



1.0 What and Why?

Cooking as a team can be very rewarding. Not only can you divide up the work by working together, but you will also feast like you've never feasted before.

An overview

What and why? An overview

Why the trend towards collaboration?

The forces that are driving increased collaboration amongst non-profit, volunteer organizations come from many sources. The major source is the decrease in the prominence of government in community life.

The age of ever-bigger government has ended and there has been a shift of social functions to the non-profit and private sector. The shift has made the building of coalitions and partnerships between groups with similar mandates and missions essential.

The political shift has been accompanied by an equally dramatic economic shift. Non-profit organizations are scrambling for scarce dollars. Private sector sponsors have moved from being merely donors to looking for partnership opportunities with community groups that they support. Partnerships which pool resources are often the only way to achieve the critical mass to move forward.

All of this is taking place in an increasingly complex society. Agencies increasingly need to define their mission by broadly-based objectives, rather than by activities—which means looking for others who share those same objectives.

The Alberta experience

Partnering is not a new experience for Albertans. The farm family that provided room and board for the school teacher was an important "partner" in bringing education to rural communities. The reputation that Albertans and Alberta organizations have for finding innovative ways of working together to address social opportunities and issues is unparalleled in Canada.

Virtually every volunteer organization in Alberta has experience with partnering, although those experiences are spread across a broad spectrum. At one end, there is the simple sharing of resources to produce an event or activity. Often that grows to a broader-based partnership involving more complex objectives or goals and many different kinds of resources. At the most sophisticated level, there are collaborations that not only jointly develop the mission and strategies of the partnership, but also influence the vision and mission of their partners. This kit is intended to be useful in all those areas.

Goal

Understand the breadth and depth of possible types of relationships.

Foundation

Increasingly, the volunteer sector is acting in collaboration. Organizations which don't work with others will be left behind.

