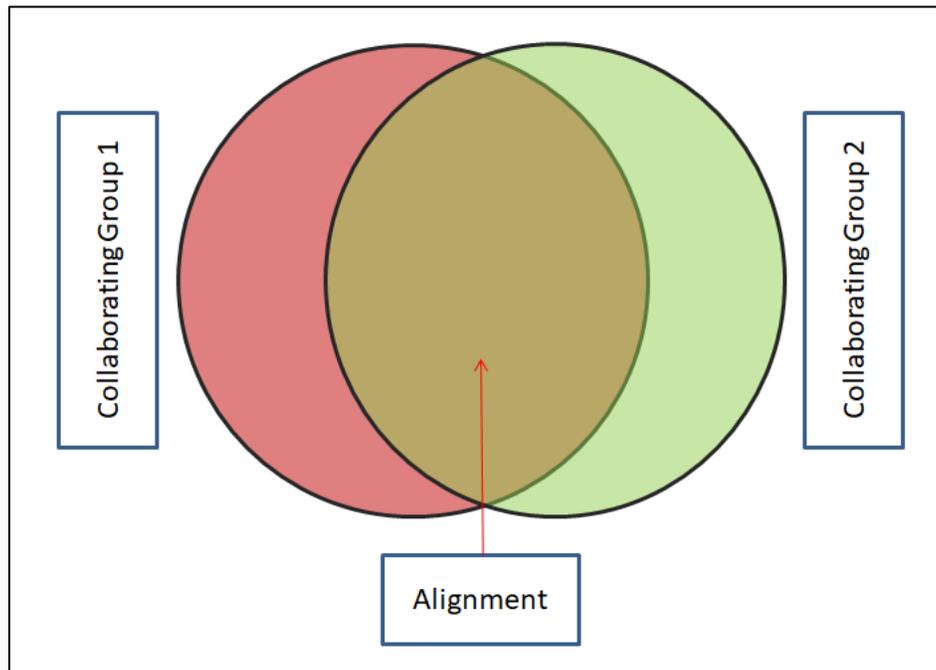


Diagram 3: High Alignment Between Similar Organisations

Insight:

Each of these two scenarios presents its own challenges to the collaboration process, and needs to be managed accordingly. While the problems arising from low alignment were obvious to participants, problems related to high alignment may be more of a surprise to those attempting to collaborate. This was an interesting insight from the Pilot.

5.5. Facilitation

Earlier stages in Incubate’s ongoing research suggested that a facilitator would be a vital ingredient to guiding participants through the collaboration process, and this assumption was supported through the Pilot.

The Benefits of Independent Facilitators for Participants

There was wide support from participants for involving professional facilitators to support their collaboration process, and almost without exception, participants were very positive about their facilitators.

“Establishing good rapport with a group is likely to accelerate things. It creates a foundation of trust – when [the facilitator] said something, people listened.” (Funder)

“Having an independent facilitator is like holding up a mirror during the sense-making process.” (Facilitator)

In particular, collaborators appreciated the facilitators’ skills around listening and creating a safe environment for addressing what were at times difficult issues. Two of the facilitators were Māori, and this was considered extremely impactful in introducing correct tikanga and respect during formal sessions. The facilitators themselves were also very aware of their impact on the group.

“We acknowledged the groups for what their drivers were. Repeating back to the group what others had said meant they were hearing each other’s discomfort and limitations. Through highlighting everyone’s part to play, everyone became softer with each other.” (Facilitator)

“I’m impressed with the facilitator. They have a relaxed quality but there’s sharp thinking behind that.” (Collaborator)

“They relaxed when we used a conversational style.” (Facilitator)

All facilitators in this Pilot used the Incubate Model only to a point, and showed a strong preference to take a participant-led approach. In practice this meant that while the general topic/focus of each formal collaboration session was predetermined in consultation between the facilitators and researchers, the Model’s specific questions were often put to one side, with facilitators allowing collaborators to lead the conversation. While this approach did help to establish trust within the collectives and left people feeling comfortable, at points during the process some participants thought more structure would have helped to move the process forward more quickly and effectively.

“[The facilitator] left a good amount of space for us to comment on how it might work for us.” (Collaborator)

"[The facilitator] intervened on a couple of occasions that kept the flow – they removed roadblocks." (Collaborator)

"The Values session was one of the few times [the facilitator] actively facilitated – it worked really well. But at times the agenda has dissolved and the last hour has been disorganised." (Funder)

"It's still too slow – we wanted to get to the practical stuff and community planning sooner. We needed more leadership and guidance, but there's a fine line between leading us and letting us go at our own pace." (Collaborator)

"They were confused about the Incubate Model – it was confusing and didn't have enough structure." (Funder)

Facilitator Input into Improving the Model

Facilitators offered valuable insight into how the Model might be usefully edited to better fit the not-for-profit sector. Specific advice included:

- Removing wordiness and reduce the number of questions

"It's not always necessary to ask all the questions. We can wait until the end of the process to check whether all points have been covered and then revisit anything that's been missed – take a conversational approach." (Facilitator)

- Rewrite questions to reflect a strengths-based approach

"Government-funded service providers will look at problems and solutions, but these guys don't use deficit language, they look at strengths." (Facilitator)

"Some of the questions are quite deficit-focused. I don't want to ask about problems and opportunities in the same breath. It's better to deliberately separate these out because negatives can derail the flow of the conversation." (Facilitator)

- Introducing a more personal whakawhanaungatanga

"Whakawhanaungatanga is not your business card; it's where you grew up, or significant landmarks. You start with the personal." (Facilitator)

- Ensure accurate notetaking for formal sessions

"Notetaking can be overlooked. Sometimes it is rotated, but not everyone is good at it. It's important to capture meeting discussions and decisions carefully." (Facilitator)

- Simplify the summary of individual sessions early in the process to focus on alignments and outcomes rather than intergroup differences

“Having a shorter summary with a positive focus will show that they all have concerns which if respected will lead to successful working relationships.” (Facilitator)

Facilitators also explored the question as to whether a Model was even appropriate at all. Given that so much communication happens outside of formal facilitated sessions, a Model only has limited impact on the process anyway. Further, because every group configuration is different, and collaborators will likely want to address particular issues at a time and in a way that is appropriate for them, being prescriptive has the potential to lead collectives in the wrong direction.

“It’s an organic process so it’s difficult. You need to be open to where the groups are at, their experience, networks, expertise – this determines how and why you approach it in a particular way.” (Facilitator)

“Normally we would have addressed certain issues as they arose, but instead we parked them as we had other things we needed to get through. This was different for us and had the potential to plant doubt in people’s minds.” (Facilitator)

“I’m feeding the Model; it’s not feeding me.” (Facilitator)

“How can you have a generic process that also allows them to express their own dynamics and issues. There are so many variables in existence.” (Observer)

6. MODEL MODIFICATIONS

Collaboration is a challenging journey with plenty of highs and lows. The journey map (below), which tracks how positively or negatively participating groups felt over time, was developed during an earlier phase of Incubate’s research. It illustrates the different stages of collaboration and that multiple challenges are experienced along the way. The Incubate Best Practice Model was developed as a way of supporting collaborators to reach positive alignment more quickly, to minimise the potential for failure, and to increase the likelihood of positive outcomes in the community

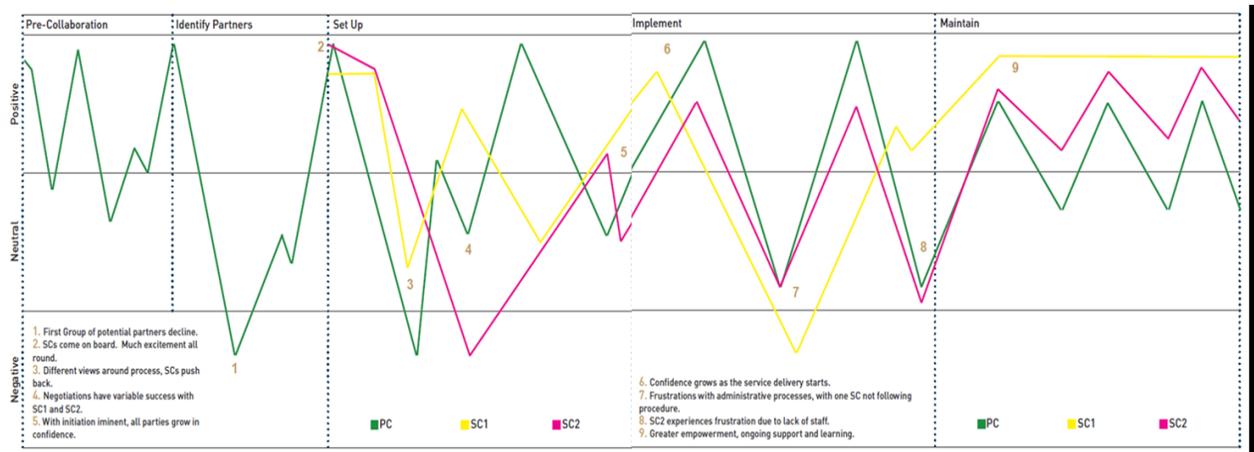


Diagram 4: The Collaboration Journey Map, 2016

The Pilot research progressed through the Pre-Collaboration and Set-Up Phases only, and iterative improvements were able to be made to those phases. General foundational changes were made here in terms of simplifying questions and editing to somewhat reflect a strengths-based approach. The Pilot concluded before any focused time was spent on Implementation or Maintenance.

6.1 Pre-Collaboration Phase:

The Pre-collaboration phase begins the collaborative relationship. It introduces the parties formally to each other and provides the opportunity for each participant to introduce themselves. Each group then meets individually with the facilitator to discuss their own organisation in more detail. This facilitated process provides the opportunity to have conversations about collaborators’ own organisations and their values that might not otherwise be purposefully explored. The topics covered have relevance for later conversations with the other groups. Finally, organisations are invited to report to the collective about where they’ve come from, what they do, and where they’re heading.

Process:

1. All groups together – initial introduction to the collaboration and Personal Whakawhanaungatanga
2. Individual sessions – focus on own organisation
3. All groups together – Organisational Whakawhanaungatanga and focus on what's important in partners, and the reasons for wanting change

The Primary Improvements to Pre-collaboration were:

1. Introduction and placement of whakawhanaungatanga, including both personal and organisational introduction

Collaboration participants came up with the idea of holding an organisation-focused whakawhanaungatanga session to conclude the Pre-Collaboration Phase:

The purpose was to share with other members of the collaborative what each of the organisations does, and a set of topics developed to create focus:

- Where we have come from - how we formed, who has been involved, how we're connected
- What we currently do - what we are most proud of, the highlights
- What we dream of achieving in the future
- One thing you need to know about our organisation is

Each group would have 20 minutes to present their message and take any questions from the collective. A variety of presentations can be used such PowerPoint or simply describing the organisation. The idea of creating a written or video record of this was discussed, although no firm decision was made.

This process worked well: groups felt heard and they learned about the others they were to start collaborating with.

2. Simplifying how information gathered from individual groups was presented back to the collective

The lengthy presentation to report back organisation descriptions gathered during individual sessions with the facilitator was poorly received by participants. Therefore it was decided that with the next Pilot group, a brief summary of the relevant points would be presented, and then a solution-focused discussion held. The facilitator checked with each of the groups that they were happy to have their information shared, and then a matrix was created containing small soundbites that highlighted similarities over differences. Factors included for each group were:

- Key sustainability driver
- Outcomes being sought
- Core values
- Key organisational cultural elements that may impact on the collaboration
- Opportunities seen by participating in the collaboration
- Concerns about this collaboration
- Key contribution to supporting this project to success

This change worked well, and the matrix was referred to on at least two subsequent occasions. It served to highlight in a simple way that there were more similarities than differences between participating groups.

3. Removal of the culture questions

None of the facilitators thought the set of Culture (covering organisational culture) questions worked - they were clumsy and focused too much on negatives. Culture questions had originally been included in the Set-up phase before being moved to Pre-collaboration. However, because the questions were essentially covered during the Values section of Pre-collaboration, we were able to remove what might have been an artificial discussion about culture that was somewhat removed from the collaboration context.

6.2 Set-up Phase:

The Set-up phase is where collaborators move from thinking about things for themselves and deciding if groups will be a good fit with each other, into specific action planning, and deciding how they will work together.

Working through the Model process showed that there was a reasonable amount of duplication in revisiting some issues, albeit from slightly different angles.

The Primary Improvements to Set-up were:

It was decided to remove two of the topics originally mooted for Set-Up because they were already being covered sufficiently during Pre-collaboration. These were:

- Partner-focused – this is where you start the conversations that will determine whether you will be good collaborators.

- Change-focused – this is where we all talk together in more depth about the identified reasons for changing or doing things differently.

Instead, Set-Up was edited to focus on the practical, starting with forming a concrete plan:

- What's the Plan – all groups come together to finalise (for now) what they are going to try to do.

The action-focused questions in the earlier Checklist version which explored resources and roles were modified to look in more detail at how people could contribute to and be impacted by the work of the collaboration

- Action-focused – with intended collaborators, this is where you work out the 'nuts and bolts' of the collaboration - how will it work in practice?
 - Resources, including information, physical assets, and finances
 - People inside the collective
 - People outside the collective
 - Communication strategies with people inside and outside the collective
 - Processes that will guide how the collective functions

It should be noted that a formal agreement (such as an MOU) is not necessarily completed by this stage because answers to these sets of questions are intended to feed into any such document as an agreed basis for the future partnership.

7. Future Potential of the Model

The involvement of experienced, professional facilitators highlighted the difficulty of imposing a ‘cookie-cutter’ tool to very complex human interactions. Their bespoke approaches paid dividends, especially in terms of trust-building amongst participants. At the same time, there was a clear desire by collaborators and funders alike to work through the process more quickly and in a more structured way. The challenge for Incubate is to manage this tension if it wants to support collaboration on a larger, national scale.

There is potential to create a programme that is more tightly time-framed, uses a pared down version of the guided questioning already created within the Model’s four phases, and helps to educate participants about collaboration through presenting case studies and discussing supports and barriers to success.

Importantly, facilitator-led development of a set of guidelines for the facilitation sector would ensure expert knowledge of group dynamics is front and centre. Additionally, because the ability to collaborate is as much a skill as a set of interpersonal relationships, utilising the expertise of a trainer or leadership coach could assist in developing a standard (and more educative) approach to supporting collaboration.

There is likely benefit in encouraging best practice collaboration across all sectors of New Zealand. Can facilitators come together to advocate for a more standard and evidence-based approach in order to persuade both collaborators and funders that spending time on Pre-collaboration (at the very least) is a worthwhile investment? How can we provide confidence that if funders invest their budgets in professional facilitation, they will see improved social outcomes? How can we reassure those working in busy organisations that investing time in building relationships will reap exponential benefits down the track?

We don’t yet have a definite pathway, but we include several suggestions below for how this might be achieved.

7.1 Time-framed with a Clearer Structure

A tighter offering with a specific time-frame and a clear structure may help collectives to move through the process more quickly without feeling like they have to commit to a long and arduous process. Additionally, we could call it a ‘Programme’ that people and their organisations commit to initially (a Model or Journey/Process may not be definitive enough).

A change management approach and/or utilising the skills of a trainer or leadership coach, for example, could assist in creating a tighter programme, while also utilising the group-led approach favoured by facilitators, thereby taking the best from each profession. Beginning with a formal design-led process to determine how facilitation/coaching professionals across the country could be supported to incorporate some standardised guidelines into their work might be useful.

Further, given the success of incorporating some Māori protocol into the Incubate process, it makes sense to further explore how additional cultural elements could usefully be infused.

How can we quicken the pace of progress during the early stages in terms of gathering the groups in a room together?

- Some feedback suggests clearer guidance about the structure and purpose of the Pre-collaboration phase would have been appreciated to reduce confusion and to increase motivation to prioritise meetings.
- Providing examples of how other successful collaborations formed and worked together would provide guidance and set expectations about the process – participants said frequently in their feedback that they were essentially taking a leap of faith that they were being guided in a useful way but they had no overview of the process.
- Being clearer about the *what's-in-it-for-me* proposition of the collaboration would encourage people to invest extra time outside of their BAU.
- Because it takes time and money to build trust (initially through pre-collaboration activities) it is important that senior management and Trust boards support their people to spend time on this – the Incubate process could focus on this type of advocacy.

7.2 Format

It is likely that the Model would benefit from being less wordy, more visual and include a process for recording and measuring progress. In the words of one facilitator:

- The Model is too academic, too wordy – it's not really a 'tool' – there are no evident ways to measure success.
- It needs to be more visual – easier to 'get' – it takes too much reading and is a frustrating process

Ideally in making less use of text, a greater emphasis on visual aids might enable facilitators and participants to quickly understand their strengths and weaknesses as a collaborative, identify key areas for improvement, and record and measure progress throughout the journey.

7.3 Education

Education about collaborative practice would be beneficial, both for collaborators and funders. Pilot participants commonly noted that they wanted to know how other groups had successfully negotiated the collaboration journey because they were feeling somewhat rudderless despite having facilitators to

support the process. Further, it makes sense to offer some simplified theory about the different levels, types and benefits of collaboration to help people place themselves into a larger context.

"I would have found some examples of how other groups have worked useful because we're not really sure what we're doing." (Collaborator)

8. CONCLUSIONS

The Pilot Research was useful to gain greater insights into the collaboration process in general, the work of facilitators, and how aspects of Incubate's Best Practice Collaboration Model impacted groups attempting to work together. The findings reveal some important factors identified as supporting collaboration, and we comment on what further work could be done to achieve this on a much larger scale.

While the groups did not complete the Model through the intended four phases, those that at least completed Pre-collaboration have experienced significantly more change in their collaborative relationships than the collective that did not. These reported impacts include:

- learning more about each other's organisational goals and ways of working
- building trust between individuals involved
- developing a shared and agreed vision for the collaboration
- developing (or in the process of) a set of internal processes and protocols for working with each other
- making action-focused progress such as securing funds
- modifying the original proposal in order to meet the variety of organisational needs and concerns

Despite some benefits, involvement in the Pilot was not a cure-all for the problems that often plague collaborative initiatives, and two of the groups still had issues to work through.

Important Factors in Collaboration

a) Pre-collaboration

Ensuring groups spend time focusing on Pre-collaboration issues does seem to have created a level of resilience. In particular:

- establishing trust;
- building relationships with each other;
- agreeing on foundational shared values; and
- agreeing on goals for the collaboration.

Tasks include self-reflection, whakawhanaungatanga (where each group introduces themselves and their work to the collective) and establishing shared goals, which together support mutual understanding.

b) What happens outside the group collaboration sessions

Many side conversations take place outside the facilitated Group Sessions. While these can add to the time needed to establish a collaboration, they also appear to serve a vital function in dealing with important issues as they arise. Additionally, external pressures such as business-as-usual and funder requirements can be both distracting and motivating for collaborators. It is suggested that the facilitator should try to understand what is happening externally and bring these into the group forum to ensure they do not derail the process.

c) Individuals' roles

Some individuals emerge as champions, others as peacemakers or solution-finders throughout the process – they are a key element of collaborative success because they put in additional effort to support the collective to reach its aims. Collaborators, facilitators and funders, can all take on these roles.

d) Managing BAU

Without exception, collaborators experienced at least some conflict between their own organisation's BAU and the collective's work. This has several impacts, including the difficulty in arranging group sessions, the constant pressure to push past the relationship-building stage to get to the action and decision-making, and in some cases a heightened perception of risk (which increases anxiety). Interestingly, the degree of alignment between participating organisations creates different kinds of potential rubs, whether that is related to conflicting goals or overlapping aims.

e) Facilitation

There was a high degree of support from participants for engaging facilitators given the acknowledged difficulty of collaboration. The involvement of facilitators was key to ensuring each collective's unique context and dynamics were acknowledged and supported. At the same time, there is the opportunity to create more structure around the process to allay the doubts and frustration expressed by some.

The facilitators provided valuable insight into how the Incubate process could be improved.

Future Potential of the Model

The challenge for Incubate is to manage the tension between the context-specific and human-centred realities of collaboration that respond to a tailored facilitative approach, and the potential benefits of introducing more structure into the process.

This report offers several suggestions for consideration that may allow a more nuanced approach than this first Model offered:

a) Time-framed, clearer programme

Taking a design-led approach to creating a programme based on the expertise of both facilitators and coaches, for example, and then holding training sessions for facilitation professionals to enable the creation of standardised guidelines that support successful collaboration in any situation.

Such a programme should seek to incorporate more cultural elements, and employ specific strategies for speeding the process along, such as fostering support from funders and senior staff/boards in collaborating organisations.

b) Format

Developing a simpler format would increase engagement with the new programme. Some work has already been undertaken to simplify, however, additional steps, such as introducing visuals and a system of measurement, would also be an improvement.

c) Education

Collaborators were clear they would have appreciated more signposting at the beginning of the process about how collaboration works and how other groups do it successfully; introducing such material can be expected to enhance commitment to the ongoing process.

Appendix 1:

Pilot Research Participant Information Sheet



OPPORTUNITY TO BE PART OF AN EXCITING INITIATIVE FOR SOCIAL GOOD

IS WORKING WITH OTHERS TO IMPROVE OUTCOMES FOR YOUR COMMUNITY IMPORTANT TO YOU?

The Incubate* team is looking for organisations to take part in trialling our new Best Practice Collaboration Model, which helps organisations collaborate for social good.

WHAT IS THE COLLABORATION MODEL?

The Model is the result of New Zealand research undertaken over the past two years into what enables successful collaboration and what are the 'sticky' points. The findings are the basis for a new Collaboration Tool that guides you and your team every step of the way through the Collaboration Journey

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU

Your collaborative project will benefit from everything we have learnt so far from our consultation with more than 30 NGO, government and corporate organisations around what enables effective partnerships ... and what's difficult. In addition we may be able to offer a paid professional facilitator to assist you to work through the model.

WHY A PILOT?

The pilot is all about testing the Model in live situations so that we can continue to improve its usability and value. Just as importantly, we need to show what impact the Model is having in terms of supporting collaboration success; funders need evidence of both effect and costs in order to support the Model.

We intend to work with four collaborations – in the form of pilots - by helping participants use our Model throughout the four-stage process of:

1. pre-collaboration,
2. set-up,
3. implementation, and
4. maintenance.

The proposed pilots will be carried out by Relate Strategic on behalf of Incubate as a continuation of the larger project that began in 2015.

HOW WILL IT WORK?

1) Assessing suitability

If you are planning to collaborate for social good in any way in the coming month(s) we want to speak with you. We will need to know some details about your collaboration to determine if it fits within our criteria. All confidentiality will be respected.

2) You decide if it's right for you

We will invite suitable groups to an information session so you can learn more about the model and decide, together with your fellow collaborators, whether it could be right for you.

3) Work with a facilitator

Once the pilot collaboration groups have signed up, we will bring them together with a facilitator to get the project started. Groups will then work with their facilitator on an ongoing basis to progress through the four stages. *This part of the process might take up to one day per month, and is aimed at directly benefitting your collaboration.*

4) Provide us with feedback

During this time, the researchers will stay in contact with participants through telephone conversations and face-to-face interviews, as well as a monthly three-question survey. *This part of the process might take a couple of hours per month, and is aimed at supporting our research.*

Resourcing

There is no financial assistance available to pilot research participants, however, we may be able to provide a facilitator to take you through the process. If not, we can provide advice on applying for funding.

The research will run over 12 months, and as noted above, should take little more than one day per month.

Confidentiality

While we will be reporting our findings, this research is about the Model rather than the groups involved, so we intend to preserve participants' anonymity to the largest extent. The research will provide an initial description of each of the four collaborative projects, but all subsequent reporting will bring together aggregated commentary. Specifically we will show how each of the Model's four stages works in practice, including what works well and not so well, how much time and other resources are required, and what improvements can be made.

No specific comments made by any participants will be attributed directly to them, their organisation or their collaboration.

WHO ARE WE?

*Incubate is a group that wants to increase the rate of successful collaboration within the not-for-profit sector, as well as support partnerships with those in the commercial and government sectors. Member organisations include Supporting Families, Senz, English Language Partners NZ, Te Whangai Trust, The Grief Centre, DIA and Datacom.

Any queries or concerns can be directed to:

Jo-Anne Hazel, Research & Strategy Manager, Relate Strategic: 021 0624662

Appendix 2: Pilot Research Participant Consent Form



Incubate Collaboration Model Pilot Research

Participant Consent Form

I voluntarily agree to participate in the Pilot Research on Incubate's Best Practice Collaboration Model. I understand that this research is being conducted by Relate Strategic on behalf of The Incubate Group in order to test and improve the Model.

I understand that the research process will require my involvement in several ways throughout the research (up to 12 months), including:

1. Development of a short written introduction to our planned collaboration and the organisations/agencies involved.
2. Ongoing sessions with a professional facilitator to support us through the stages of our collaboration. The researcher may attend some of these sessions as an observer.
3. A monthly response to a short survey about the Model.
4. Several qualitative 'check-ins' throughout the process, which will include face-to-face and/or telephone conversations with the researcher.

I grant permission for the check-ins to be tape recorded, and to be used only by Relate Strategic for analysis of interview data. I grant permission for the research findings to be published in a final report, which will be made publicly available.

I understand that any identifiable information in regard to my name and/or agency name will only be included in the initial introduction, but not be included in the detailed analysis of the research.

Research Participant _____

Participant Organisation _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Primary Contact: Jo-Anne Hazel, Senior Researcher, Relate Strategic.

(021) 0624662