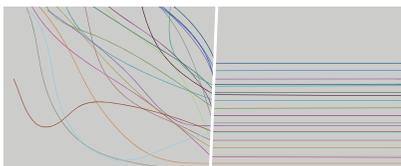
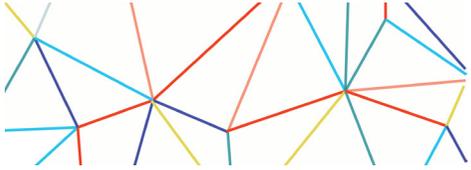


Positive Interdependence

A review of the successes and challenges of consortia governance in delivering the Creative People and Places Programme.



June 2021

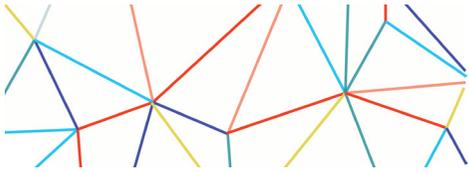


Contents

Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge the generosity of all of those who have shared their experiences and insights of the CPP programme with us. Their willingness to give their time and their energies to this project are especially commendable in the context of the many other demands upon their time during the pandemic.

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Executive Summary

Established in 2012 by Arts Council England ('Arts Council'), the Creative People and Places Programme ('CPP') has invested £81.6m over four funding rounds. To date 33 projects, involving 173 organisations have been supported across all Arts Council regions. To be eligible, a project must be structured as a consortium, including at least one grass roots or community organisation and one arts organisation.

This independent review has been commissioned to explore the successes and challenges of consortia governance within the CPP programme. It has used a mixed methods approach (Appendix One), focused on the extent to which consortium governance delivers the CPP aims.

The emphasis on place and community engagement has meant that CPP encompasses a wide range of highly diverse places, participants, partners, creative practices, and governance approaches. The governance review has happened during the extraordinary disruption of a national pandemic, and this has had an immediate impact on the individuals and organisations involved. Its longer-term impacts are yet to be determined.

For some this period has strengthened their consortium governance while others have had to devote their energies elsewhere.

CPP operates a hierarchical governance structure that is 'pluri-centric' (Rhodes, 2000), meaning that governance approaches are not homogeneous across the programme and there is unlikely to ever be, nor should there be, a 'one size fits all' model.

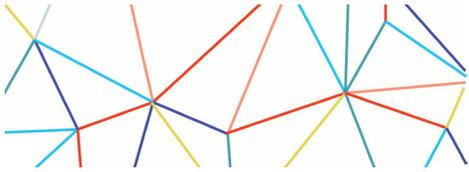
Governance is described as hierarchical because the governance of CPP as a whole is multi layered (Figures 10 -12). The nature of governance for each project is highly dependent on local circumstances, the individuals concerned, the member organisations and the needs of their communities.

Participants in the review (Appendix Two) have widely welcomed the opportunity to discuss CPP governance and overall, the feedback has been largely positive about consortia governance.

The three main reasons for joining a CPP consortium are:

1. Improving the lives of people in my community





2. Building stronger partnerships with other organisations
3. Getting involved in delivering artistic and cultural activities in my community



Figure One: Map from 'More Than 100 Stories,' by Sarah Butler and Nicole Mollet.

The benefits of being involved have been described as:

- Shared experience and expertise
- Passion and commitment
- Shared motivation
- Development of a collective vision and aims

Collective and cross sector governance is widely recognised as being complex and two key challenges were raised during the governance review

- Transition points: transition has been a common theme and each consortium goes through several phases from formation to separation. In most cases these are because of adaptation to a changing context, in some cases it has been because of shifting relationships
- Roles and expectations: there are multiple roles involved in the governance of a CPP project and they evolve over the lifetime of the consortia. Clarity around roles and expectations is of critical importance and

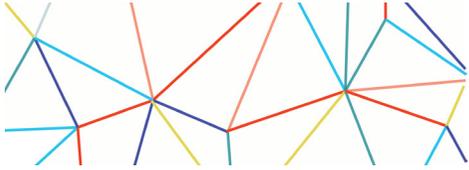
contributors to the review have suggested it is an underdeveloped area

CPP has allowed windows for collaboration and collective governance to open that have not been there before. These are not groupings of equals, which is a positive in that it brings together entities of different scales, sectors, specialisms, and resourcing. The aspiration for CPP governance is that projects should be consortium led, the feedback from the governance review suggests it lies on a spectrum from those projects that are to those that would be better described as consortium influenced.

Extending the action learning approach adopted by the wider CPP to governance would help illuminate and support the collective learning around governance in future.

The strengths of governance within CPP lie in the power of shared purpose, values and ethos and in the ability to adapt as the projects evolve.

Detailed recommendations relating to the Arts Council, CPP Consortia, and Lead Organisations are set out on pages 37-39.



CPP: Governance Review

Our vision for Creative People and Places is to support the public in shaping local arts and cultural provision and, in so doing, to increase attendance and participation in excellent art and culture. This investment encourages long-term collaborations between local communities, arts organisations, museums, libraries, amateur groups, the voluntary sector and others.

Arts Council England

Purpose of the review

Arts Council England has commissioned this independent review of the successes and challenges of consortia governance within the CPP Programme. The review is part of a wider programme of research and evaluation within CPP and has been triggered by a number of developments including the transition of several CPP delivery teams into independent organisations and the Arts Council’s new strategy for 2020-30, ‘Let’s Create.’

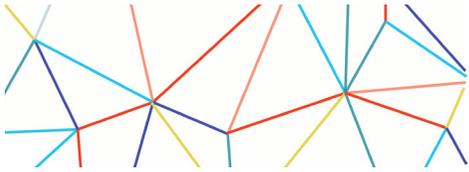
Creative People and Places Programme

Creative People and Places focuses on parts of the country where involvement in the arts and culture is significantly below the national average. We believe that everyone has the right to experience and be inspired by art, so we want to transform the opportunities open to people in those places. (Arts Council, 2021).

The CPP programme was established in 2012, and to date the Arts Council has invested £81.6m of National Lottery Development Funds in four rounds of funding for 33 projects together with support for peer learning and research and evaluation.

Round	1	2	3	New Round 1	Total
Commencement year	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2019/20	
Number of CPP projects	6	11	4	12	33
Original awards (£m)	14.5	16.0	4.6	17.5	52.6
Extension awards	8.2	15.7	3.6	0.0	27.5
Total investment in projects	22.7	31.7	8.2	17.5	80.1

Investment in peer learning	£0.8m
Investment in research and evaluation	£0.7m
Total investment to date	£81.6m



Great Art & Culture for Everyone, 2010-2020

'Goal 2: Everyone has the opportunity to experience and be inspired by the arts, museums and libraries.'

Lead Organisations:

- Grass roots and community organisations (48%),
- Arts and cultural organisations (29%)
- Public sector organisations (12%).

77% of the arts and cultural organisations involved as Lead Organisations are National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs).

The programme was designed to deliver against Goal Two of the Arts Councils' ten year strategic framework 'Great Art and Culture for Everyone.'

The main focus of the fund is increasing local empowerment and engagement in cultural provision where there has traditionally been low involvement. Allied to this is a desire to promote shared learning, increase partnerships, and create a step change in cultural activity in the eligible areas.

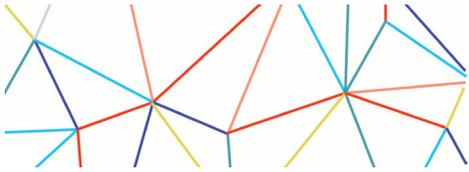
Applications for funding can only be made by consortia from qualifying places. The bidding consortium must include at least one community group and/or grass roots organisation, and an arts organisation, other consortium members can be drawn from arts and cultural organisations, civil society and the private or public sectors. Each consortium must be led by one organisation which will be the accountable body if the funding bid is successful. As the programme has evolved a number of CPP delivery teams have incorporated as independent entities to continue with project delivery and to assume the role of a Lead Organisation (LO).

Analysis of the membership of the 33 CPP projects in 2020 showed:

- 173 organisations were members of CPP consortia.
- Average membership was five organisations, although the makeup of the consortia varied considerably.
- Overall about one third were grass roots or community organisations (31%), one third were arts and cultural organisations (35%) and the remaining third was made up of public sector organisations (23%) and a range of others.

There are CPP projects in all of the Arts Council's regional areas.

Area	Number of CPP projects
London	4
Midlands	7
North	14
South East	7
South West	1
Total	33



Complexity, diversity, and innovation

Creative People and Places is about more people choosing, creating and taking part in brilliant art experiences in the places where they live.

Many of our consortium members have had very serious issues to deal with throughout Covid and we have been aware that we are not the priority.
(Review Participant)

To be eligible for CPP investment an area must be in the lowest third of places ranked by involvement in the arts in the Active Lives Survey. The 2019 National Evidence Review suggested that these places faced five inherent challenges.

1. It is more difficult to get people involved in decision-making processes than it might be in other areas where the population has a higher socioeconomic status.
2. There is an overarching picture of low levels of engagement in local decision-making processes across all areas.
3. There is a general decline in people's interest in responding to consultations.
4. There is scepticism or suspicion about new initiatives in areas that have had numerous special measures and interventions promising change.
5. There are historical and entrenched characteristics of the area that mitigate against participation in decision-making processes (Icarus, 2019: 22).

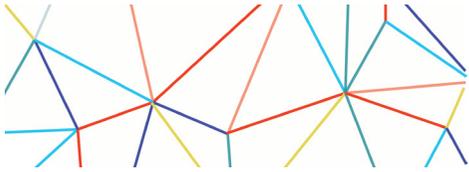
In its emphasis on place and on grass roots decision making the CPP programme inherently encompasses a highly diverse and disparate range of places, partners, participants, artistic practices and governance and management approaches.

CPP governance operates at many levels bringing together participants with different experiences and expectations. The programme is deliberately exploratory, creating space for unexpected and novel responses to the conventional questions of how power is exercised and accountability ensured.

Covid-19 Pandemic

This review has taken place against the backdrop of widespread disruption, accelerated technological adoption, deep uncertainty and unprecedented levels of personal loss in peace time.

On 23 March 2020 the Prime Minister announced the first of three national lockdowns in response to the global Covid-19 pandemic that had begun in China in the previous year.



TRUST

Figure Two: from 'More Than 100 Stories,' by Sarah Butler and Nicole Mollet.

... a consortium model needs to be designed to reflect local circumstances and make the most of local assets and opportunities: there is no one-size fits all approach and the diversity of CPP lead organisations, members and eventual strategic priorities illustrate this. (Bunting & Fleming, 2015: 16)

The immediate impact on the individual lives, the cultural sector, our economy, public services and society has been profound and, in many cases, devastating.

The longer term impacts of the pandemic are impossible to predict at this stage.

Let's Create

In 2020 the Arts Council launched its new ten-year strategy, Let's Create, which focuses on delivering three outcomes.

1. Creative People: Everyone can develop and express creativity throughout their life.
2. Cultural Communities: Villages, towns and cities thrive through a collaborative approach to culture.
3. A creative and cultural country: England's cultural sector is innovative, collaborative and international.

Supporting delivery of these outcomes are four Investment Principles.

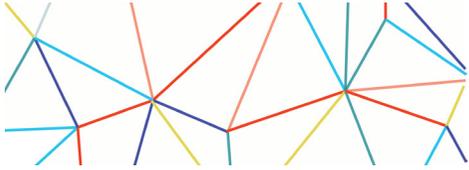
1. Ambition & Quality: Cultural organisations are ambitious and committed to improving the quality of their work.

2. Inclusivity & Relevance: England's diversity is fully reflected in the organisations and individuals that we support and in the culture they produce.
3. Dynamism: Cultural organisations can thrive and are better able to respond to the challenges of the next decade.
4. Environmental Responsibility: Cultural organisations lead the way in their approach to the climate emergency (Arts Council England, 2020).

The increased focus on place, on the democratisation of creativity, and on inclusion and relevance offers the opportunity for CPP to move more fully into the mainstream of publicly funded provision.

Previous governance research

CPP governance and consortium working was first researched in 2015. The Final Report (Bunting, C. & Fleming, T. 2015) engaged with eight consortia and 'sought to understand the development and experiences of CPP consortia' including 'practicalities, challenges and opportunities.' One of the concluding points raises the issue of variance across the CPP projects.



Interorganisational collaboration:

Governance of collaborations 'entails the design and use of structures and processes that enable actors to set the overall direction of the collaboration, and that co-ordinate and allocate resources for the collaboration as a whole and account for its activities.' (Cornforth et al, 2015)

Consortium:

specialized joint ventures encompassing many different arrangements (Brooks, Blunden, & Bidgood, 1993). Typically, consortia consist of a group of organizations that have a similar need and band together to create a new entity, formally or informally, to satisfy that need for all of them. (Kanter, 1989).

This CPP Peer Learning research outlined a temporal approach to governance based over a series of phases:

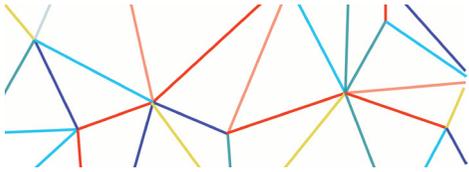
1. Pre-application: Consortia would benefit from pre-application support including research to align partnerships
2. Business planning: needs scope of testing ideas and building relationships
3. Project governing board: drives the start-up phase. Needs to include skills audit, aims and objectives, roles and responsibilities defined, etc
4. Core consortium delivery: Bespoke governance process toolkit, long-term development plan, evaluation and review built in

The research also outlined a series of reflexive questions for consortia to consider every 6-12 months to check on the effectiveness of their collaboration. These were broken down into four sections (and have been taken into account in this review): behaviours, processes, resources and outcomes.

Recommendations relating to the four phases were taken on board by the Arts Council. There has been no evidence that the reflexive questions were adopted or utilised.

Definitions

Terms relating to inter-organisational working such as consortium, collaboration, and networks are often used interchangeably and can lack clarity. The review has therefore set out its terms in use in a Glossary for ease of reference (Appendix Three).



CPP Governance characteristics

It was important for me to lead and develop the application for the areas, and to support the process so that it can be the best it can be and the most right for the town.

It's a very rich and rewarding process and has certainly created great opportunities for our organisation as well as reached a very significant number of the community.

We recognised the value [we] could bring to building on the legacy of CPP, and the strength we added.

(Review Participants)

Motivation and satisfaction

A clear majority of those who responded to the surveys believe that their current governance arrangements are working well, report strongly positive experiences of their collaboration and assess their own partnership working as being effective (Figure Three).

Consortium members and Lead Organisations identified the same three core reasons for joining a CPP consortium:

1. Improving the lives of people in my community
2. Building stronger partnerships with other organisations
3. Getting involved in delivering artistic and cultural activities in my community

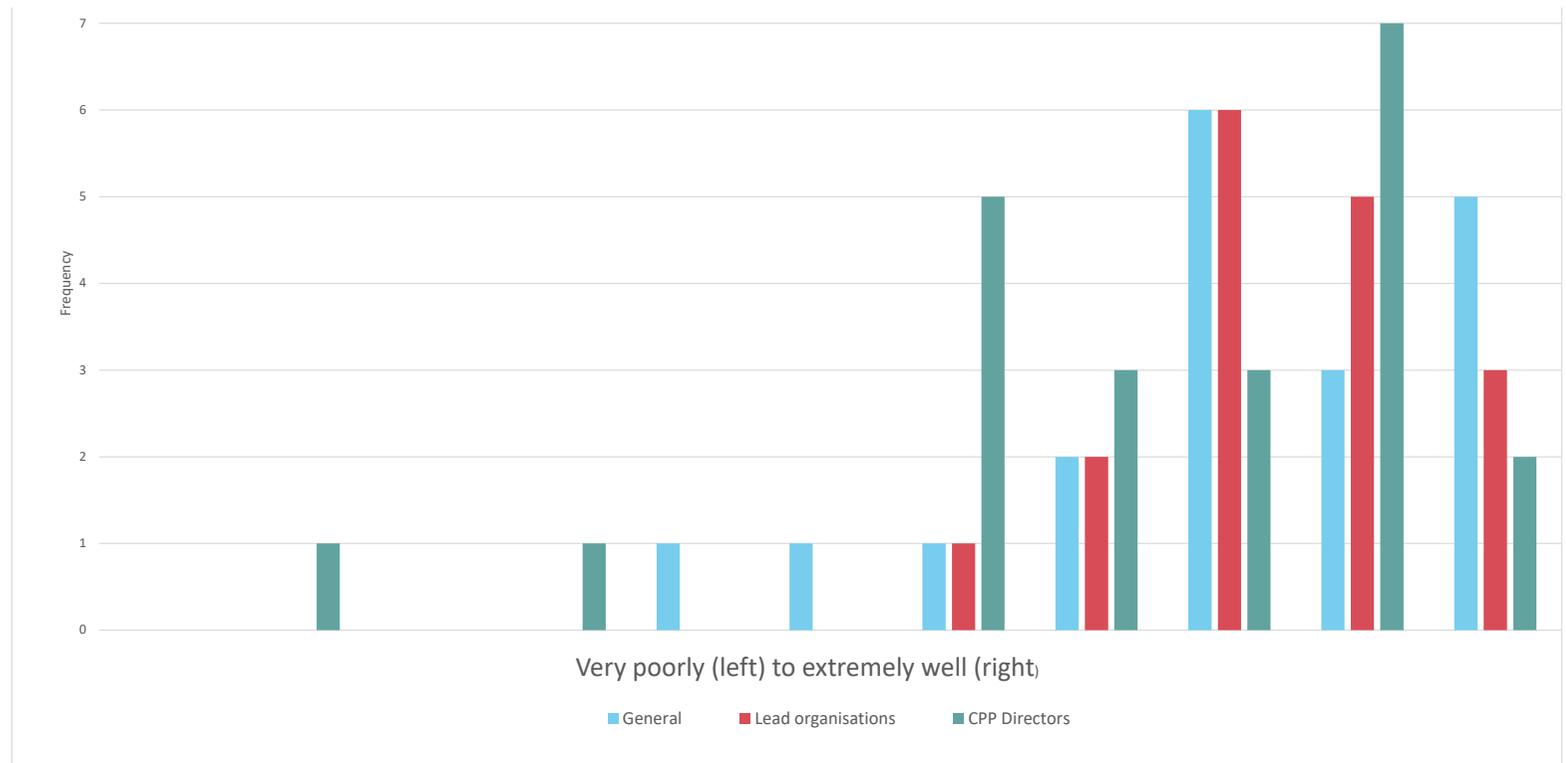
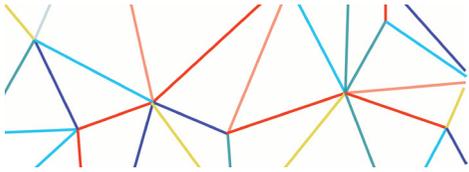


Figure Three: responses to the question 'how well do you think your consortium is performing now?'



Among those respondents who chose to comment further on their motivations four themes emerged (Figure Four):

- Enabling access to high quality arts and culture
- Empowering communities
- Securing investment for their community/place
- Desire to contribute their organisational and personal expertise

The themes around motivation were common to both lead organisations and other consortium members although the language used differed.

Lead organisations drew mainly on the language of the arts whilst consortium members were much more likely to express their motivations in public sector/higher education terms.

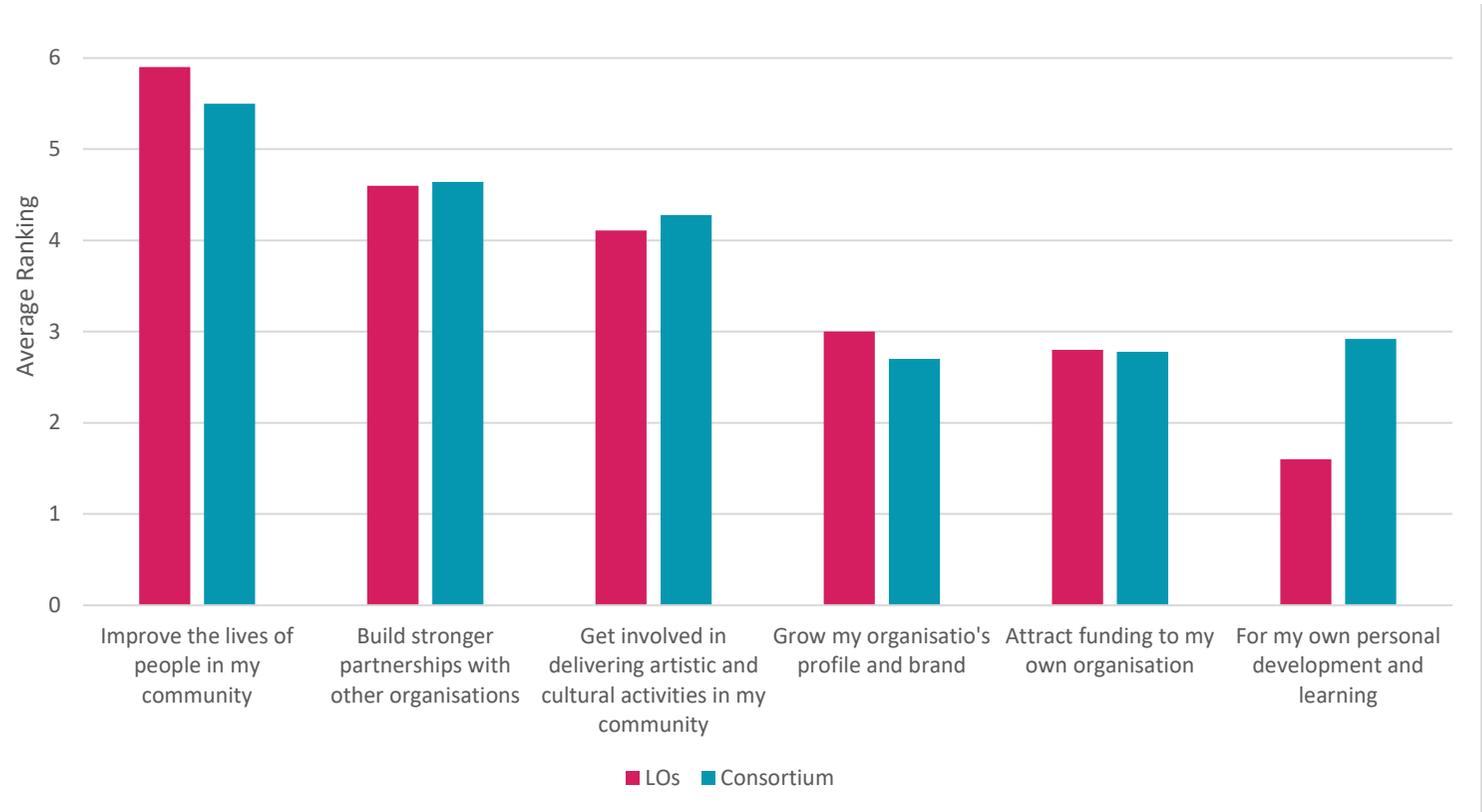
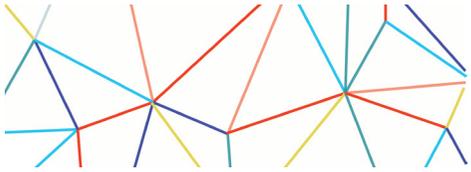


Figure Four: responses to the question 'reasons for joining your consortium'



The factors that have helped the consortia be effective (Figure Five) are reported as:

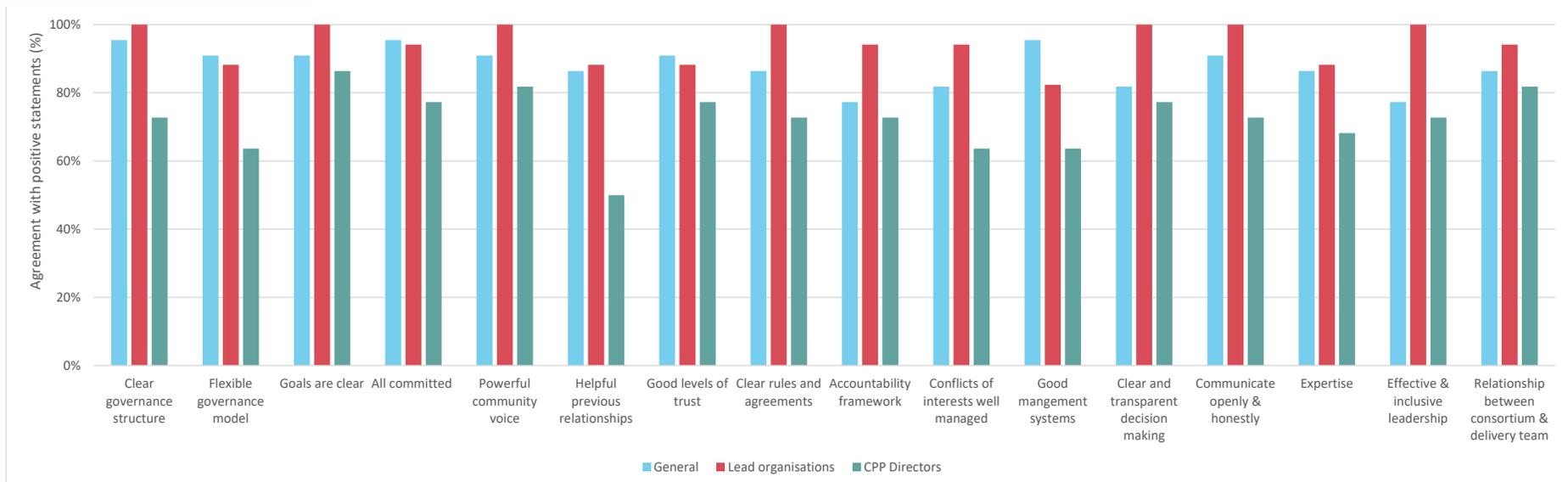
- Openness, honesty, and removal of self interest
- Clarity of vision and roles
- Passion and commitment
- Increased trust and confidence
- Planning
- Effective chair
- Experience and expertise of consortium members
- Video conferencing - enabling all to meet
- Critical Friend
- Refreshing the group

The factors have made it harder to be effective, include social, contextual and resourcing issues:

- Pandemic pressures on own organisations, on CPP, on communities, not able to meet in person
- Limited capacity and pressure of time
- Dominant personalities
- Turnover in consortium
- Conflicts of interest
- Transition from one phase to the next

In all cases the Delivery Directors agreed less with the survey statements than other respondents.

Figure Five: Working Together responses



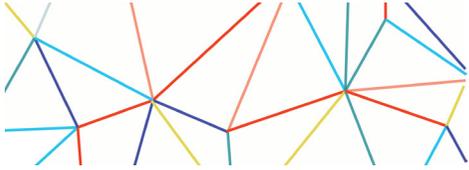


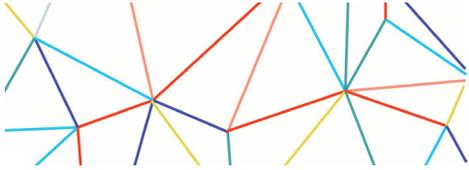
Figure Six: Deb Shenton, Appetite.
Photograph: Stephen King

Strengths of consortia governance

- Emergent approach
- Multi-partner
- Cross sector
- Community focused
- Builds on hyperlocal knowledge
- Partnership agreements
- Commitment of those involved at all levels
- Commitment to communities and place
- Ethos of CPP
- Governance has adapted to each context
- Learning ethos
- One size does not fit all
- Critical Friend model
- Self assessed performance is high
- Collaboration viewed very positively
- Involvement of people/organisations outside arts sector
- Ability of existing CPPs to scale up model in other areas
- Flexibility for delivery teams to incorporate
- Flexibility to novate funding agreements to new leading organisations
- Consortium members able to join and step off
- The Arts Council taking a flexible approach

Weaknesses

- Wide-ranging and diverse expectations
- Loose/tight oversight (both standing back and involved in the detail) by the Arts Council
- Delivery Directors are caught between multiple stakeholders and having to hold the tensions on occasion
- Programme development process – plans and structures in place often before Directors appointed
- Lack of a clear knowledge sharing framework for CPP governance
- One size does not fit all
- Focus on delivery over governance processes
- Tensions between requirements of accountability and desire for generous, inclusive decision making
- Reliance on LO when sector is under pressure
- Failure to re-imagine governance at key transition points
- Resolution of governance issues appears protracted exacerbated by lack of role clarity



It might have been useful to talk to other chairs. In fact I don't know who my equivalents are in the region.

Increased pressure and workload due to pandemic in a substantive role has left less time to support the consortium.

We are a relatively new consortium but I think dealing with the challenges of this year has strengthened us and brought us together more.

(Review participants)

Opportunities

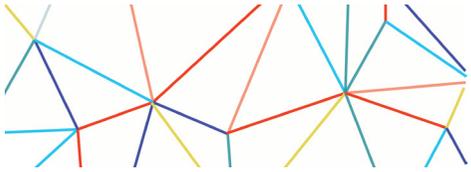
- Social learning
- Growing partnerships
- Models for other programmes
- Wider collaborations
- Action learning and research into collective governance
- Evolving governance processes
- New forms of organising
- Levelling up agenda - attention and funding
- Let's Create - encouraging greater engagement with CPP approach
- Share learning from review with next generation of CPP projects

The strengths of governance within CPP lie in the power of shared purpose, values and ethos and in the ability to adapt as the projects evolve. Its current weaknesses arise from the tensions inherent in the model, the disruptive impact of transitions and the failure to adopt and benefit from a clear knowledge and experience sharing framework.

Threats

- Short/medium term: next phase pandemic – relative health of member organisations
- Medium/long term: post pandemic changes in cultural / social / economic landscape - impact on partners and participants
- Government response to increased public borrowing - reduced funding / return to austerity
- Increased competition for available funds meaning organisations are forced to focus on their own needs
- Shifting governmental priorities
- Move further towards instrumental value of the arts

The key opportunities will come from building on what has been learnt and expanding the potential of the model through more shared learning. A commitment to greater social learning around governance should help CPP projects adapt to the uncertainties and challenges of a post-Covid world.



Advice from Lead Organisations to new projects:

- Don't underestimate the workload
- Choose a strong* organisation with financial and legal resources to be your accountable body
- Make sure you are undertaking the role for the right reasons
- Be clear from the start
- Think long and hard about managing conflicts
- Keep channels of communication open at all times
- Get all the systems and procedures in place before the programme starts
- Recruit a good CPP Director asap!
-

*'Strong' references organisational resilience and capacity, not just size or scale

Lead organisation impact

CPP has a complex, multi-layered governance model in which power is exercised at many levels and by many individuals and organisations.

LOs occupy a pivotal role in consortium governance and a position of influence and power only matched by the Arts Council as funder. In particular they have four key roles as the accountable organisation.

1. Convening key players including consortium members, potential members and other stakeholders
2. Inculcating healthy norms and productive ways of (collaborative) working
3. Supporting and enabling the Delivery Director and Delivery Team to do their best work
4. Active stakeholder management in collaboration with the Delivery Director including receiving and disbursing funds

If they are unable to fulfil these critical roles the CPP project will struggle to deliver.

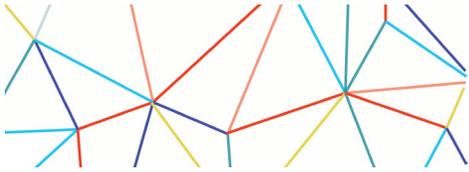
The necessity for the LO's board to approve the CPP budget and their position as the Delivery Director's employer imposes constraints on the power of other players such as grass roots consultation groups, the delivery team and other consortium members.

The ability of LOs to be effective will be shaped both by the relationships they build with others involved in their consortium governance system and by their own internal resources and realities (Figure Seven).

To be successful LOs need to establish and maintain positive, productive relationships with all of those involved in governing the consortium; this requires considerable skill and time throughout the lifetime of the project.

Those charged individually with the role of a LO, usually the senior executive, will need to manage their internal stakeholders as well as their co-governors.

Key internal stakeholders will include: governing bodies, their chairs and committees, senior management team members, providers of services to the CPP delivery team and people/teams whose work is similar to the work of the CPP project e.g. staff working in participation and creative learning.



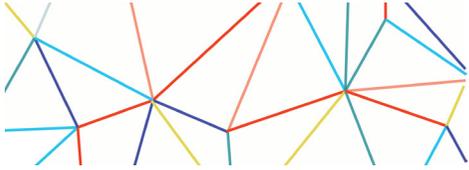
Advice from CPP Directors to new CPP projects:

- View governance in its broadest sense
- Working with and through a lead body and consortium is extremely challenging
- Build a strong support network
- Build relationships with your consortium members
- Don't be afraid to change or adapt your consortium if it's not working
- Lean on your RM
- Work with a good Critical Friend
- The community is your best asset. Invest in it and it will support you through all the challenges ahead

The approach that those charged with the LO role choose to take will be shaped by cultural norms and organisational ways of working, organisational capacities and capabilities as well as their own experiences, preferences and skills.

Organisation	Relationships with LO
Arts Council England	Funded client - restricted project funding
CPP Consortium members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fellow member of the consortium • Chair of the consortium / working with and to an independent chair • Provider of performance information • Key role in planning • Occasionally liaison with consortium member employing the Delivery team and providing support services
Delivery Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually employer and line manager (23 out of 25 Delivery Director survey respondents) • Usually provider of services e.g. finance, administration
Delivery body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually employer • Usually provider of services

Figure Seven: LO relationships



As a result of the interaction of this wide range of factors, many of which are beyond the control or even influence of the consortium, there are different structures for the involvement of LO (Figures 12-14).

Under the emerging independent model, the new entity assumes the roles of both LO and delivery team. This development appears to be an attempt to reduce the complexity and tensions inherent in the separation of lead, consortium oversight and delivery. These new organisations are much more closely linked to their CPP project than other LOs.



Figure Eight: Sheila Ghelani. 'This Head, These Hand,' Heart of Glass

Consortium chair impact

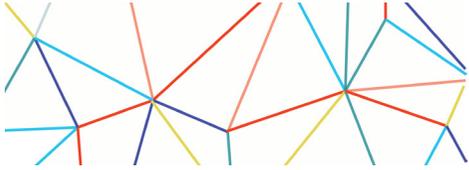
Among survey respondents the satisfaction with their consortia chair is high; nearly three quarters believe that their consortium benefits from clear and inclusive leadership. Half of the LOs who responded to the review combine their role as accountable body with that of chairing the consortium.

There is considerable variation in the importance attached to the role of the consortia chair and, partly in consequence, in the way in which the role is undertaken.

For some consortia it is clear that an effective chair has been essential in the project's success whilst other consortia have operated without a chair for considerable periods of time or opted for a rotating chair, choosing, or being forced to choose a more shared approach.

In situations where relationships between consortium members or between the consortium and the delivery team have broken down, the role of the chair becomes critical in rebuilding trust and effectiveness.

The Arts Council's primary relationship is with the project's CPP Director, once appointed. As a result the Arts Council's visibility to and connection with consortia chairs is generally relatively weak, especially where the chair is not a member of the LO.



Stand alone organisations (SAOs) : combining LO and delivery roles

It is important that the lead organisation is not seen to make grants to its partners. This grant decision making is the statutory responsibility of the Arts Council. The lead organisation does of course make payments from its grant to its partners in consideration for the activities they are delivering under the partnership agreement.

(Arts Council
Guidance, 2014)

A small number of consortia have chosen, or are considering choosing, a change in their governance model in which the delivery team becomes a separate legal entity (a charitable company, a Charitable Incorporated Organisation or a Community Interest Company) and assumes both delivery and LO roles.

The SAO brings together accountability and delivery responsibilities as well as the provision of support services and the employment of delivery staff completely 'in-house'. The SAO model could be seen as a creative, emergent response to the CPP Programme constraints.

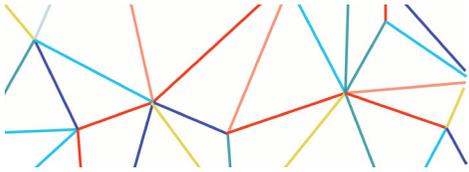
Those who have moved to the SAO model, or are considering doing so, are motivated by a number of factors:

- Passion for their mission and a hunger to do more and better work
- Desire to reduce complexity and disagreement

- Response to the practical difficulties of putting community voices at the heart of consortium decision making in places of deprivation arising from the inability to appoint individuals to consortia
- The real time constraints that individuals working for grassroots organisations often face when trying to serve on consortia
- Hope for greater permanence and security at both organisational and individuals levels

The SAO is an evolving model that offers a range of benefits and challenges (Figure Nine). The main potential benefits derive from simplification, clarity of roles, building infrastructure in areas of traditionally low investment, and the ability to embed cultural provision more deeply within local communities. It provides an opportunity for genuine organisational change and development.

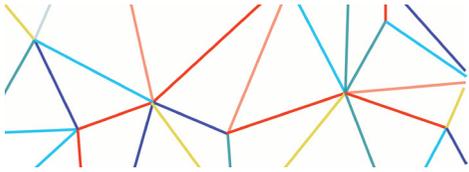
The main challenges rest with the resources needed to create the new organisation and the time needed for it to establish itself. There is also a question mark around how the business model will develop over the longer term.



Possible Benefits	Potential Challenges
Some simplification of governance and reduction in tension between LO and Delivery Director/team.	Process of transition to a stand alone model needs investment (time and costs). Attention may be diverted away from delivery into the transition process.
Improved performance: save time to reinvest in programme delivery and development, improved communications, improved data flows	Need to invest time in re-negotiating governance relationships and in re-designing processes.
Bringing consortium and community decision making closer together as the delivery team becomes the LO	Continuing need to manage relationships and expectations between consortium and the LO now also the stand alone organisation board.
Ability to involve individuals from the community in decision making through the SAO	The SAO may permit a greater concentration of power in one organisation as the price of simplification. It will be even more important than for other CPP consortia that the SAO is able to act as a servant leader encouraging and enabling others.

Possible Benefits	Potential Challenges
Opportunity to embed a CPP ethos and ways of working in a permanent organisation - particularly valuable given systemic inequalities the CPP programme seeks to address	Maintaining a clear distinction between the CPP programme and the organisation's other activities. May be especially challenging as the CPP programme will be at the heart of the organisation's origin story and foundation.
Opportunity for sharing and scaling of CPP ethos and ways of working as the stand alone organisation grows	Destabilising and organisational warping effect of any large, fixed term, restricted funded project housed within a relatively small organisation such as the impact on purpose, dependence on project funding to support other activities and cash flow and the need to manage the risk of the project ending.
Potential to be seen as a more independent than an existing entity taking on the LO role	Establishing credibility as the delivery body alongside other existing organisations

Figure Nine: SAO possible benefits and challenges



External impact/s risks for lead organisation

There are considerable potential benefits in being an LO:

- Enhanced mission delivery
- Better networks
- Increased profile
- Additional knowledge and skills

The responsibilities of an LO carries risks in normal times, many of which have been exacerbated by the pandemic.

- Shortage of capacity and capability to function effectively especially at a senior level and in the finance function
- Ensuring that the LO's governing body can exercise appropriate oversight in relation to CPP
- Failure to ensure ring fencing of CPP funds from other business revenues, costs and cashflows
- Reputational risk
- Impact on relationship with the Arts Council

The impact of Covid-19 on consortia has been substantial but not consistent.

The purpose of this partnership is to work together to successfully shape and deliver the Creative People and Places programme.

(Review participant)

We identify and manage conflicts of interest well.:

General - 82%
Lead organisations - 94%
Directors - 64%

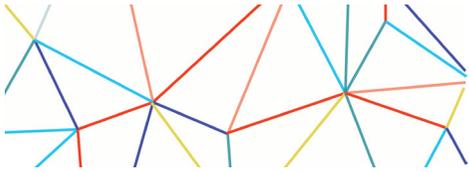
Approximately half of the LOs reported that the pandemic had made it harder for members to engage whilst one third reported working together more effectively.

Virtual working has had benefits in terms of convenience but downsides in terms of real engagement. Capacity during a time of furlough and redundancy appears to have been a greater challenge than finances within the CPP project itself.

Clarity of role and expectations

There are many governance roles both within and connected to a CPP project:

- Arts Council as core funder
- LO (governing body and executive) as applicant, probable driver of early business planning and accountable body
- Consortium chair
- Consortium members as contributors to funding bid, shaper of business plans, overseer of delivery, contributors of expertise and introducers to networks
- Governing bodies of consortium members
- Delivery Director - programme delivery
- Grass roots - programming decisions



- Community members as consultees or playing a role in decision making

Not all of these roles exist from day one and all roles will change over time as the project progresses and as new people/organisations join and others leave.

The partnership agreement must cover a period that is at least as long as our grant agreement with the lead organisation.

In all cases the partnership agreement must refer to, or preferably include, our terms and conditions of grant.

(Arts Council England, 2014, Guidance on preparing a partnership agreement.)

There are several areas where clear expectations need to be explored and agreed and then reviewed and renegotiated as the project evolves:

- What are we trying to achieve?
- What do I/my organisation get out of this?
- What roles are others undertaking?
- How do our roles interrelate?
- What should my/our contribution be?
- How much agency do I/we have?
- Can I/we afford to participate?

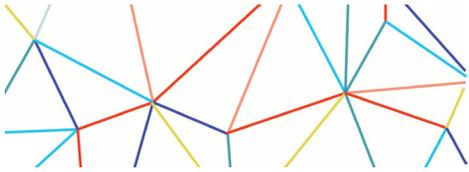
The governance review responses suggest that this is the area of greatest confusion and challenge for CPP projects. Contributors to the governance review acknowledge the critical importance of clarity around roles and expectations whilst believing that it is an underdeveloped area.

Partnership agreements

All the partnership agreements meet the Arts Council's minimum requirements (Arts Council, 2014). Reflecting their diversity consortia have done so in a wide variety of ways. The process of developing an agreement that is acceptable to all parties, including the Arts Council, is often protracted. This may reflect the challenges of responding to the expectations and experiences of consortia working for people from different sectors. These agreements will hopefully reflect the outcomes of a period of negotiation following the transition from bidding to planning.

Structures, titles, and tone vary from the formal to the relatively informal; examples include: Trust Deeds, Partnership Agreements, Memoranda of Understanding, complex legal agreements, and project summaries.

Some organisations have adapted existing templates that range from University or Local Authority Legal Services templates to project outlines, whilst others have borrowed heavily from Arts Council documentation or started from scratch to create bespoke documents that address wider issues of purpose and ways of working.



... in many consortia there is a significant reduction in consortia decision making once a Delivery Director is in place and the delivery plans approved as the consortia moves more clearly into advice and support rather than lead and approve.

Review participant

The length of the documents vary from one page to 40 pages, reflecting very different levels of detail and variations in contents.

In addressing purpose, many of the agreements are quite generic and task focused. There are very few references to the motivations or values of the consortium members: in part this reflects the formal, quasi legal language of most of the Agreements.

Creating a good partnership agreement needs to take account of process as well as content. It can be a powerful mechanism for uniting the consortium (Appendix Four provides some prompts for developing a great partnership agreement).

Decision making processes

Decision making within a CPP project is complex as it is distributed across several levels and within different organisations. This complexity can lead to disruption and disagreement at times of transition when the previous decision making processes are no longer appropriate but new ones have not been set up and agreed upon.

For example, in many consortia there is a significant reduction in consortia decision making once a Delivery Director is in place and the delivery plans approved as the consortia moves more clearly into advice and support rather than lead and approve.

A majority of CPP projects believe that they manage conflicts of interest well but it is clear that in some instances conflicts have not been identified, have escalated, and have not been well managed.

Currently, the majority of decision making rests within the consortium, and members have to act in part as representatives for their wider communities. This is an area for future development and consortia are considering how to engage communities more directly in decision making.

Delivery team relationship

The importance of the relationship between the Delivery Director and the consortium, and especially the LO, is widely acknowledged as are the challenges, including:

- Business plans being developed before the Director is in post



The consortium is not involved in any decision making. We are asked to reflect and our views are fed in to overall direction of travel but there is no decision making on specific topics at meetings.

Review participant

- Insufficient time to invest in building relationships due to the perceived pressure of delivery
- Lack of communication
- Delays or difficulties in obtaining financial information
- Complications arising from the employment relationship

It is notable that whilst the Directors in our survey have a positive perception of the governance of their projects their view is consistently less positive than either the LO or general consortium members.

There are also differing perceptions of how much a consortium should be focused on programme delivery, particularly in the early stages. The Arts Council does not want delivery pressure to create an imbalance in devoting time to establishing effective governance processes.

Consortia governance approaches and experiences

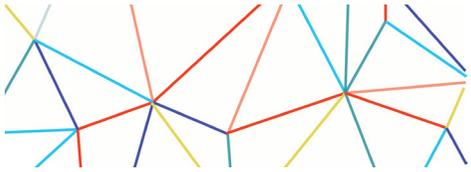
CPP governance combines elements of a number of different governance models.

- Public funder/accountable body

- Public sector – local authority and Elected members
- Higher education – board of governors with charitable status
- Charity – trustee board of directors governing for public benefit
- Social enterprise – board of directors governing for community benefit
- Grass roots/hyper local decision making by service users/beneficiaries
- Volunteer led and run entities
- Consortia working in other sectors such as health and higher education where partners often deliver as well as govern

Consortia members bring their own governance models and expectations to their work on the consortia formed by their prior experiences. Some models will be familiar to many, some will be unfamiliar to most.

The complex, hybrid nature of CPP's model can be a source of confusion in the early stages or at moments of transition when roles and/or people change. The exploration and negotiation of clear expectations is identified by many as essential but challenging.



How have people experienced collaborative governance?

Strong support for the concept and benefits of consortia working was consistent across the review. People reported enjoying the opportunity to work differently with partners from beyond their usual networks.

They valued the opportunity of learning about new approaches and perspectives.

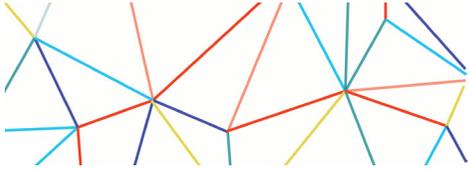
The shared commitment to creating a step change in the cultural opportunities available to their local communities was a source of unifying passion and energy.

Survey respondents ranked their experience of collaboration well across all aspects. Even those areas of lesser satisfaction were scored above 50% (Figure 10).

A positive commitment to consortia working and to shared decision making does not mean people are ignorant to the challenges of making a complex and unfamiliar model work.



Figure 10: experiences of working in a consortium by role



What have been the most rewarding aspects of your role as an LO contact?

Supporting something completely beyond the normal scope of the organisation's operations and finding creative solutions.

It allows a different view of our own governance.

Conflicts of interest was an issue raised early on during the development phase and I feel good about how that was discussed and developed honestly and openly with the consortia...we now have a clear conflicts of interest procedure in place which is working well.

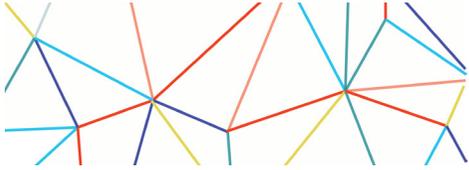
(Review participants)

Governing in this way is time intensive and it demands a high level of interpersonal skills – many people reported finding it difficult to invest sufficient time in building and maintaining effective working relationships.

The timescales for resolving issues within this context are often extended by the need to involve many people who do not work for the same organisation and who come with different perspectives. This can lead to frustration and a loss of confidence in each other.

Refreshing the consortium and bringing on new people with different skills and networks has been important for some consortia but it is also time consuming and potentially disruptive, leading some to resist change.

The pandemic has intensified these challenges for many CPP consortia.



Financial management

The CPP Director has operational responsibility for the finance for the programme. The Lead Organisation CEO has strategic responsibility, with support from the Lead Organisation Head of Finance.

Ultimately it is the Lead Organisation's Trustees who accept liability and responsibility.

I feel there is strength in the current financial management that is managed jointly between the Lead and the CPP Director and especially having accounts robustly audited each year.

(Review participants)

The financial management of CPP projects is often more complex than would be the case for a more usual dyadic funded project.

- The funds involved are substantial and may represent a significant proportion of the LO's income putting additional pressures on, or skewing, their existing business model and financial processes. Some participants reported that they felt the balance of CPP activity to the LOs core activity was important
- Not all of those involved are familiar with charity fund accounting and/or Arts Council requirements.
- The role of the consortium changes over time from developer of a business plan to overseer but not decision maker.
- As the accountable body, the LO's board usually signs off the CPP budgets.
- CPP Directors usually control the budget on a day to day basis, possibly exercising more independence than is common for other budget holders within the LO.

In most CPPs, it appears that those involved are comfortable with both financial control and reporting (Figure 11) but a small minority report issues around both.

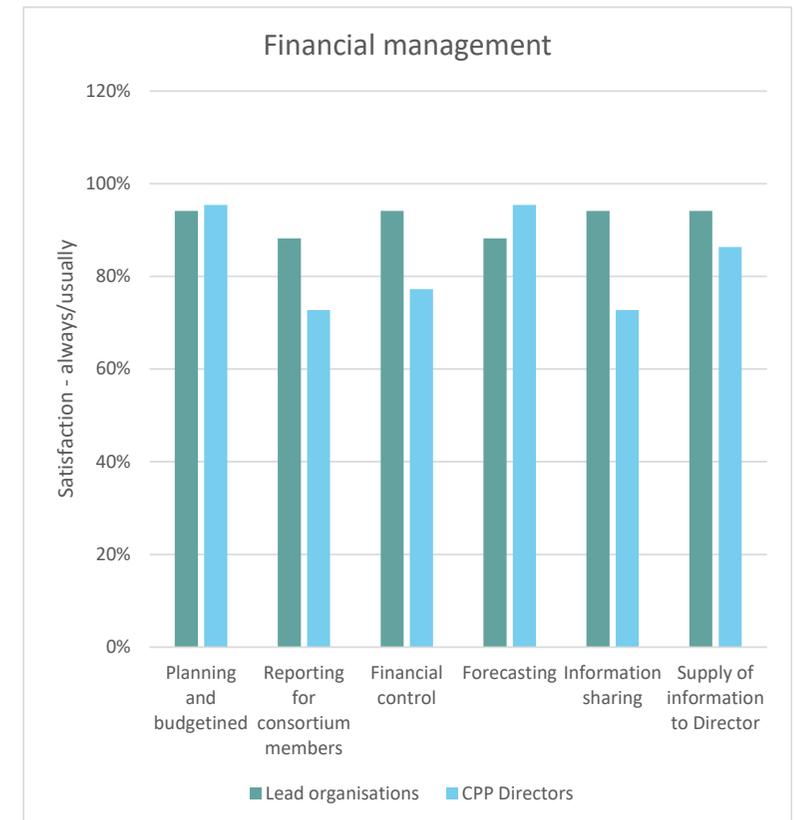
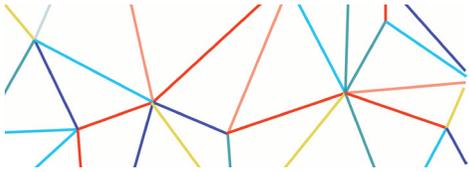


Figure 11: Satisfaction with financial management by area



Conclusions

CPP...consortium influenced not consortium led.

The consortium structure works very well providing discussion, support, ideas, direction, partnerships, strategy and celebration. The Code of Conduct and a strong Chairperson, support the group to work well.

(Review participants)

Multi-layered governance

CPP has hierarchical governance characteristics in terms of its structure with different models in use (Figures 12 - 14). The Arts Council has authority over the whole and ultimate accountability, it has its own governance and reporting structures. As the core funder the Arts Council has played a significant role in shaping and monitoring the evolution of CPP.

The LO has authority over the consortium as it is the accountable body and as such has a different level of engagement to other members. This is generally enacted as a soft authority until there is a dispute. The aspiration of CPP is that the LO takes an equal place alongside the other consortia members. In regulatory terms the governing body of the LO has a fiduciary duty to oversee the effective and appropriate use of resources.

Consortium members hold the oversight responsibility for their project and, in some cases, a 'representative' role, ideally bringing community voices into the governance structure. All the organisational members of the consortium have their own independent governance structures. The delivery entity (which is sometimes also the LO) may have

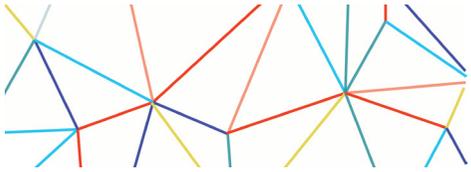
its own governing body and is responsible for delivering the programme in accordance with the goals either mutually agreed or set by the consortium.

The governance structures of CPP sit between a 'pop-up' approach generally used in project working and the formal governance structures of the individual entities involved, meaning that collectively they can sometimes be pulled in either direction. It also means governance experiences and expectations can vary widely.

Three main variations of consortia governance structure have emerged during the review:

1. LO and Delivery Body are members, Delivery Body employs Delivery Director (figure 12)
2. LO is a member and employs Delivery Director (Figure 13)
3. Delivery Body is independent and Delivery Director is the point of contact (Figure 14)

CPP governance is situated within a much wider series of networks meaning it has what are termed as 'pluri-centric' forms of governance in contrast to the more familiar 'uni-centric' (organisational) model (Rhodes, 2000).



Multi layered, multi-level CPP Governance

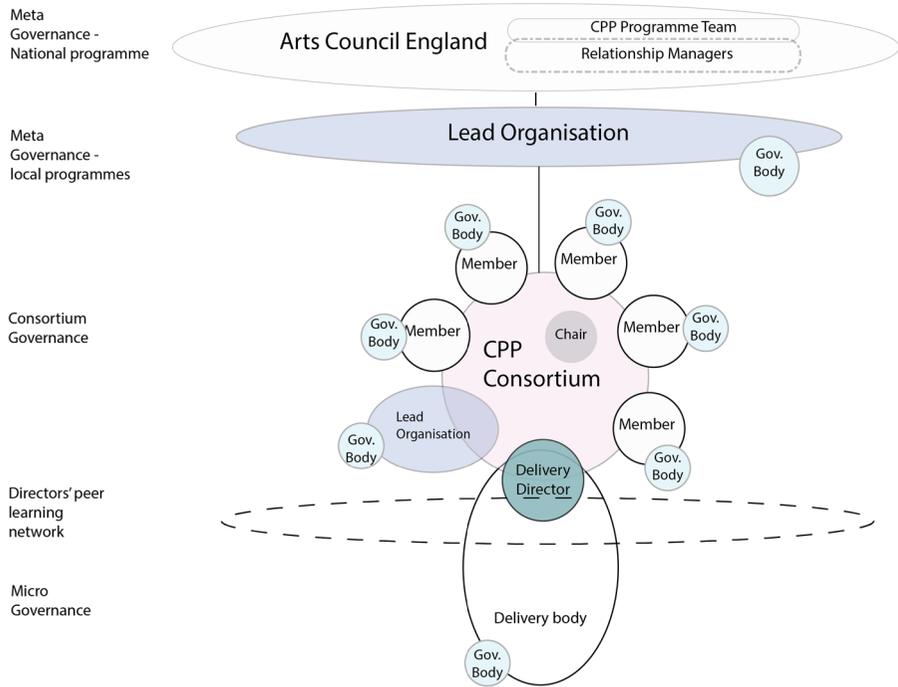


Figure 12: LO and delivery body are members, LO has accountability to the Arts Council

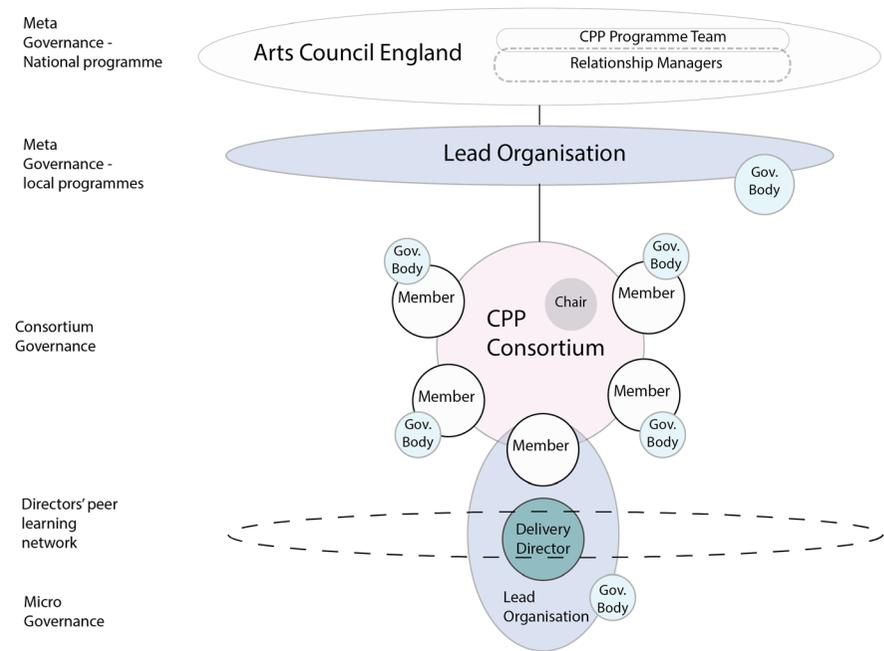
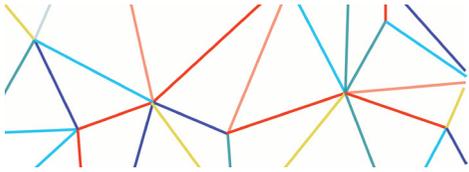


Figure 13: The LO is delivery body and consortium member (the LO may, or may not be, a SAO). The LO has accountability to the Arts Council



Meta
Governance -
National programme

Meta
Governance -
local programmes

Consortium
Governance

Directors' peer
learning
network

Micro
Governance

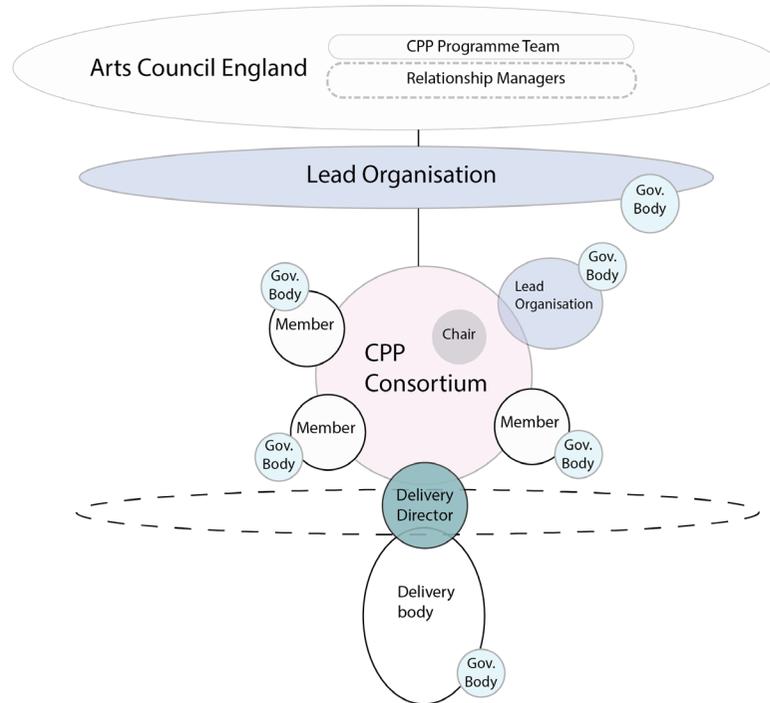


Figure 14: The LO is a member, the delivery body may not be a consortium member. The delivery body may also be a SAO. The LO has accountability to the Arts Council

The nature of the governance structure for each project is highly dependent on local circumstances, the individuals concerned, the member organisations and the needs of their communities.

CPP Culture

Culture is generally thought of as the way things are done in a particular group or organisation. It encompasses norms, values, principles, artefacts, and behaviours. It can transform over time, and culture in practice does not always reflect the aspirational culture that group members describe.

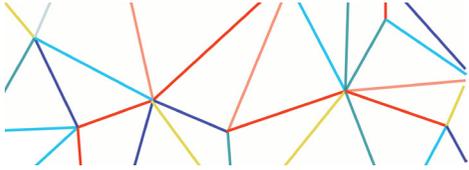
Desired governance culture for CPP

During the review the desired culture of CPP governance has been described in various ways and includes several features:

- Mutual trust, support and generosity
- Accepting of experimentation and failure (failing well)
- Managing tensions effectively
- Diversity, and transformation
- Collective learning
- Community decision making

CPP governance culture in practice

Culture is seldom a homogeneous state and given the pluralistic nature of CPP governance it is recognised that there are likely to be a range of subcultures whose characteristics may or may not echo those of the wider programme.



I think the consortium members are essentially the 'owners' of the vision, mission, and values of the project...

Review participant

Each organisation involved in CPP will be bringing its own norms and practices and one of the challenges and benefits of the programme is how these cultures connect and adapt. This is an important feature of CPP as culture is recognised as driving strategy and structure, that is, while people may sign up to the aims and vision of the programme it is their behaviours and ways of doing things that bring it to life.

Consortia governance has demonstrated that trust has been built between the different entities involved, but this is not always a smooth process and can be fragile. The main challenge appears to be the relationship with the LO and how it conducts its role within a consortium's governance.

Recognising that CPP governance includes an experimental approach to collective organising is described as core to the programme and as such this requires a tolerance of risk and failure that is not always seen within the subsidised cultural sector.

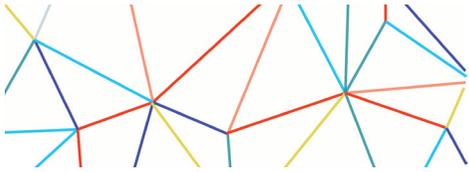
Views on how well this has been embedded in governance approaches vary and given the hierarchical nature of CPP governance not everyone feels comfortable being able to share failures openly.

If this is to be a central aspect of the culture more focus on collective learning around these complex governance processes is likely to help. This will support modelling the behaviours needed for effective consortium governance. CPP has been very good at surfacing learning across other aspects of the programme, extending this to governance should assist with embedding the desired culture more effectively.

At present CPP governance takes a group representative approach to community decision making given the restrictions on individuals joining the consortia. Having an independent chair helps bring in another perspective but individuals and communities are generally represented through local organisations as consortia members.

Ensuring a broad approach to community decision making in CPP governance is a challenge but it is recognised as a need by the projects and different approaches are being taken:

- Forming subgroups of local community members
- Engaging community members in the commissioning or development of programme activities



Within the categories of 'CPP' and 'NPO', there is a wide diversity of entities. CPPs and NPOs range in a number of ways including in artistic focus, size, funding levels, location, aims and ways of working. Caution should be taken against over-generalisation.

(Tavistock Institute, 2019, Collaborating for Change, CPP Report)

- Running public consultations

This is an area where shared learning across consortia governance could be particularly beneficial. It is also something likely to evolve as consortia move through transitional phases once the original consortia members find their feet, grow in collective confidence, and establish ways of working.

Dilemmas and tensions

CPP governance has a number of inherent dilemmas that highlight the complexity of collective organising. This reinforces the view that there is unlikely to be a single governance framework that fits every CPP project. These include:

- Being an integrated part of a collective entity vs. representing the interests of a member's own entity
- Some members having responsibility for governance and delivery vs. some members having accountability for delivery and governance
- Being delivery focused vs. governance focused
- Members with arts expertise vs. members with expertise in other fields

- Owning the CPP project vs. delegating delivery to others

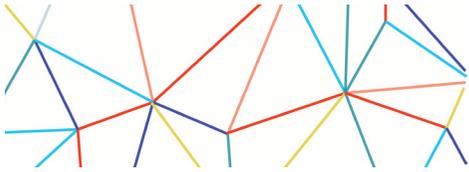
Members are having to balance the needs of the collective with those of their organisations, or communities and the aims of their project.

Governance and proximity

One of the characteristics of CPP inter-organisational working is that it is cross sectoral and multi-disciplinary. This adds complexities to the partnerships and while it offers significant benefits it can add to misunderstandings and tensions.

A concept to consider in understanding how close or apart members of the consortium are likely to be is that of proximity (Knoben & Oerlemans, 2006). This can provide a framework for members to understand different perspectives. There are three dimensions to proximity: geographical, organisational and technological.

Geographical: the place based focus of CPP has tended to mean that the consortia have the advantage of members being in reasonable physical proximity to each other and having a depth of understanding of their local area.



I feel we have significant experience of acting as an accountable body and chairing organisations at difficult times - it would be good to be able to discuss issues with other CPP lead bodies to hear of their journey, opportunities and challenges.

Review participant

Organisational: encompasses structures, cultures and processes - the way each member does what it does. The further apart this dimension is for each member the longer it will take and the more resources will be needed to establish agreed ways of working

Technological: concerns the level of overlap between the knowledge bases of the various members (this is focused on knowledge acquisition, sharing and systems, not simply technology)

The three areas have the potential to overlap and influence each other, but all three need to be in place to allow a consortium to function effectively. The closer the proximity across the three dimensions the more likely that the consortium will establish a climate that supports knowledge exchange, collaboration and innovation.

In terms of future development of CPP governance and with a particular focus on the technological dimension the consortia may consider how they want to develop in relation to their respective disciplines and knowledge exchange. At this point they appear to be working between multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary (Figure. 15).

In moving towards transdisciplinarity the consortia would be looking to a holistic approach around community engagement/empowerment. While interdisciplinary collaborations create new knowledge synthesised from existing disciplines, a transdisciplinary team relates all disciplines into a coherent whole (McGregor, 2004). The field of 'sustainability' is a good example of transdisciplinarity.

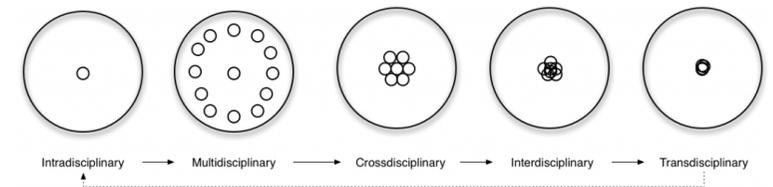
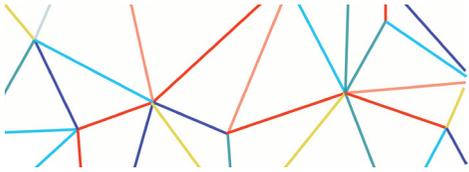


Figure 15: Inter to Transdisciplinary (Jenseniu, 2012)



Failure was often felt to be too negative, too absolute, too critical a term to be usefully employed when talking about initiatives intended to support cultural participation. But shared stories shape professional practice. If cultural organisations keep telling themselves they are delivering success, they will never face up to the scale of change required to create a more equitable sector.

(David Stevenson,
Arts Professional)

Experimentation, action research & failing well

CPP has an extensive set of reports, guidelines, and toolkits as part of its 'Our Learning' resource. The evaluations cover everything from quality guidance to decision making, and the dominant evaluation method used in the reports is that of the case study.

What is not evident, despite it being regularly mentioned as a guiding methodology, is a clear action research framework for consortia governance.

Several participants have reported that despite its ethos CPP has not necessarily created a safe environment to discuss or share failure. Action research is a methodology that is well suited to experimental social and cultural impact programmes and aids reflection 'in action' as well as 'on action.' In CPP governance to date it seems to have meant 'action' rather than a formalised evaluative approach.

Adopting a more focused approach to reviewing governance would help build an environment where projects are enabled to have aspects that can fail well, balancing the pressure to only report success. Jancovich's 'Five Facets of Failure – process,

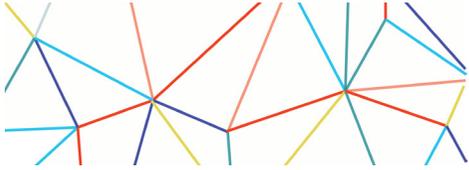
profile, purpose, practice and participation' was mentioned during the review but it is not evident how it has been applied to governance practices.

Challenges of transitions – conflicts, time, expectations

One of the most common themes that has come up throughout the review is that of transition, it is inherent in the consortium governance process. Each consortium goes through a number of phases from formation to separation. This reinforces the view that there is no 'one size fits all' approach, nor is each consortium 'once and done.'

The consortia have each evolved in response to the respective programmes and contexts that allowed for a collaborative window to open (Figure 16). Most have then gone on to experience a number of transition points. This should be recognised and supported in terms of the time and resources needed.

The programme's perceived delivery focus has driven much of the energy of the consortia and this has sometimes meant that the consortium governance processes have been running to catch up, it's been likened to building the plane while flying it.



CPP has been evaluated within an inch of its life...

We need new thinking, and space for new thinking.

It's fine to fail at CPP.

CPP – trying things out, learning and failing. I'm not sure people will say if things went wrong. I'm not sure we're opening up and embracing failure.

(Review participants)

A transitional space provides a moment when the consortium is letting go of what has been before (e.g. the set up phase) and start to organise itself for what comes next (e.g. the arrival of the Delivery Director). These are points of momentum and offer the opportunity for innovation but they are not comfortable for all and may present instances where tensions arise.

Transitional spaces occur for the consortia at pre-application, after set-up, at the appointment of the Delivery Director and between phases of change.

Transition points are ideal opportunities for reflection and for shared learning across CPP.

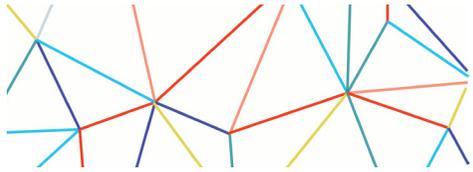
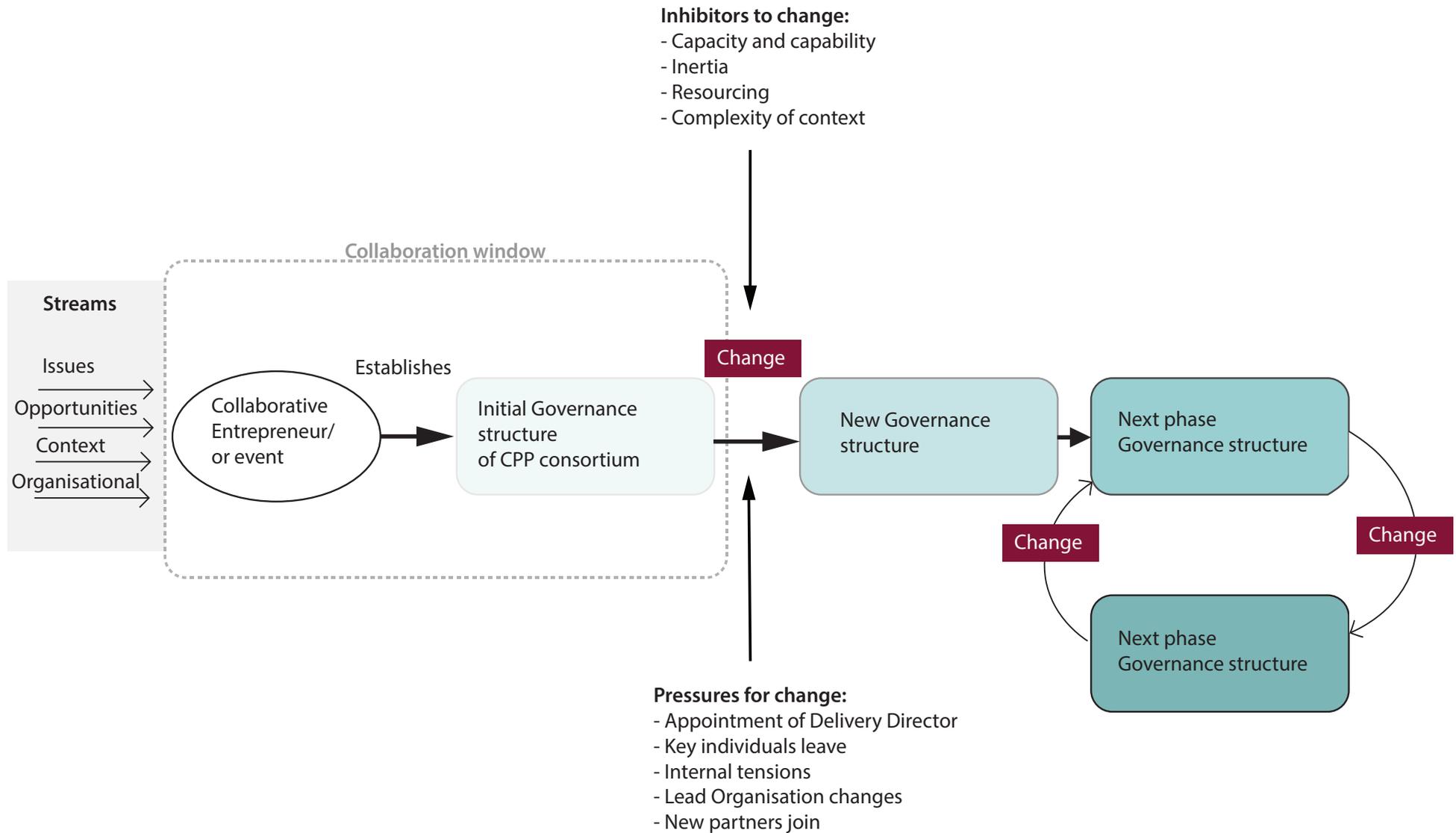
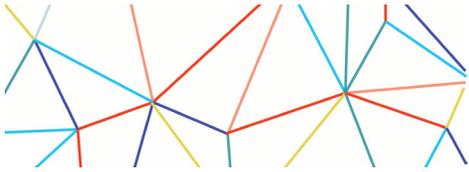


Figure 16: Consortium formation and transition phases (adapted from Cornforth, et al (2014))





Not only are transitions fraught with uncertainty about the outcome, in many cases they are continuous and open-ended.

(Amado and Ambrose, 2001)

Collaborative
Entrepreneurs act as the catalyst for forming collaborations by working across organisational boundaries.

...collaborations or networks are unlikely to constitute a partnership of equals.

(Cornforth et al, 2014)

Consortia – good governance characteristics

Good governance characteristics are well identified with regard to individual organisations, however, they are less commonly stated with regard to consortia governance. A range of characteristics have emerged during the review:

Good consortia governance Is...

Rooted in a common goal

Open to diverse entities and voices

Flexible and responsive to learning

Generous and members work for the good of the collective

Balanced in terms of skills and expertise

Is not...

A space to force individual goals or concerns on others

Dominated by a single individual or entity

Rigid and rule driven

Self-centred where members are focused on self-interest and gain

Overly dominated by one particular field

Good consortia governance Is...

Open to diverse viewpoints and perspectives

Able to make clear decisions

Able to adapt as members join or leave

Aware of individual member needs as well as the collective

Able to tolerate conflict and disagreement

Utilising all the expertise and knowledge available

Risk aware

Is not...

Prone to group think and agreement

Driven by 'representativeness' to the point decisions become impossible

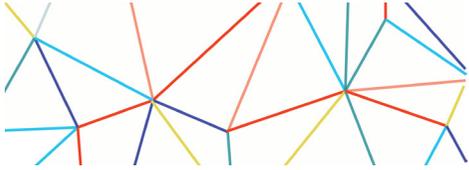
Dependent on specific members

So collective focused that member needs are disregarded

Fearful of conflict to the point that it is stifled

Deferring to a specific discipline or knowledge base

Risk averse



Sharing learning beyond CPP

Given the range and scale of projects, and lifespan of CPP to date there are a number of areas of consortia governance that offer the opportunity for shared learning and knowledge exchange outside of the programme. These are most likely to be of interest to the wider non-profit and public sectors, and potentially the civil society arena.

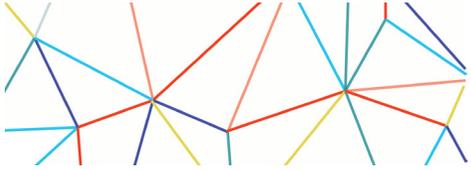
Two areas of knowledge could be considered:

1. Explicit knowledge: data, information, reports, codified
2. Tacit knowledge: experience, values, emotions, routines, competences

Ideally, the approach would be based on the notion of shared practices rather than best practices. This would help build a culture that embraces, learns from and shares failure. CPP already has a range of knowledge sharing mechanisms from its regular reporting to the Peer Learning Network. At present there has been limited attention to sharing the knowledge and experience of CPP governance.

There are a number of areas of explicit knowledge and learning with potential to be transferable to other contexts and sectors:

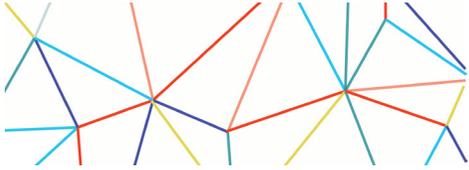
- Identification of factors where consortium governance may be appropriate
- Recognition of 'consortium window' and enabling governance set up
- Illuminating consortia governance development phases
- Establishing consortium governance structures
- Identifying factors that inhibit change in consortia governance
- Identifying factors that enable change in consortia governance
- Consortia governance structure options
- Consortia governance working practices
- Understanding failure positively as part of collective governance
- Understanding consortia governance lifecycles
- Managing consortia conflicts and group dynamics



Tacit knowledge sharing would focus more on the experiences and emotional processes of initiating, sustaining and changing consortia governance working practices.

Each of these knowledge areas warrant sufficient attention in their own right and are worthy of further investigation, but fall outside of the scope of the current review. Dependent on the nature of the knowledge concerned there are different mechanisms for dissemination:

- Sharing explicit knowledge: conferences, papers, reports, articles, blogs, seminars, events, and e-learning
- Sharing tacit knowledge: mentoring, guided experience, simulations, shadowing, paired working, community of practice and e-learning



Recommendations

Shared learning: an action research framework for CPP governance

Consortia governance has been a core part of establishing the principles of CPP. Ensuring its ongoing development will benefit not only CPP but also the wider cultural sector, as collaborative working is likely to be more relevant than ever. It is recommended that a clear action research framework for CPP governance is established. An indicative approach might be:

Main inquiry question:

In what ways does place based, consortia working support a step change in arts and cultural provision?

Cycle one: what mechanisms are needed to ensure effective CPP consortia governance?

Cycle two: How does consortia governance evolve to ensure it meets changing needs and contexts?

Cycle three: How can a network of local consortia be created to maximise knowledge exchange and shared learning?

In what ways does place based, consortia working support a step change in arts and cultural provision?

Each question would be researched for a specified period of time with the findings shared at the end of the period.

At that point the next inquiry question would be reviewed and revised by the community to ensure it was still appropriate. It is likely this would need a level of resourcing to ensure the action research cycles are undertaken.

Arts Council

To date the Arts Council has held what might be described as a loose/tight policy lead on the development of the governance of CPP.

On the one hand it has set specific criteria to determine at the outset whether a project is eligible. It has also specified the requirements for consortia as a prerequisite for the programme and guidance materials are issued throughout.

The Arts Council then moves back and allows each CPP consortium to establish itself, with the core CPP team only stepping back in when things go awry, and/or there is a need to change a LO. This can lead to confusion about the role of the Arts Council.

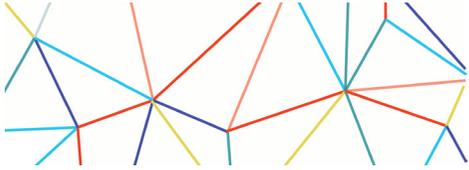
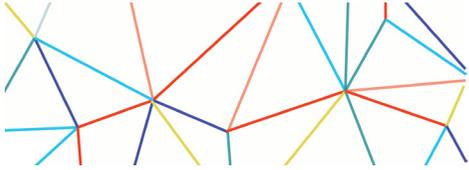


Figure 17: The Touch Commission, Sudha Bhuchar, Revoluton

It is recommended that:

- The Arts Council clarifies in its guidance that its approach to working with CPP consortia is driven by risk and that the intensity and level of engagement with each consortium will vary according to the perceived level of risk to funding or outcomes, and/or need for support.
- Support is given to bring in an external facilitator or mediator when conflict resolution is needed
- It would be helpful to distinguish clearly in the programme guidance between (a) the Arts Council's requirements and (b) recommendations or suggestions as to how these requirements could be met (distinguish between funder and stakeholder)
- Introduce consortia governance training at the outset of each project, this could draw on existing CPP project expertise and topics might include:
 - Group dynamics
 - Building shared purpose and values
 - Collective financial management
 - Conflicts of interests
 - Core consortia documentation and processes
 - Design thinking
- Evaluation models
- Support a consortia governance peer learning network to encourage dialogue and information exchange
- Work with the consortia to establish a clear action research framework focused on governance
- Share experience and knowledge with other funders supporting consortia working - National Lottery Community Fund, NESTA, Paul Hamlyn, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation etc
- Better signposting of support resources
- Better connection with the consortium members. At present the main contact appears to be with the Delivery Directors or the LO
- Enabling a safe space for the spirit of experimentation and testing, including the sharing of failures. Share resources like the [Fail Space Project](#)
- Introduce a knowledge base for consortia governance - it is evident there are a wide range of resources available through the various consortia, from Codes of Conduct to Dispute Resolution processes. Pooling these resources would be valuable



I think the consortium members are essentially the 'owners' of the vision, mission and values of the projects...Their role is to agree and work to this - VMV, work together to set the goals of the project (strategy) and the oversight role is support and challenge for the staff team to ensure we keep on the right lines.

(Review participant)

CPP Consortia

- Review and reflection on governance processes at regular intervals and before and after every major transition point. A possible review tool is attached at Appendix Five
- Sharing and connecting across consortia
- Field visits to other consortia
- Championing the action research approach and building safe/brave spaces to discuss failures
- Maximising the support of the 'Critical Friend' (where one is in place and it is appropriate)
- If transdisciplinarity is of interest members might shadow each other and/or offer staffing exchange opportunities etc.
- Support independent consortia chairs

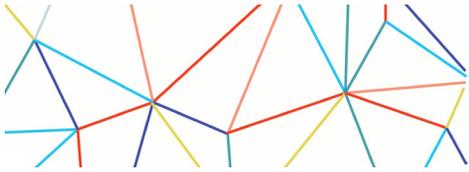
Lead organisations

- Opportunities for LOs to meet and share experiences and learning
- Support for the board, especially the chair and Treasurer, in thinking through the challenges at each stage of the CPP life cycle

- Guidance on financial strategy and risk management in relation to CPP projects which addresses a number of core questions. A possible framework for such guidance is given at Appendix Six

Consortia considering the transition to an independent delivery organisation

- Commission research into experiences of delivery teams who have incorporated into an SAO
- Develop a toolkit to help consortia who are considering this path to understand the implications and, if appropriate, to work towards independence. This would help the consortia and reduce the need for active Arts Council involvement on a case by case basis.



Appendix One: Research brief & approach

Summary review brief:

- SWOT analysis
- Lead Organisation impact
- Independent Chair impact
- Mitigation of external challenges
- Clarity of roles
- Partnership agreements review
- Decision making
- Delivery Team employment
- Creation of standalone organisations
- Tangible recommendations

Scope and limits of the evaluation

This review focused on the CPP governance and accountability structures and the extent to which consortium working helps deliver on the aims of the programme. The Arts Council has sought to understand what it can retain and build on as well as what it may consider changing in relation to consortia governance.

The review was required to address the following themes:

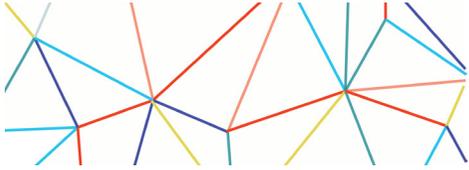
- Analysis of the current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of consortia working in the Creative People and Places context
- What impact the approach of the LO has had on delivery of the programme aims
- The impact of having an independent chair for a CPP consortium
- How the external challenges to the LO are best mitigated
- The extent to which consortium members beyond the LO are clear on their role

- A review of the partnership agreements and to what extent they are fit for purpose.
- Decision making processes and conflicts of interest
- Employment of delivery team and their agency in delivering on the programme aims alongside accountability to their employer, the consortium, and Arts Council England;
- Consideration of CPP teams establishing a standalone organisation
- Consideration of any changes to the CPP guidance or funding agreements that may help to clarify the approach
- Tangible recommendations of next steps

While the primary focus was on the CPP consortia, the review also considered any learning that may be applicable to wider place-based consortia.

Methods and approach

The review was based on a mixed methods approach, which has allowed for involving as much of the review population as possible as well as providing qualitative and quantitative insights.



Evaluation population

The focus of the review has been the Arts Council as the CPP initiator and provider, as well as the 33 CPP consortia across the country. Availability of participants has in part been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic including the various lock downs and restrictions as well as furloughing.

Timeframe and focus

The evaluation took place between September 2020 and March 2021 and was designed to be summative and formative in focus.

Interviews

Semi structured interviews were conducted with Arts Council staff and CPP Directors. This approach was designed to elicit individual experiences of the programme as well as outcomes and impacts. The main focus was what people felt was working, what was working less well and what, from their perspective, might be improved.

Surveys

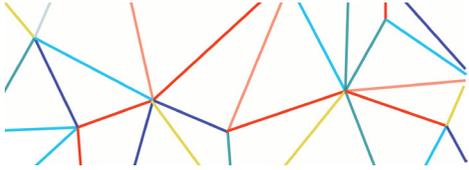
Short surveys were distributed to Directors, consortia Members and consortia Chairs, and respondents were given four weeks to respond. Survey responses from consortium members were lower than anticipated, it is not clear why this is the case but it is reasonable to speculate that Covid-19 and communication channels may have had an impact. All responses to the surveys were anonymous.

Responses to the surveys were as follows:

- 25 CPP Directors
- 22 Consortium Members
- 17 LOs

Desk research

Programme documents, commissioned publications, research and academic papers, and social media have been reviewed as part of the data set for the evaluation. Where possible data have been gathered from at least two different sources for each of the areas reviewed to ensure consistency in the findings.



Analysis

The review includes quantitative analysis based on the results of the surveys. Where percentages have been used, the figures have been rounded up or down to the nearest decimal point. Feedback from participants is represented as far as possible in their original words, the extracts used have been subject to selection by the reviewers. The reviewers have also undertaken qualitative analysis of all interviews based on thematic coding (researcher and participant defined).

Limitations and restrictions

Participation in the review has been entirely voluntary. Given the timeline, resources, and wider context the evaluation has a number of limitations. It has not been feasible to interview all LOs, Directors or consortium members.

All the review conversations have been conducted remotely and while wide-ranging and consistent findings have been found the additional nuances gained ordinarily from personal meetings and physical observation have not been achievable.

The economic and personal anxieties of this period are also likely to have impacted some participants ability to take part as well as their current perspective.

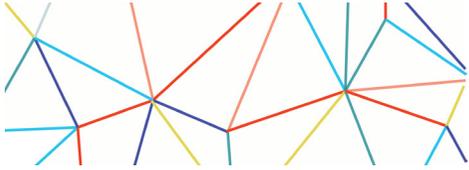
Conditions

The review is supplied on the basis that it is for information purposes only and solely for the use of Arts Council England as the commissioning agent. No other person may rely on it for any purpose whatsoever. Circulation of the report in whole or in part is agreed on this basis.



Appendix Two: Review Contributors

Name	Position	Organisation
Zulfiqar Ahmed	Director	The Leap
Rebecca Blackman	Director, Audience and Engagement and Midlands Area Director, Nottingham	Arts Council England
Lisa Clarke	Associate	Practical Governance
Patrick Fox	Director	Heart of Glass
Sara Harrison	Senior Manager - Engagement and Audiences, Theatre	Arts Council England
Anna Hassan	Relationship Manager, Engagement and Audiences, North	Arts Council England
Karen Perkins	Director of Culture and Engagement,	The Culture Trust
Bob Thrust	Partner	Practical Governance
Liza Vallance	Artistic Director and Chief Executive Officer	Studio 3 Arts
Claudia West	Senior Relationship Manager, South East	Arts Council England
Sarah Wickens	Head of Programme	Creative Barking & Dagenham
Tom Wildish	Relationship Manager, Midlands	Arts Council England
Jenny Williams	Project Director	Revoluton Arts



Appendix Three: Glossary

Definitions in use throughout the document.

Inter-organisational collaboration:

Governance of collaborations ‘entails the design and use of structure and processes that enable actors to set the overall direction of the collaboration, and that co-ordinate and allocate resources for the collaboration as a whole and account for its activities.’ (Cornforth et al, 2015)

Consortium:

Specialized joint ventures encompassing many different arrangements (Brooks, Blunden, & Bidgood, 1993). Typically, consortia consist of a group of organizations that have a similar need and band together to create a new entity to satisfy that need for all of them (Kanter, 1989).

Cooperative learning:

Structuring positive interdependence (Slavin, 1990) in pursuit of a specific shared goal or output.

Community of practice:

A community of practice based is an ‘informal constellation’ or a grouping ‘that people form as they pursue shared enterprises over time.’ (Wenger, 1998). ‘Communities of practice occur at multiple levels, members need not be co-present, nor be a well-defined identifiable group, nor have socially visible boundaries.’ Lave & Wenger (1991)

Coordination:

The attitudes, behaviors, and outcomes of joint determination of common inter organisational goals.(Castaner & Oliveira, 2020)

Co-operation:

Co-operation refers to the attitude, behaviour, and outcome of the implementation of those goals as agreed on. (Castaner & Oliveira, 2020)

Collaboration:

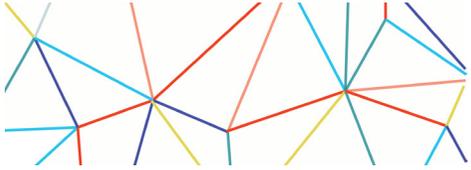
Refers to voluntarily helping others to attain a common inter- organisational relationship goal or a private goal. (Castaner & Oliveira, 2020)

Networks:

Groups of three or more legally autonomous organisations that work together to achieve not only their own goals but also a collective goal. (Willem & Gemmel, 2013)

Governance:

Making collective decisions about important issues, including the purpose of collective action, strategies for achieving purpose, and oversight and accountability mechanisms. (Stone, et al, 2010)

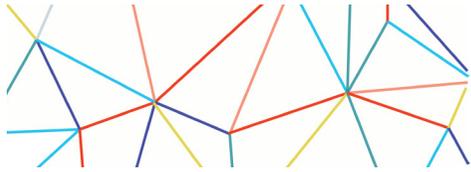


Appendix Four: Creating a great partnership agreement: Content

A great partnership agreement is about more than complying with funding conditions and establishing legal rights and responsibilities; it should be an easy to use, working document that actively supports delivery of the partnership's purpose by clarifying mission and motivation, building productive ways of working and anticipating potential areas of conflict and dysfunction. The language should be accessible and meaningful for all. The document should be easy to navigate and update.

These prompts are designed to supplement and build upon the Arts Council's current guidance on partnership agreements.

Does our partnership agreement ...	Response and evidence	Changes we need to make
Identify the parties?		
Set out the partnership's purpose in specific and compelling ways that everyone has helped to develop and signed up to?		
Clearly establish the rights and obligations of all parties including the management of conflicts of interests and loyalties?		
Explain how decisions will be taken by the consortium including delegated powers?		
Contain procedures for resolving disputes?		
Include provisions for regular review and updating of the agreement?		
Allow for the development and revision of key partnership policies, such as those in relation to the management of conflicts of interest and loyalty?		
Provide for changes in consortium membership and for the termination of the agreement?		



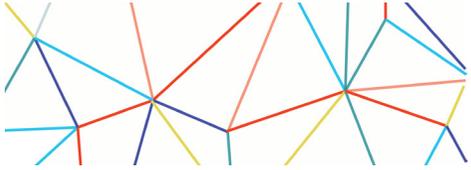
Appendix Four: Creating a great partnership agreement: Process

Working collectively can be challenging, and creating a multi-partner agreement benefits from a focus on process as much as content.

Have you asked yourself what kind of consortium you want to be? How do you want to work together? What kind of culture do you want to create?

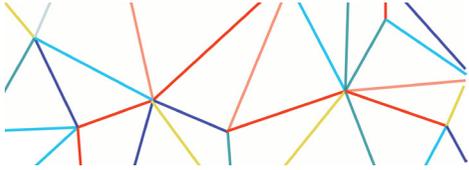
In the early stages of a consortium's development the involvement of an external facilitator or an independent adviser can help set out some ground rules.

Has our partnership agreement process...	Response and evidence	Changes we need to make
Been thought through collectively?		
Engaged everyone in the consortium group?		
Made sure all voices have been heard and included?		
Been open to diverse perspectives and differences of approach?		
Made sure we listened actively to all viewpoints?		
Ensured that everyone believes in the agreement and is committed to its delivery?		
Made clear the agreement is dynamic and will need to be revisited as the project develops?		
Established what we need from the group?		
Created a safe and brave environment for having difficult conversations?		
Identified what is needed for this consortium to work together successfully and effectively?		



Appendix Five: Governance review checklist

Are we	Response and evidence	Actions we need to take	Are we	Response and evidence	Actions we need to take
Rooted in a common goal			Able to make clear decisions		
Open to diverse entities and voices			Able to adapt as members join or leave		
Flexible and responsive to learning			Aware of individual member needs as well as the collective		
Generous - members work for the good of the collective			Able to tolerate conflict and disagreement		
Balanced in terms of skills and expertise			Utilising all the expertise and knowledge available		
Open to diverse viewpoints and perspectives					

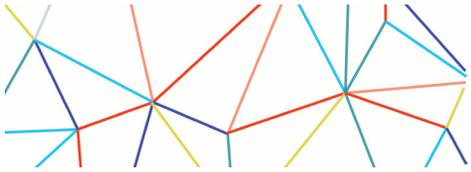


Appendix Six: Financial strategy and risk management: prompts for lead organisations and consortium members

These prompts are designed to be used by the lead organisation and the consortium during times of planning and major change such as the application phase, the business planning phase and when there are significant changes in the way that the CPP finances are managed e.g. appointment of a (new) Development Director, change in lead organisation or a move to independent status.

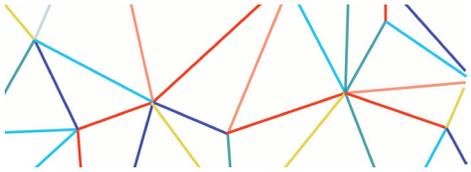
They are largely addressed to lead organisations but address questions which all consortium members should consider.

Core questions	Prompts
How will we ensure that we can correctly account for substantial restricted fund income and expenditure?	<p>What has been our previous experience of accounting for substantial restricted funds both in our management accounts and our statutory accounts?</p> <p>Do our current systems allow us to identify and report on our CPP funds in a timely and accurate way?</p> <p>What changes might we need to make?</p> <p>Do we need to talk to our auditors/providers of our accounting software?</p>
How might our CPP project change our business model?	<p>How does our current business model work?</p> <p>How will being a LO change our business model?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How big will the change in our income be? • Will we be delivering new services/products to new customers? • Will our activities change? • What new resources will the project bring into our model? <p>You might want to use the Business Model Canvas to think about this question.</p>



Core questions	Prompts
How will we manage our changed cashflows?	<p>How do we currently manage our cashflow?</p> <p>What changes might we need to make to ensure that the CPP funds are separately identified and not used to cashflow our activities?</p> <p>Do we need to set up a separate bank account?</p>
How will we need to adapt our planning processes	<p>How do we currently plan?</p> <p>What changes will we need to make to accommodate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different timelines • Involvement and needs of other parties • Diversified income streams and activities
How will we need to adapt our current systems of financial control?	<p>We need to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement • Budgetary control • Delegation of authority • Management reporting cycles and format • Preparation of statutory accounts

Core questions	Prompts
How will we adapt our risk management processes?	<p>How does our role as a LO change our risk profile?</p> <p>How should we include CPP in our risk register?</p> <p>How will we manage the risks we are assuming?</p> <p>How will we review these risks on a regular basis?</p>



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