

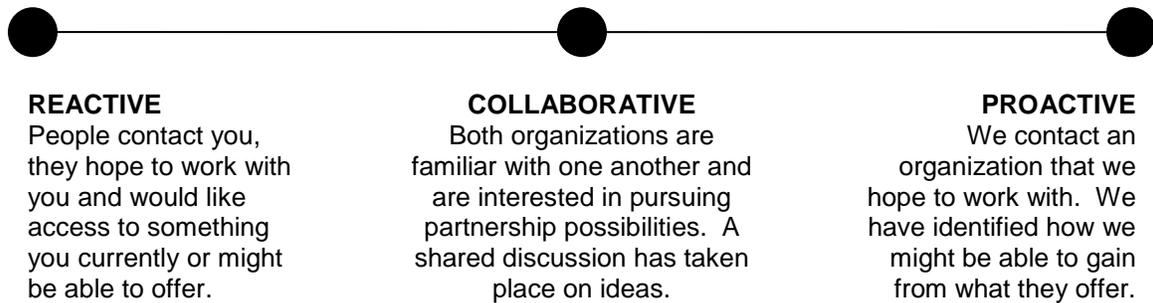
A Framework for Engaging in Healthy Partnerships

Building a social venture that is very collaborative in nature can contribute greatly to its sustainability and overall success. In an attempt to reduce duplication, fill key gaps and strengthen the capacity of your existing initiative, your intention may be to become more knowledgeable and engaged in efforts that involve similar goals, values and objectives to our venture. It is necessary to ensure that collaborations established are ones that do not over exhaust your resources, but rather, mutually strengthen shared objectives and capacities.

This document is designed to assist social innovators in establishing partnership relationships with like-minded organizations.

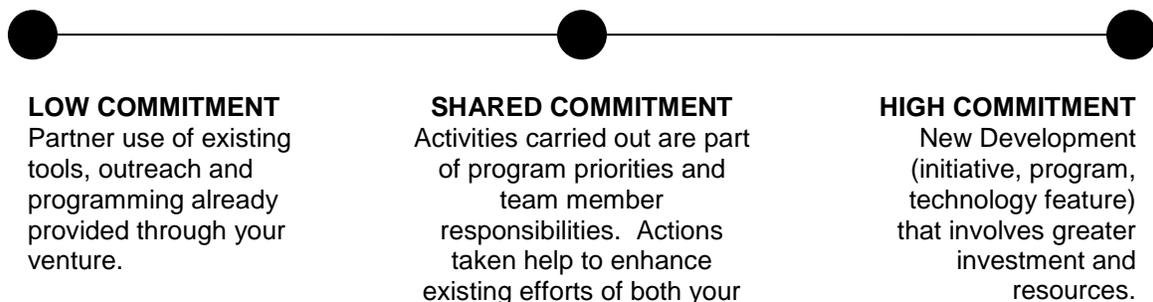
Types of Initial Engagement:

Generally speaking, we are either proactive in pursuing partnerships because we are interested in working with a particular organization, or we are responsive to an organization that has expressed interest in partnering with us.



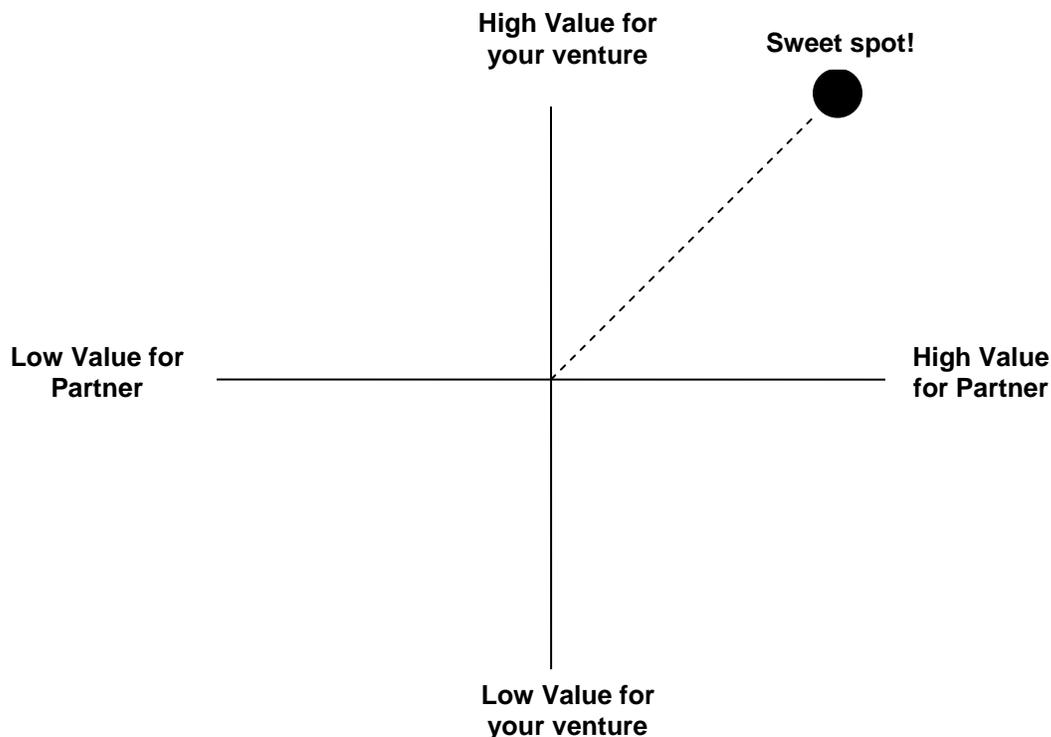
Level of Commitment:

Partnerships that involve a high level of commitment should provide reasonable support and capacity in terms of resources - especially if the new initiative or program is not something that is already part of short-term priorities.



Exchange in Value:

Ideal partnerships are ones that offer a great deal of value to your venture and the Partner organization. Value for you might mean increased capacity to strengthen existing programs through additional resources, promotional activities, opportunities that offer enriched experiences or deeper engagement and overall efforts which help to achieve your vision which leverage strengths, are aligned with your values and contribute to your efforts.



Forming Relationships:

It is critical to engage with current, past and future potential partners in a manner that is respectful, open and collaborative in nature in an effort to foster healthy relationships. In representing your venture throughout partnership-based discussions, your style, tone, language, ideas, response and overall communications are reflective of the organization at large which is something to remain conscious of. It is important to be able to distinguish between providing a personal honest opinion, a professional opinion, and an organizational opinion when communicating with partner organizations.

You are not under any obligation to simply provide partners with things that they ask for, but once a set of commitments are made, it is certainly important to ensure that these commitments are fulfilled in a timely and thorough manner. When setting timelines and budgets, be careful not to over-extend your resources, and commit to deliverables that are not achievable. When you deliver on these expectations, partners are inspired – however when you fall short, they can become frustrated and may lose trust. In any relationship, trust is something that is important to keep in tact. It is for these reasons that you should remain optimistic, supportive and creative, while at the same time grounded and realistic when pursuing partnerships possibilities.