

Benefits of Collaboration

When developed successfully, collaboration can be a highly beneficial activity for nonprofit organizations. The following have been commonly cited as benefits to collaborating:

- Reducing costs by sharing personnel and resources between agencies
- Eliminating duplication of services and streamlining service provision
- Reducing harmful competition between agencies
- Increasing public awareness surrounding specific issues and agencies
- Developing interagency relationships for future projects and problem-solving
- Reaching out to a broader network of consumers and clients

Obstacles Associated With Collaboration

While there can be many benefits to collaborating with other organizations, it should be noted that the process can be challenging, as well. There are a series of common obstacles that nonprofits often encounter in their collaboration attempts. These should be taken into consideration in the formation of any collaboration:

Cultural Considerations

- Clashing work styles between agencies
- Differing values and underlying philosophies
- Differing languages and workplace lingo

Relational Considerations

- Personality clashes or alliance-forming between individual staff members
- Building relationships of trust and familiarization between participants
- Developing an efficient system of communication

Practical Considerations

- Securing ongoing funding and resources for collaborative initiatives
- Maintaining group organization and momentum
- Developing mechanisms for ongoing measurement and evaluation