Butterfly Art Project
Encouraging Creativity and Healing through Art

BOOK 3: Chapter 6 MARKETING YOUR ART CENTRE
Chapter 7 DEVELOPING NETWORKS
AND PARTNERSHIPS

CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

Asset-Based Community Development	ABCD
The Butterfly Art Project	BAP
Community Art Facilitators	CAFs
Community Based Organisation	CBO
Community-Driven Development	CDD
Companies and Intellectual Property Commission	CIPC
Civil Society Organisation	CSO
Department of Social Development	DSD
Early Childhood Development Centre	ECD
Faith-Based Organisation	FBO
Financial Intelligence Centre Act	FICA
Memorandum of Incorporation	MOI
Non-Governmental Organisation	NGO
Non-Profit Company	NPC
Non-Profit Organisation	NPO
Public Benefit Organisation	PBO
Search Engine Optimisation	SEO
South African Revenue Service	SARS
School Governing Body	SGB

The information contained in this handbook is intended to inform and guide its readers, it is by no means a complete guide for starting an Art Centre and should not replace any legislative or regulative guidelines published by relevant statuary or governing bodies from time to time.

6. MARKETING YOUR ART CENTRE

6.1 WHAT'S A MARKETING STRATEGY?

A marketing strategy acts as a general roadmap for how you plan to market your centre and the channels (how) you plan to use. It outlines the key marketing projects/activities you need to undertake, the goals you hope to accomplish through each channel, and a plan for measuring your success.

The success of your marketing strategy is based on connecting your marketing goals to specific organisational goals and coming up with a plan to actually work toward achieving them.

As part of you strategy you will need to develop a marketing plan and a marketing budget. Your marketing plan is actually a statement, supported by relevant financial information, of how you are going to develop your art centre - "What you are going to offer to whom, when and how you are going to offer it." Within this plan you should identify all your planned marketing channels (how you will market your art centre) and include any annual events, yours or those offered through other organisations, fundraising activities, etc that you can use to bring attention to your work.

As part of your research in marketing and marketing strategies, you may come across various terms like:

- **Above-the-line:** refers to an advertising strategy involving both above and below the line communications in which one form of advertising points the target to another form of advertising thereby crossing the "line".
- **Below-the-line:** refers to forms of non-media communication, even non-media advertising, for example direct mail, public relations (such as store banners, competition entry forms, etc) and sales promotion for which a fee is agreed upon and charged up front.
- **Through-the-line:** strategy makes use of current traditional media: television, newspapers, magazines, radio, outdoor, and internet.

Don't let this deter you. In this handbook we are going to keep things simple – this often works best for small enterprises, should you however, become a global corporation, be sure to hire a marketing professional to assist you in developing a marketing strategy more suited to that level of operations.

Before we begin to develop our strategy, we need to understand the 7 P's of the marketing mix:

6.1.1 THE 7 P'S OF THE MARKETING MIX

1. Product
The service that you will offer through your art centre is the thing you offer to satisfy your customers' wants and needs. As part of defining your service offering, you may want to consider, what service(s) exactly you plan to offer; the range of services; the quality and design; and the length and frequency of the classes.

2. Price
Pricing your services is critical to your success, whether you are running a for-profit or an NPO. If you are running an NPO and are not planning on charging your students for the classes, but rather focusing on raising the funds for your work, you still need to cost out your services (classes). These should be considered in terms of both long-term strategic gaols and short-term activity level.

3. Promotion
This is the element of the marketing mix that most people mean when they talk about 'marketing'. But jumping straight into decisions about what promotional tools to use without considering their relationship to the rest of the mix can be a sure-fire way to waste money. There are many different promotional techniques, each with their own strengths but essentially they can be broken down into four broad categories: Advertising; Public Relations; Sales Promotions; and Direct Selling. These techniques are used to essentially "sell" your organisation, services and grow your customer base.

4. Place
'Place' refers to the distribution channels you use – where will you market your centre. Your choice of such channels is important, as is the variety of channels you use. For example, a common challenge for NPO's is generating enough interest and support to garner larger funding and donor support.

As an NPO you chose of channels will need to be more creative in that you will not necessarily have the finances to pay for more traditional forms of marketing – e.g.: advertising on TV or in print media. Building you skills and knowledge around the use of alternative (now becoming more mainstream) channels like social media,

networking (word-of-mouth) and the like, is going to be an important part of building your organisation's profile within your community.

There are also local radio stations who may be willing to offer your airtime to promote your organisation, don't be afraid to ask – make sure that you have your information readily available and that you can present this in a clear and concise manner.

5. People

The impact that you and your team can have on your marketing cannot be underestimated. At its most obvious, this element includes the understanding that you and your team are the "face" of your organisation – they are your brand.

You need to consider the knowledge and skills of your staff; how to build their motivation and get them to invest in supporting and building your brand. Remember that while each element of the marketing mix will have an impact on each of the other elements of your organisation, the people element is one where the importance of understanding marketing as an integral part of the way you operate is crystal clear.

6. Process

The process part of the mix is about being "easy to do business with". How easy are you to reach; how easy is it for your students to register for your classes; do your students come to you or do you travel to their location; are your lessons appropriate to their age/ level of skill/ interests.

Remember to look at this from your students' point of view. Plan all your marketing channels and activities where your target group can best access and in a language that they can understand.

7. Physical Evidence

When you sell tangible goods, you can offer your customer the chance to 'try before they buy', or at least see, touch or smell. With services, unless you offer a free trial, your customer will often be buying on trust. And to help them do so you need to provide as much evidence of the quality you will be providing as possible.

So physical evidence refers to all the tangible, visible touchpoints that your customer will encounter before they buy.

Think about how all the elements of your marketing mix work together. Is your pricing reflective of both what your target group can afford and are willing pay? Does your choice of promotional tools reinforce your choice of

distribution channel? Does your message "speak" to your target group?

6.1.2 CREATING YOUR MARKETING STRATEGY

A good marketing strategy looks at the end goal and considers the best method of reaching that goal given all of the contributing factors for your organisation. This means considering things like your target group for each goal, your marketing budget, and the capacity to undertake the work that needs to be done. Because, at the end of the day, a one-size-fits-all marketing strategy doesn't really exist.

As with any organisation, having a game plan for your NPOs marketing allows you to strategically work toward achieving key goals. Creating your first marketing strategy may seem like unachievable goal, but, by focusing in on your top three goals and your key marketing channels, you can break up the planning process into easy to manage steps.

That being said, there are goals and channels commonly shared amongst the non-profit marketing community that can be easily adapted to something that could work for your organisation.

To help get you started, we've outlined three common NPO goals and brainstormed the ways a typical NPO might achieve them using three common marketing channels. These are planning to increase donations, boost volunteers and spread awareness using a website, email marketing and social media.

GOAL 1: INCREASE DONATIONS

If your organisation would like to focus on increasing donations, the following marketing projects could fit into your marketing strategy:

• Include a "how to help" donate button, page or information block on your website. Your homepage is often the most visited page on your website. Use this opportunity to make your case for donations.

• Create special pages for key fundraising campaigns with links from your homepage: These pages will provide the details of the campaign and offer a place for you to send people through promotional materials.

• Highlight dedicated donors and provide impact updates on a blog: When donors can see the impact that their gifts provide on a regular basis, they may feel inspired to give more often.

• Send thank you emails to donors after they've given: As part of your donor retention efforts, you should (at the very least) be thanking everyone who gives to your organisation.

• Segment your email list to include a group that only

sends to funders/ donors: funder segmentation will allow you to send more customised messaging and organisational news to specific people you need to keep informed and interested in the work you are doing.

- Send additional emails to update donors on the impact of their gift: Most often, keeping current donors is much more beneficial than attracting new donors. And that means spending the time to cultivate and retain donors. Be careful through, not to inundate them with information – this can irritate them and cause them to stop supporting your organisation.
- Develop a base of donors/ supporters whom you can call for donations: These calls to action can be planned as a part of your fundraising activities.
- Follow and communicate with current and potential sponsors on social media: This is a great way to build relationships that may lead to additional sponsorships.

Goal 2: Boost Volunteers
Need more volunteers to move your mission forward? Try the following:

- Post volunteer opportunities on your website: Be sure to address all applications and respond appropriately. Be careful not to simply take on volunteers because you need "workers", choose those people who volunteer based on whether they are able to "do the job" you need them to do. You can also post these opportunities on social media.
- Ensure that the volunteer page is easy to find in your website structure: When you organise (or reorganise) your website structure, keep the Volunteer page in a logical location, such as within the "How to help" section.
- Highlight dedicated volunteers and new opportunities on the blog: These blog post ideas are all about volunteering. You can then post these highlights on social media as well.
- Be sure to thank your volunteers: Send a thoughtful email after someone volunteers for the first time. Regular emails can work to encourage community and relationship building, establishing a positive relationship that keeps volunteers coming back.
- Update volunteers on the impact of their work: This can be accomplished through email or social media, depending on what your volunteers prefer.

Goal 3: Spread Awareness
Part of building your organisation is the ability to generate awareness within the community of the work you do. This can include:

- Include content to learn about your services on your website: When you're spreading the word through

other marketing channels, it's nice to have an informative page to send people to so they can learn more about what you do. Add a short description of what you do at the top of your homepage.

- Send out a regular email newsletter: Sending out regular newsletters helps educate your subscribers and keep them engaged in the work that you do.
- Research social media channels before joining: You want to make sure that your target audience regularly engages on those networks before dedicating the time to be active on new channels.
- Maintain an active presence on all the networks you use: To accomplish this, consider creating a posting schedule and sticking to it.
- Consider creating a social media ambassador program: Supporters can then become ambassadors and spread awareness among their followers.
- Engage and communicate with influencers in your field: research potential partners and supporters to strike up a conversation with them on the social media channels that they're active on.
- Send out emails, or have meetings, with members/ leaders in your community. These will include teachers, businesses owners, and other community leaders.

These are simply some examples of strategies you could use to achieve your goals. But if you have different goals or use different channels, you may have to pick and choose what works for you – it is vitally important that you find the right solution for your organisation. And even if these ideas fit your organisation perfectly on the surface, it's a good idea to make tweaks based on what you know about your target group and potential supporters.

Look at all the different components of your marketing strategy and assess how each has been able to move you towards achieving your goals. Do you send emails? Post on social media? Have a website? A blog? Attend community meeting/ functions? All of these are channels that can be used to get results.

If you look into certain channels and see that one is not working, or is not as effective as another, you may want to think about cutting that channel or adjusting it in a big way through your marketing strategy. Because time costs money, and as a new "start-up", spending time on what works matters.

6.2 CREATING YOUR BRAND
Your brand is somewhat like the face of your organisation because a good brand will have personality and make you feel something. Your organisation's "brand" should

communicate its purpose just as well visually as it does in its mission statement. It should reflect the values of the organisation, embody its mission, and keep consistency in all interactions. For many NPOs brand development is often the last thing that people think of – of all too often they feel that they are not "marketing people". Sometimes the actual day-to-day of running an NPO simply takes priority, often leaving little time for strategizing on how best to market your organisation.

Here are three things you will need to consider before you can begin building your brand:

1. **Craft a strong mission statement and perfect your elevator pitch:** You should have a clear and concise mission statement that clearly conveys the who, what, where and why of your organisation. If you can't answer the question, "What does your organisation actually do?" in less than minute, you are missing out on a huge opportunity to inspire and engage others about your organisation. Avoid developing mission statements that sound like a bunch of jargon, or that have too much "development talk". Speak from the heart, use simple language and be clear about you values.

2. **Define your organisation's values:** You will need to decide how you want your stakeholders (students, funders and other supporters) to perceive your work and core values. You should ask questions, like: What sets my organisation apart from others? How will I determine what services I should offer (identify the need I will address)? How much input do my students have in helping me decide how to plan my lessons? These values will eventually become woven into every way the organisation expresses itself to key audiences – from explaining your work to a funder/donor for the first time, to building partnerships with other NPOs in your community, to presenting an impromptu elevator pitch at a conference.

3. **Determine what success looks like to your organisation and leverage the right communications tools:** You do not need to be on every social media platform to market your organisation. You need to find the most suitable platforms that will work for your target group and that will get your "message" out there – this could include: a monthly newsletter, a slideshow of impactful images on your website, or a blog post or narrative video that can be shared on Twitter and Facebook.

1. Developing a branding guide

Branding is an important part of all kinds of marketing practices. Whether it's in emails, on social media, or on a website, having a consistent brand helps non-profits gain recognition and support. A branding guide is just one step to consistent design that builds trust and highlights the work that you do.

Some of the most obvious ways you present your brand are through your logo, colour, and design, but brand is also influenced by your tone, the content you produce, and the way you react to others. Making sure your visible brand is consistent across different channels is important because if you want people to believe in your brand, you can't give them mixed messages.

Brand guides are not just for large organisations or for-profit businesses. Any organisation planning to market their services should plan to develop one as part of their marketing strategy. Brand guides can help to provide guidelines on not only graphic elements such as fonts used and colour schemes, but also core values and even the official vocabulary to be used when describing your work.

In addition, because many smaller NPO's do not have the funding to hire professional marketing teams, brand guides are even more crucial for working with whomever is involved in sharing information about the work that you do – for example staff sharing updates on social media, your fundraiser, supporters sharing messages through their network, etc. Without the guidelines outline in your branding guide to work with, people can apply their own style to your brand and the image, and message, you are trying to build could be lost.

When developing your brand guide, you should consider the following:
• Does your brand guide express your organisation's core values? Is your visual identity in alignment with your brand values?
• Does your brand guide describe how your logo should be displayed for partnerships?
• Does your brand include various projects with distinct visual identities? Does your branding guide plan for these to work as an extension of the core brand?
• Do you work in communities with different language preferences? Would you benefit from having translated versions of your logo? Should you have your printables translated?
• Does your brand have established guidelines for digital advertising such as Facebook?

- Does your brand guide include stationery design (e.g.: letterheads, email signatures)? Is your stationery design a strategic extension of your core brand guidelines?
- Does your brand guide include a general template for presentations (e.g.: PowerPoint)?
- Does your non-profit brand guide include information on your target group?
- Does your brand guide include enough design examples of your visual identity?

A branding guide should be one of the cornerstones of your marketing strategy. It ensures that every letter, business card, sign, and advertisement present a consistent, lasting image of your organisation. It will distinguish your organisation in the minds of funders/donors, increase your impact, and maximise the united effect of your marketing activities.

Remember, as with many of the topics we have include in this handbook, your brand guide does not have to be a "bestselling book". Start with what you know, what you would like to achieve, how you would like your organisation to be promoted and work from there.

2. What's in a logo?

A logo is often the first thing people think of when they hear the word 'brand', yet it is only powerful if the underlying messages and visuals are clear and put together effectively. Your brand identity is made up of many components: your logo, brand colours, image and how you style your "printables" – these include leaflets, emails, website, social media posts, blogs, newsletters, etc. All of these elements help to express the personality of your organisation and most importantly allows your supporters to instantly recognise it.

The best logos are:
- versatile
- relevant
- unique
- artistically pleasing
- memorable
- timeless
- scalable
- simple enough for use with various mediums
- communicates the qualities of your brand

For some ideas on how to design a logo, visit:
https://medium.com/inkbot-design/charity-branding-tips-a-logo-design-guide-for-nonprofits-faa561068fb6

Sites that offer free assistance with the design of your logo: *https://www.graphicsprings.com/category/community-non-profit*
https://www.designevo.com/create/logos/non-profit.html

6.2.1 WHAT IS YOUR MESSAGE

Your supporters expect your organisation to have certain core values that they can connect with, and therefore support. More than ever, charities are expected to demonstrate how their cause is unique, effective, relevant and worthy of support – this is how your organisation will stand out and build trust with your audience – and this is your message.

When communicating your message, regardless of the channel, remember that people relate to "the story" you are telling, so while providing facts and figures can be helpful for some organisations, for example: those building homes for the homeless, or feeding schemes for the poor, it is just as important to be able to share the stories of what you do, who you work with and how they have been impacted by participating in your organisation. The story makes it real – it helps people connect on an emotional level.

The tone of the message can be the strongest and most important element when it comes to positioning your organisation. What is it you are trying to say? Why should your supporters donate or help you raise awareness? A general rule for your messaging is: don't focus on donations, but rather the change you want to create – the actual impact. Choose a different word, with a different connotation: for example rather than asking for funding, ask for an investment.

6.3 CREATING YOUR WEBSITE

A website is an invaluable tool for most NPO's, particularly those focusing on arts and culture. Arts organisations are highly visual by nature, whether we're talking about museums, children's art education, performance organisations or art preservation. It stands to reason that an arts organisation's website should be visually appealing and tell the story of your work.

A well-designed website makes a good first impression with visitors, establishes the non-profit's credibility and keeps them searching for more information. A well-designed website leads a visitor through the site with links to pages showcasing your work, telling engaging stories and sharing ways in which they can help your organisation.

Before you get started on your website, make sure you've done the planning and preparation necessary to make sure your project goes smoothly and results in the best-possible site for your organisation.

While your website is open to everyone, it should not be built for everyone. Just like the goals you set for your organisation, your fundraising plan, your marketing strategy or business plan, you need to have clear goals for what you would like to achieve through your website.

Start by answering "why does my organisation need a website?" Your answers might include:
• So our potential donors can evaluate our organisation.
• So our visitors know about upcoming events.
• So students can access our resources.

The next step in the process is identifying and prioritising your audiences allows you to make smart decisions when it comes time to design and build your website. NPO's often have a wide variety of audiences so this can take be difficult to determine.

Common audiences can include:
• Students
• Parents
• Community members
• Funders (individual donors, corporate funders and/ or foundations)
• Potential and/or Current Volunteers
Be as specific as you can and then prioritise them in order of most- to least-important. Later, when you're facing questions like "how do I order the menu?" or "what do I put on the homepage?" you know whose needs take priority.

Once you've got a list of your audiences, consider what each type of audience primarily needs to accomplish?

• A donor needs to find the donate button or page.
• A student needs to know what classes/ events are planned.
• A parent needs to know your emergency contact information.
• Volunteers need to know what services they can offer/ help you need.

Next you will need to decide what kind of content you will be displaying on your website? Content is basically anything that gives your visitors information. Your content strategy is the way that you plan to present your content over time. For instance, you may want to publish

two blog posts a month, and put out a free quarterly report for your audience to download. Since content is such an important aspect of a website, it is important that you take the time to really consider what and how this will be presented.

Your content could include, but is not limited to:
• Blog posts
• Documents
• Videos
• Pictures (such as in a gallery)
• Slideshows
• Embedded social media feeds (such as your Twitter stream or Facebook page updates)

Understanding your content strategy will help you decide what pages you'll be using and what features will be on each one. Most websites usually have an "About" and "Contact page", but any other pages should speak to your audiences and be sure to share your story(ies).

Some other aspects you need to consider when designing your website:
• Your design should be clear (not messy, repetitive or overlapping), the message should be on point and you "brand" unambiguous.
• Navigation though your site should be "user friendly" and all links must work – including those liking to any social media channels. Clean dropdown menus make for easy navigation around the website.
• Imagery and interesting textures within the rotator images can create interest for viewers.
• Prominent calls to action at the forefront of the homepage make it obvious what the organisation wants visitors to do during their time on the site (volunteer, donate, attend an event).
• Clean dropdown menus make for easy navigation around the website and responsive design allows for easy access on any device. Remember that many people in South Africa access the internet from their phones, which means that cell phone compatibility is important.

Another important consideration when planning your website is whether to use your organisation's name as the domain for your website. On the plus side, this will make it easier for someone to search for you in a search engine. If you decide to use something other than your organisation's name make sure you think about how you're going to make people see the connection between your work and your website name.
Once you decide on the name for your domain (where

your website will be hosted) you will need to check its availability – most service providers that host websites can help you search the availability of the name you would like. If your service provider offers hosting services, they may offer free or discounted domains for NPOs – these site addresses are often end in .org.

Examples of where to source domain hosts:
http://www.webdesignhostingsa.co.za/
https://www.registerdomain.co.za/
https://www.domains.co.za/web-hosting-south-africa
https://www.uniwebserve.com/respo/nonprofit_websites.htm

Examples of good NPO websites to visit:
https://www.dag.org.za/
http://www.connectnetwork.org.za/

6.4 USING SOCIAL MEDIA: BE THOUGHTFUL, HAVE FUN AND GET CREATIVE

The benefit of social media is that it can facilitate quick and vast communication. It is a tool that helps large numbers of people to connect, think and act in unison in a way that we have never experienced before. Social media rewrites the rules on who has a voice. You don't need to be a great writer, thinker, leader or media mogul to share your ideas.

There's no universal "right way" to use social media. Before you start planning which social media platforms to use, it's important to figure out the role it can play in your organisation's efforts to serve your community. If a particular platform is not somehow helping you serve your community, it's probably not a worthwhile to spend the energy maintaining a presence.

Before getting started with social media, take a little time to figure out how it will fit in to your marketing strategy and how you'll measure success. You need to decide what you want to achieve by using social media – your social media goals – as well as the impacts each can have within your organisation. For example:
• Increased name recognition
• Connect with new supporters
• Maintain relationships with current supporters
• Share your impact – tell your stories

Determining the concrete impacts your social media efforts should have on your organisation will not only help you know if you're being successful, it will also help you demonstrate the tangible benefits of your efforts to others. For example:

• Increased student registrations
• Increased new donors
• Increased repeat giving
• Improve overall fundraising
• Increased new volunteers
• Increased repeat volunteers
• Increased collaborative opportunities

Using social media-specific metrics, like "Likes" on Facebook or how many Twitter "followers" you have, are not necessarily the best way to measure effectiveness. If social media is to truly serve your organisation, it needs to have a tangible impact on your organisation's ability to serve your community.

Ask yourself – What outcomes will serve as indicators that you're using a particular social media platform effectively? These indicators could include specific outcomes (results) like:
• Number of registrations for your classes
• Number of repeat students
• Number of new donors
• Number of repeat donors
• Overall fundraising
• Number of new volunteers
• Number of repeat volunteers

Social media is all about building relationships. Keep an eye on the data, but don't stress out. If done well, social media can both help your organisation serve your community and be a fun process along the way.
Be sure to personalise you social media pages, groups, posts – remember what we covered in terms of building your brand – the use of social media is simply an extension of brand building. Most social media platforms offer all kinds of options to personalise you pages. It only takes a few minutes to change the colour scheme and add a background image, which will make your profile stand out.

Here are some examples of social media platforms that you can explore:

1. FACEBOOK – CAN IT WORK FOR YOU?
With recent news articles indicating that the Facebook algorithm is prioritising Groups over Pages, it's the perfect time to think about creating a Facebook Group. You can use Groups to facilitate support, connect volunteers, plan events, give board members a way to communicate informally and open communications for any other stakeholders of your organisation.

Facebook Groups are essentially online forums, giving those with shared interests a place to communicate. Different from your Facebook page, which is visible to anyone, Group members and post content can be hidden from the general public based on the type of group.

A Facebook Group is a free and easy way to encourage discussion and connections in a place where your supporters may already be spending their time. Your supporters will feel more connected to a cause when you create the feeling of a close-knit and supportive community through your facebook group. But what else can you be doing to encourage conversation and community amongst your supporters?

There are currently three levels of privacy settings for Facebook Groups.
- **Public –** Anyone on Facebook can request to join the group, see a list of members and see what members are posting. Public Groups are discoverable through Facebook search.
- **Closed –** Anyone on Facebook can find the group through Facebook search and request to join, but only members can see a list of members and what is being posted.
- **Secret –** You cannot request to join and must instead be added by a current group member. Only members can see the group, its members and posts.

The closed group option will probably be the best option for your organisation as it provides anonymity to the group's members and posts without hiding it from searches within Facebook.

Facebook has spent a lot of time and effort improving the community-building resources and capabilities of their Groups. Some helpful features include:

- **Member Notifications –** Group members get a notification when someone posts in the Group, making them more likely to see posts. This feature, however, can be turned off by the member.
- **Create Rules –** You can add up to 10 rules to help manage expectations and conduct within your Group.
- **Moderation Capabilities –** You can add or remove members from your Facebook group. You can also delete offensive posts or those that go against any stated rules to help create a safe place for facilitating conversation.
- **Live Watch Parties –** Stream live video of big events or trainings to the entire Group.

- **Chat –** All members of a Group (including the administrators) can chat with any other Group member, even if they are not friends on Facebook.
- **Ask Potential Members Questions –** Admins can ask up to three questions to determine whether or not a new member should be accepted into a Group.
- **Sharing –** Share posts from your Facebook Page to a Group (and vice versa).
- **Tagging –** Tag any Group member in posts and photos.
- **Photos –** Any member of the Group can add photos to a Group album, visible only to other members.
- **Events –** Create events specific to your Group.
- **Files and Documents –** Upload files to share with the Group and create new documents that all Group members can edit.

These features enable Group Moderators and Admins to create a safe environment for building communities of like-minded people and encouraging connections.

2. INSTAGRAM – A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

The old adage, "a picture is worth 1000 words" is very accurate in this day of social media. An NPO can deliver a strong message to the right people by using either Pinterest or Instagram. Pictures tell the story on either platform – posting pictures and visuals that highlight your mission and activities. Interesting pictures of activities and events can grab people's attention and are often better than just using statements.

Instagram is an excellent way to connect with other social media networks. You can share with Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr as well as Flickr, Foursquare and more. What makes Instagram different from social media platforms, however, such as Facebook or Twitter is the way people use it. Research has shown that people using Instagram frequently check the site, often several times a day, and engage with posts at a much higher rate than with other social networks.

Using graphics and short paragraphs with bullets can quickly convey your organisation's message. If you use it right, you could tap into an engaged, active network of passionate people, ready and willing to like, comment on, and click on your posts. This can help with targeted fundraising and a picture along with a message adds special emphasis to what is being communicated. The ability for your message to be spread across various platforms using Instagram is a definite advantage for any NPO engaged in fundraising activities.

If you are planning to use Instagram for your organisation, it is a good idea to sign up for an Instagram for Business account. It's free, and it provides you with several useful tools that you don't get with the personal account, including analytics and a Contact button. However, to succeed with Instagram, it is best to have a clearly defined strategy, an eye-catching visual style, a staff commitment to consistent posting, and an in-depth knowledge of your target audience. This information should be included in your brand guide. Also, when you post your content be sure that it's interesting to look at, with information that is educational, useful and sharable.

Some video's about Instagram you may find interesting:
https://web.facebook.com/business/e/getting-started-with-instagram-for-business?_rdc=1&_rdr#video1

Here are some tips to help you make better use of Instagram:
https://www.thebalancesmb.com/awesome-instagram-tips-for-nonprofits-4115850
https://www.classy.org/blog/instagram-tips-modern-nonprofit/

3. TWITTER – SHORT, SHARP AND TO THE POINT

Twitter is the great social media platform to inform your supporters, mobilise them, and interact with you're the public at large. If you're producing content like videos, blog posts, and infographics, Twitter can help amplify the distribution of it. This platform can help to build trust and a sense of genuine connection, which is what your prospective funders/ donors and supporters want.

Twitter is essentially a micro-blogging site, where people communicate in short messages called tweets. Every tweet is limited to 280 characters or less. This way of communication can be challenging in that you will need to refine your skills so that you can write in a compelling way.

You might be thinking that limiting your posts to 280 characters is no way to advertise your organisation, but you may be surprised to know that this social media platform has more than 320 million active monthly users who make use of the 280 character limit to pass on information.

Some tips on how to use Twitter to communicate with your organisation's supporters:
- **Keep it interesting –** Don't Tweet for the sake of it. Write the kind of tweets that will attract the right kind of people. Are your followers really interested in what you had for breakfast?

- **Choose your words wisely –** The 280 character limit forces you to be direct and choose your words carefully! Be careful of using text language (l8r, tnx 4 ur hlp). Draft then rewrite your tweet to make it as concise as possible.
- **Presentation is everything –** Punctuate properly. You should also include your website address in tweets wherever possible, so that people can read more about an issue, and to promote your website's content. Don't worry if it's long, Twitter will automatically shorten it for you. Adding a photo or illustration to your tweet, makes it much more likely to get noticed.
- **Join the debate –** Follow organisations and people who are relevant to you and your organisation. You can retweet things they post that might be of interest to your followers. Comment on other Tweets when appropriate, but use a tone of voice that matches your organisation, rather than reflecting your own personality.
- **Send other Twitter users a Direct Message –** If you want to ask someone on Twitter something without sending out a public tweet, send them a Direct Message (DM). Don't clog up people's feeds with a message that only needs to be seen by one person. There is a handy button for sending a Direct Message, in the Messages section (top left).
- **Integrate Twitter with your other social media networks –** Social networking works best when you can link to your other social media platforms. Make sure you link to your Twitter profile in a prominent position on your website. Include your Twitter address on your contact us page and add to your email signatures. You can also tweet links to your other resources online; videos on YouTube, posts on Instagram etc.
- **Use hashtags –** By prefixing a word in a tweet with the hash symbol (#) it becomes a clickable and searchable hashtag. This is very useful for following a topic. You can tag your events this way (eg #KidsArt), helping you follow the conversation from anyone tweeting about that event. Try to integrate them into the sentence rather than append them to the end. Otherwise you'll have little room left for descriptive text, and too many links look overwhelming.
- **Check your stats, and benchmark them –** How will you learn what does and doesn't work, if you don't check your stats? Fortunately Twitter has provided the tools to do this. Click on your profile picture in the top right, then choose Analytics – this tool can help you find out how many times your tweets were placed in front of people, how often readers engaged with them

by retweeting what you wrote, and how often they clicked to visit your links.

- **Make your profile shin –** It's important to present a good profile, that looks professional and match your organisation's branding. You can upload a logo and a banner. The recommended dimensions for the banner are 1500x500 pixels, and your logo should be 400x400 pixels. Your banner can be updated occasionally, to reflect your activities if you, but remember to keep it simple as possible. Make sure you add your organisation's website address to your profile.

You get 160 characters to write a biography. Keep it professional and make it concise, containing a few very relevant keywords, because this could make your profile appear when people search for those words in Twitter.

If you write a tweet and want to promote it above your other tweets, there's an option to pin it to your profile so it always appears first.

Here is a YouTube video tutorial for using Twitter:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SBDYYGER5iM
Some helpful tips on using Twitter:
https://donorbox.org/nonprofit-blog/twitter-best-practices-for-nonprofits/
https://www.volunteerhub.com/blog/marketing-tool-for-nonprofits/
https://4agoodcause.com/nonprofits-use-twitter/
http://www.socialbrite.org/2011/04/08/10-rules-for-how-nonprofits-should-use-twitter/

4. LINKEDIN – CREATING A NETWORK OF CONTACTS

While most organisations understand the benefits of Facebook, YouTube and Twitter, far fewer organisations fully realise how LinkedIn can help them.
As one of the original social networking platforms, LinkedIn is geared primarily toward professionals and businesspeople. It can provide your organisation with networking and marketing opportunities.

LinkedIn is great for people looking to connect with people in similar industries, networking with local professionals and displaying business related information and statistics. It is an excellent site for re-posting and promoting causes and events. Whether it is funders/ donors, volunteers or staff, those connected to your organisation through LinkedIn can share relevant information with their own connections, increasing your visibility.
LinkedIn is a great tool for researching potential board

members, volunteers or staff members based on common interests, skills and connections. As the site is meant for users to promote their experience and expertise, it's much easier for an NPO to verify employment history and reliability for candidates present on LinkedIn.

Think of LinkedIn as a constant, virtual networking event at your disposal. You want to be at your best so you can:
- Give your elevator pitch on the fly.
- Share important organisational information and updates.
- Do some vetting for qualified new hires.
- Network with investors.
- Establish yourself as a mission-driven organisation AND a respectable, well-run business.

It's time to build and strengthen your professional connections. Make sure your organisation is taking full advantage of the "world's largest professional network".

Some tips on how to best use LinkedIn:
https://www.classy.org/blog/ways-use-linkedin-for-nonprofits/
https://www.charities.org/news/blog/how-effectively-use-linkedin-your-non-profit
http://www.thefundraisingauthority.com/internet-fundraising/linkedin-non-profit/

5. YOUTUBE – SHOWCASE YOUR WORK

The YouTube platform is a great opportunity for the development sector to reach broader audiences, particularly for NPOs. A successful video can boost public awareness around the work that you do and provide fundraising opportunities (for example #IceBucketChallenge). But with over 300 hours of video uploaded every minute, how can you make your content stand out?

The greatest strength of NPO videos is that they appeal to people's emotions. Any video you upload should therefore have emotional resonance for your audience. It can be humorous, and entertaining and informative, but most importantly it must have the power to change minds, opinions and hearts in the space of a couple of minutes. It should tell a story that people can relate to. It is important to keep in mind the Three 'S's when planning your YouTube videos:

- **Short –** Not many people like to watch two hour long movies on YouTube. Most people prefer using YouTube to view quick, sharp videos that doesn't take up too much of their time. Mobile internet usage is also surging and people who browse the internet on their phones generally do not want to watch a mini movie on

their portable device because of both the data usage and the time of focused attention required. A general rule of thumb is to keep videos to under 4 mins (this is the average length of music videos). If possible, keep it even shorter, maybe between one to two minutes long.

- **Simplicity –** People, who are YouTube fans, are constantly bombarded with stats and figures about the problems in the world, which they struggle to remember once they have finished watching the video. The most important thing is to ensure that only the information that you want audiences to remember should be featured in your videos.

- **Storytelling –** It is important to create videos that tell a story rather than simply raising the media profile of your organisation. Even a rehashing of the organisation's projects and campaigns will not be effective if it is not reinforced with a compelling story.

The great thing about YouTube – the great thing about social media in general – is that your audience can do the marketing for you! Users can 'share' videos that capture their attention so it is important that you take time to craft a video that contains an engaging and emotional narrative that will inspire your supporters to not only take action but to pass on your message to their network of friends.

Recommendations to get more out of YouTube

- **YouTube's non-profit programme:** This can be a tremendous help to your efforts to market your NPO on YouTube – sign up here: https://www.youtube.com/yt/impactlab/.
- **Editing:** If you have the financial resources, invest in the right software and skills for video editing. Videos don't need to be professionally shot (though good quality sound is important), but good post-production can make a big difference.
- **Intro video:** It is a good idea, if you have the know-how to make sure that your lead video is compelling - it's often the first thing people see on your channel. Consider creating a trailer or using a storytelling video that explains your work.
- **Titles:** Take your time and plan your titles – no one will click on something with a boring title.
- **Don't be put off by quality of the video (except for the audio quality):** it is not about the quality or resources you have, but the story you are telling.
- **Additional features:** Your video's description should be

as detailed as possible and include keywords and links – it's an opportunity to direct people to other content you want them to consume – for example to your website, or other videos you would like them to watch.

- **Subtitles and transcripts:** Ensure that, where possible, you add subtitles and transcripts to your videos. They may take a bit more time than end screens, but they make your channel more accessible and enhance search engine optimisation (SEO). If you are not able to do this, be sure to include a description about what is happening in the video – keep this simple and be sure that the tone is in line with the guidelines on your brand book.
- **Backstage:** Keywords and SEO are vital to maximise the reach of your content. Keep an eye on emerging trends, as well as keywords that are historically popular (300+ searches per month). As you work with YouTube more and more, you will need to be sure to take time to learn how to navigate this.
- **Integrate:** Embed videos into other social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram and on your website.
- **Get the stats:** Sync your YouTube channel to Google analytics. This will help you tailor your videos to your audience, as you explore what works well for them on YouTube.
- **Strategise:** As with all social media platforms be sure to be consistent across your channel. Be aware of the tone of your message, the quality of your story, branding your videos, etc.
- **Get involved:** Subscribe to relevant partners, follow channels that relate to your work and where possible link to others that are doing the same/ similar work.
- **Create conversation:** Shareable videos need to be relatable, topical and valuable. You should be producing content that introduces new ideas and invites audiences to react and interact.
- **Sustainability:** Think long-term. Having a video go viral may be useful in the short-term, but the real goal should be sustained engagement by creating an effective platform for conversation.

Interesting YouTube videos to help you learn how to use YouTube videos to your advantage:
https://creatoracademy.youtube.com/page/lesson/jumpstart
https://mashable.com/2009/08/19/youtube-social-good/#qKP1p7WrGaq8
Helpful sites:
https://www.socialbakers.com/statistics/youtube/channels/society/ngo/

6. Pinterest - put a pin in it

To start, what is Pinterest's real purpose? Pinterest is often thought of as a social media platform, but it's really more of a search engine if you think about it.

When someone logs in to Pinterest, they're not looking for photos of what you did last weekend or posting personal updates. They're typically looking for inspiration whether it be recipes for dinner, planning an event, or funny quotes that make them smile. By shifting your frame of mind when it comes to Pinterest, you can leverage the platform in a more strategic way.

Pinterest is primarily image-based, which makes it different from most other social media platforms out there. Before you spend too of time naming boards and searching for pins to add to your Pinterest account, it's important to take a step back and assess whether or not it's right for your organisation.

If your organisation has a Pinterest account that's full of content from around the web, you might not be using the platform to its full potential. Creating pins that link back to your own website is key. Focus on promoting your own work above all.

Pinterest could be beneficial if your organisation:

- Has a lot of original photos.
- Creates infographics and other visual resources on a regular basis.
- Has a variety of content on its website that you can link to, including blog posts.
- Isn't tied to a small local area. The point of Pinterest is to get as many people to your site as possible, so if your non-profit works in one small area, it might not be the best use of your time to get a bunch of people 500 miles away onto your site.

Tips for Posting on Pinterest

Pinterest creates an amazing opportunity to drive traffic to your own site by creating original pins with your unique content. A pin is made up of a few different building blocks: an image, a link, and a description. Before getting started, here are a few best practices to keep in mind.

- **Use images that are more vertical than horizontal –** Pinterest displays graphics in vertical columns down the page. In order to gain the most from Pinterest, pinning vertical images is the way to go.
- **Add a link to your pin –** Make your pin work for you! Including a link to your website in every pin you post will help build traffic to your website.

- **Add your logo to the pins you create –** As long as the pin is unique to your organisation, adding your logo can help your brand recognition. If you're using a photo, be sure that it was either taken by your team or that you have the proper release to use it (for instance, purchasing a stock photo).
- **Use keywords in your pin descriptions –** Don't leave your pin description blank. Rather include a description of what the image you've pinned is all about. Try to use keywords you think others would use when looking for your pin, for example: if you've pinned a photo of an art class with children, explain that in the description.

To give you some ideas, we've made a list of Pinterest marketing ideas:
- Showcase local artists
- New and old exhibits you've hosted
- Art project ideas for kids
- Art project ideas for adults
- Quotes from well-known and/or local artists
- Photos of art projects created by your organisation's students
- Turn artists' artwork into smartphone wallpaper (with their permission, of course!)
- Invitations to events

6.5 MARKETING YOUR ART CLASSES

As soon as you have a basic plan for your art projects/classes, you need to begin your marketing. While we've included a lot of information around developing a marketing strategy, branding your organisation, developing your website and using social media in the previous section, you do not have to wait until you have all of these things in place before you begin marketing your art centre, or more specifically your art classes. Often word-of-mouth can be your best marketing tool. Start telling all your friends and family about what you are planning, ask them to "spread the word". Speak to your neighbours, local schools, community centres and church leaders.

To assist in spreading the word, it helps to have a few basic business tools, like a business card and your web page (that you can refer people to for more information). Hand out your business cards at meetings, when you meet someone new who may show some interest, conferences or any training you may attend.

As soon as you have a solid class schedule with ages, times and cost, design and print a simple flyer and distribute copies to libraries, local schools, aftercare and community

centres and anywhere that may grab a potential student's attention (or their parents if you are targeting your classes at children). Always get permission first.

Explain when and where your classes will be run, the cost, the details of the project, and how a student could go about registering for a class. Try to include some photographs of different finished projects so that potential students can see what is on offer? What the activities entail?

Ask local community groups and arts organisations if you can leave your flyers in their building. Also, put up flyers on community notice boards, local shopping centres and of course hand them out to your friends!

Another way you can begin marketing your classes is to give presentations. This can be done at community meetings, local schools, community churches, etc. Use your passion for what you are doing (planning to do) to help build your base of supporters – recruit your students.

Networking opportunities should not be missed! If there are meetings, conferences, etc, go! Take your business cards, and flyers if appropriate, and hand them out to the people that your meet. Look for synergistic opportunities (where you can work with other people or organisations), perhaps community partners with, or through, whom you can work.

6.6 MARKETING BUDGET

All enterprises need to plan for their marketing activities, even NPOs. Marketing activities have a cost attached – even if it is just the cost of time. For example setting up a Facebook account may be free, but it takes time to set it up to suit your organisations, it takes time to maintain the page/ group, it takes time to respond to comments, questions or shared posts as needed.

To determine your marketing budget it is a good idea to write down all the activities your plan to undertake – it is best to base this in line with your annual plans. Depending on your financial year, you will need to plan your budget a few months in advance of your year starting off.

Start by reviewing your marketing goals to ensure they represent the best way you can put marketing to work to advance your organisational goals. Be sure to link your marketing budget and what you want to accomplish in a way that's easily understood. Your goal is to translate the actions outlined in the plan — what it will take to meet those goals — into an expense.

Generally achieving marketing goals requires financial resources in addition to human resource (time, effort and skills – including those that are outsourced). There's no way out of it: You have to pay for services such as reliable web hosting, flexible email marketing tools and postage. And if you want to design a high-impact website, analyse targeted email marketing or implement successful fundraising campaigns, there's a price tag associated with doing that well.

Your plan (can be a one-pager) will enable you to decide between "needs" and "wants," to plan a budget around what really matters — what's going to drive your marketing impact – motivate your supporters to take the actions you need! For example, based on your budget framework, you may decide to spend more time on keeping your website up to date and sending our emails with newsletters, or you may decide to focus your efforts on several social media platforms (or just one). At the same time, your budget might indicate that it makes sense to hold off on setting up a website right now, or buying the video editing equipment or hiring a social media consultant.

At the end of the day, you need to remember to be flexible. Marketing is an investment. As you progress and build your organisation, you will find that in some years you will need more, and less in others. Keep your eyes on the prize – what are your marketing goals? What will the impact be on your organisation in the long-term?

Here is a guide to help you plan what costs you may need to include in your budget: (the line items listed here are not a must have/do, but rather an idea of what MAY be needed)

Budget item	My Time Factor	Other Resources	Outside Service Costs
Website			
Hosting			
Design			
Maintenance			
Social media			
Consultant			
Photographic equipment			
Premium subscriptions			
Editing equipment (eg videos)			
Maintenance			
Print media			
Advertising costs			
Design			
Consultant			
Business Cards			
Design			
Printing			

By reviewing your marketing plan before you begin planning your budget, you'll see clearly how much you have to spend to reach your goals and will gain a sense of what strategies may work best to achieve which goals. And when you're making marketing decisions throughout the year, remember to use the plan as your framework.

If you have a limited budget or no budget at all, there are still lots of marketing options open to you. You'll just need to carefully consider any additional costs associated before starting projects, like Facebook or YouTube ads or working with marketing consultants.

If you are creative in your approach to your marketing, there are sites where you can create a webpage for free, though most of your true marketing will probably be done via social media such as Facebook and Instagram, and these to not cost money, only your time, which can save you money.

7. DEVELOPING NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Butterfly Art Project
ENCOURAGING CREATIVITY AND HEALING THROUGH ART

7.1 GETTING INVOLVED IN NETWORKING

"A network is a group of individuals and organisations who come together around one or more clearly defined commonalities to exchange information and/or undertake joint activities and who organise themselves in such a way that their individual autonomy remains intact."
– P. Starkey

Networks and networking are not new in practice, and in fact are quite common in both the development and commercial sectors. The question of how to go about creating effective networks is still not fully understood by many NPO's. Civil society in South Africa, by in large, seem to have fallen into networking as a result of funder requests/ suggestions, and although there are those who do fully understand the nuts and bolts of how to create, build, and sustain effective relationships with like-minded organisations or creating support networks, there are still many more who do not yet recognise the full benefit of doing this.

Since many NPOs are small and often situated in small rural areas, networking is commonly seen as a cost–effective way to share information and spread knowledge about grassroots' needs, solutions and best practices. Much of this potential is not realised, however as NPOs are often reluctant to share information voluntarily as they are often in competition for resources, support and beneficiaries.

Your network can be your greatest asset in growing your organisation. When you intentionally build your network in the right way, you create a circle of individuals and organisations who can provide the support, links to other networks or organisations, access to resources (more that accessing funding) and are happy to help you. An effective network can help your organisation achieve its goals.

There are two key approaches to developing your network, strategic and opportunistic. The strategic approach encourages you to analyse your network, find commonalities for making connections, and have purpose-driven meetings. The outcomes (benefits) of this network is driven by specific needs/ goals – for example: joining a youth [organisation] network to be able to access the target group of these organisations in order to recruit students to your centre.

The opportunistic approach is of a more casual approach, such as friend-of-a-friend, coffee meetings, bumping into

someone at a workshop of conference or doing favours for contacts that don't seem to have the capacity to help you now. The long-term benefits of these contacts/ connections may seem uncertain and are often based on the idea of "who knows what may happen in the future".

If you use these two approaches in tandem, you will be able to make connections that can help you solve problems, learn, move forward on a professional or organisational goal, or whatever it is need you need to succeed; at the same time you could be building connection for further development in the future.

When you consider these two approaches you need to also take into account the time and effort required to cultivate your network. Using a strategic approach allows you to reap tangible rewards in a measureable way, and which should be considered an important investment (time not wasted) in the growth and development of your organisation.

The more casual approach may take the same amount of time in the long-term, but without clear goals for the relationship you form, or tangible goals, this is time you need to carefully think about spending (is it time you could be using to work in another area of your organisation to achieve the goals you have laid out.

Here are some tips on how to network more effectively:
- Know what your goal is and ensure that the individual, organisation or group you are connecting with have the same or similar goals for why they want to work with you.
- Make sure you have a clear statement to explain your organisation to others – your "elevator speech" that includes the name of your NGO, the purpose of your NGO, and why your target group should be interested.
- Attend conferences, networking events, and conventions to gain more networking opportunities (or host one yourself). When you go to these events, have a plan: look at who is attending and decide who are the key people or organisations to target.
- Presentation is everything. If you are developing a network with corporate funders/ donors for example, arriving at a meeting in jeans and a T-shirt may not make you seem very credible or professional. Make sure you look like someone your target needs to talk to. Always carry business cards!
- Be more interested, than interesting: Focus on listening before asking for something, and Follow up, follow up, follow up – don't be afraid to ask for a second meeting.
- Maintain your connections/ relationships. Just like a

marriage, your networking relationships take work to maintain. This could be the occasional email/ phone call to regular meetings.
- Think about how you can incorporate social media into your networking plan – for some of your networking contacts this can be all they require to maintain a relationship with you or your organisation.

How do you create/ strengthen your network(s)?

1. **Analyse –** Identify the people in your network and what you get out of interacting with them.
2. **De-Layer –** Make some hard decisions to back away from unworkable and energy-sapping relationships.
3. **Diversify –** Build your network by linking with the right kind of people: supporters who will help you achieve your goals.
4. **Capitalise –** Make sure you're using your contacts as effectively as you can.

In terms of effective networking, remember that in any sector, organisation, or industry, lots of human factors affect the nature of the relationship you build. This means that, networking does not only have a logical basis, but emotional too. So be nice and greet people you meet. Introduce yourselves get to know about the others. You might not like all the people you need to meet, but be aware of your emotional responses, and try to strike a balance.

The last step is to make sure you capitalise on your network. Are you staying on contact? Are you providing value to your connections? Don't fall in the trap of connect with them and forget them.

Networking sites that can help you connect to other organisations:
https://www.brownie-points.co.za/
http://www.nonprofit-network.org/
https://www.facebook.com/groups/1733208333619851/
https://theangelnetwork.co.za/about-us/

7.2 COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

Community of Practice (CoP) is a groups of people, or in the development world organisations, who share an interest in a particular challenge or issue. The concept and name are credited to anthropologists Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger who theorised that adult learning happens best in conversational, informal environments, such as training workshops or on-the-job training.

"In a nutshell: Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly." – https://wenger-trayner.com/introduction-to-communities-of-practice/

In order to be able to better meet our beneficiaries need, we need to be able to adapt to their, and our, changing environment. This required that, more than ever before, organisations, community groups, government institutions, and individuals must find innovative ways work together. With less and less funding available and resources having to be shared (or used to gain a broader reach) the concept of inter-organisational collaboration is becoming increasingly important. CoPs provide a model for connecting organisations and people in the spirit of learning, knowledge sharing, and collaboration as well as individual, group, and organisational development.

The idea of CoPs has been around since the early 90's, and has become more and more popular as a way of working together (or collaborating) in order to meet the needs of our communities.

There are three key elements that differentiate CoPs from other groups of people:

1. A shared **domain** of interest (where members are committed to addressing a common issue, which gives the CoP an identity) – for example, schools working together with community organisations to provide additional services to their students.
2. A shared **community** to cultivate relationship building (members share a connection, whether interpersonal or through shared interests and through this a platform is created through which the information sharing occurs)
3. A shared **practice** or experiences around the area of interest (members are all practitioners of the domain – the common interest and identity, giving them experience from which to draw and contribute to the community) – for example organisations that are all involved in providing services to children under the age of 17; or schools working with community organisations that provide development options to children (e.g.: sports groups, organisations that provide training in art and music).

Source: Wenger-Trayner E, Wenger-Trayner B. Communities of Practice, a brief introduction. 2015. http://wenger-trayner.com/introduction-to-communities-of-practice/

According to Wenger (1998), CoPs provide five critical functions.[4] They:

1. **Educate** by collecting and sharing information related to questions and issues of practice.
2. **Support** by organising interactions and collaboration among members.
3. **Cultivate** by assisting groups to start and sustain their learning.
4. **Encourage** by promoting the work of members through discussion and sharing.
5. **Integrate** by encouraging members to use their new knowledge for real change in their own work.

CoPs are important as a learning strategy, because they have the potential to:

- **Connect organisations and people** who might not have the opportunity to interact, either as frequently or at all.
- **Provide a shared context** for organisations and people to communicate and share information, stories and personal experiences in a way that builds understanding and insight.
- **Enable dialogue** between organisations and people who come together to explore new possibilities, solve challenging problems, and create new, mutually beneficial opportunities.
- **Stimulate learning** by serving as a vehicle for authentic communication, mentoring, coaching, and self-reflection.

- **Capture and share existing knowledge** to help organisations and people improve their practice by providing a platform to identify solutions to common problems and a process to collect and evaluate best practices.
- **Introduce collaborative processes** to groups and organisations to encourage the free flow of ideas and exchange of information.
- **Help organisations** and people organise around purposeful actions that develop tangible results.
- **Generate new knowledge t**o help organisations and people transform their practice to accommodate changes in needs and technologies. (Adapted from Cambridge, Kaplan & Suter)
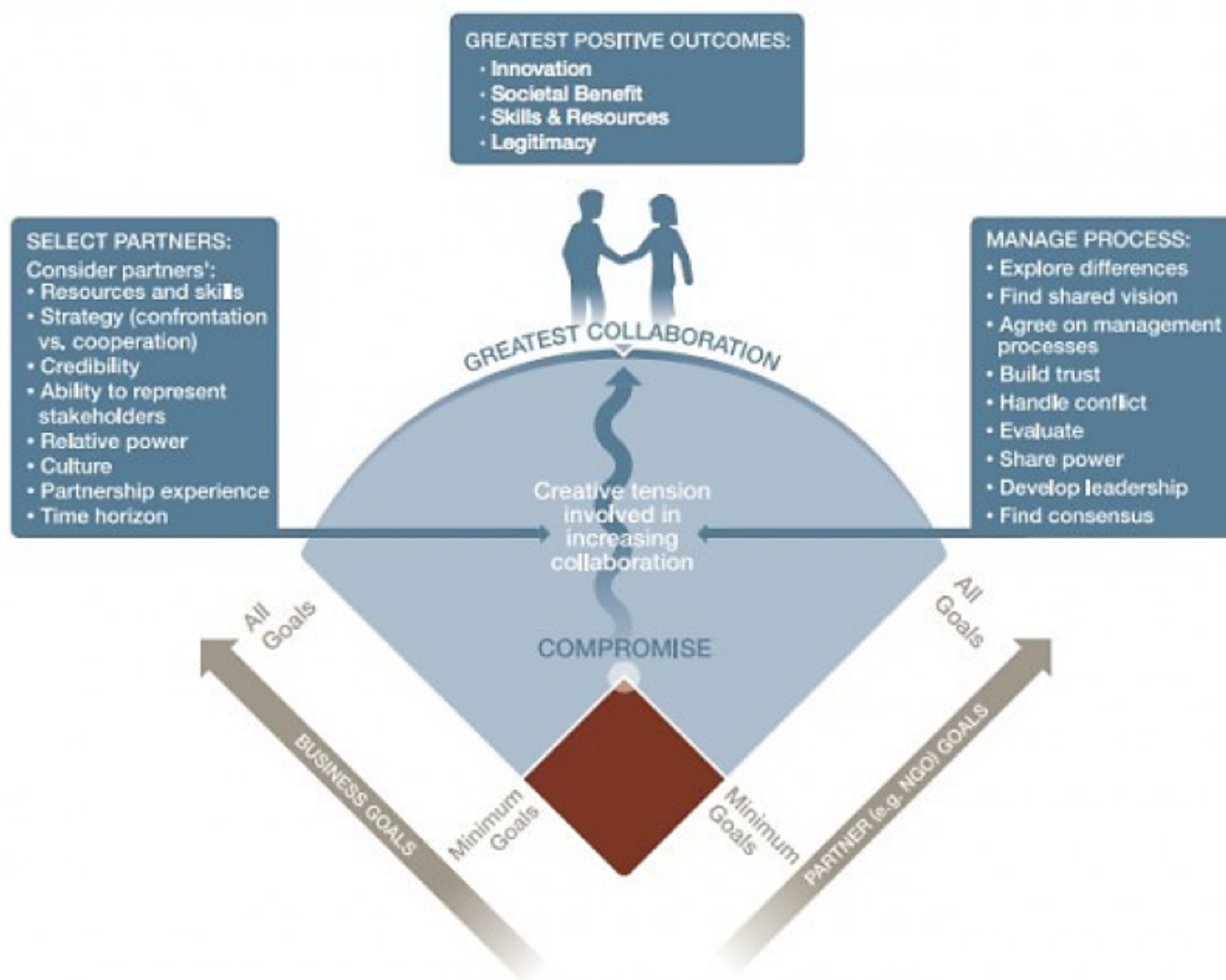
7.3 HOW CAN PARTNERSHIPS HELP ME?

At its simplest, a partnership is when two or more organisations work together towards a common aim. Partnerships can help your organisation:

- **Innovate –** Collaborative partnerships can identify unexplored opportunities and find new ways to address issues.
- **Achieve sustainability goals –** Effective partnerships bring diverse insights together to tackle complex problems.
- **Gain access to skills and resources –** NPO, community, and government partners can provide a broader spectrum of skills and knowledge – this is especially useful for smaller NPOs. The sharing of resources, rather than having to access everything you need by yourself can help you achieve your goals.
- **Increase your reach –** partners can help you increase you reach – if they are already working with your target group, but in different areas, working through them can increase the number of people that you are able to reach. Working through partnerships also means that you do not need to start up new centres every time you want to break into a new area or group.

To get the greatest benefits of your partnerships, it is important to understand why different partnerships achieve different outcomes. The following diagram explains the possible benefits of collaboration, and the actions that will let you achieve them.

[4] *http://www.communityofpractice.ca/background/why-communities-of-practice-are-important/*

Source: https://nbs.net/p/executive-report-sustainability-through-partnerships-28f1889f-1399-416a-a2e1-2e3b44fb060e

The focus of partnerships is often on the work being done together, or the project being carried out. There are different types of partnerships, each with different levels of commitment, resourcing, and power relations. The type of partnership will be influenced by both the purpose of the partnership (for example partnership with a funder vs partnership with a community organisation), and what each member of the partnership "brings to the table". Either (or both) of these elements can contribute to power imbalances. Once a partnership has been formed, it can be difficult to create the opportunities to shift the focus onto the relationship and to take time to understand each other's needs – which can further add to a power imbalance.

It is important therefore to ensure that you clearly (and fully) negotiate all terms of the partnership prior to undertaking a project/ programme together. As NPOs it is generally in the nature of the organisation to give – whether this is to their beneficiaries or their funders, it is often ingrained in the organisational culture. But,

we have ask ourselves, if we are giving, where are we "getting" from – whether this is resources, accolades, services or other support. The source of these will impact on the nature and dynamic of the partnership.

An example of this would be if you partner with a youth agency to access their target group to recruit your students, they may require that train under their "banner" – in other words, you will offer the classes, but they will be seen by the community as the organisation who is providing the programme.

When deciding on who to partner with ask yourself the following questions:
• What are the parameters of this partnership?
• How do I see this partnership developing?
• How does your partner see it?
• Where do we want to be?
• What are they offering? What are we offering?
• What is the "share" of resources – time, skills, knowledge, facilities, money, etc?

- How will this partnership benefit my art centre? How does it align with the goals of the art centre or how will it help the art centre achieve its goals?
- What is in it for them?
- How will this partnership benefit my target group?

7.3.1 BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Community partnerships can be formal or informal, involve networking or detailed relationship-building, and create grass-roots relationships and/or strategic alliances. Developing partnerships is important to the success of any community initiative. There are two key elements of managing community partnerships:

1) making sure you are achieving your goals (all parties)
2) also nurturing the relationship between you and your partner/ community

It is easy to get caught up in our aim of making a difference and focussing only on the point at which we are working together. Like a married couple who plan a regular evening out without their children, nurturing a partnership needs time to be set aside and planned in advance. Building trust is key to a relationship because only when partners trust each other will they be able share what is really going on, and by extension create an environment where change can happen.

Be sure to make a space in the relationship to manage conflict as you go along – expect to discuss differences in approach as they arise, make it part of the agenda to look at regularly, do not leave differences to grow unmanageable. Communication is the grease that keeps the engine of partnership running.

Partnerships are not always the easy option. With care and resources though, a partnership should enable you to transform the lives of people you could not otherwise reach. When working in communities, it is always a good idea to identify and connect with community partners. These can be anyone in your community – for example local government, tourism, chamber of commerce, educators, active community members.

When developing community partners with ask yourself the following questions:

- Who benefits from this partnership – My partner, my organisation, the target group?
- How best can we make this partnership work to create a "win-win-win" situation?

- Does your partner's values, ethos, focus align with those of your organisation?
- How do your target groups align?
- How do your [organisational] "cultures" align with/ support each other?
- Is this partnership a long-term or short-term investment?

There are more questions (thoroughly investigate) to explore before finalising a partnership, but those listed above are a good place to start.