Get Along to Get Ahead

Collaborative approaches to cultural entrepreneurship - how to multiply your museum’s resources by seeking collaborative relationships with like-minded libraries to better serve both organization’s patrons, members, and communities.

What do these institution have in common? What can they share with each other, their patrons and their communities? Using the 3MScotchTape mentality of resource management we have identified the following areas that contain collaboration opportunities:

**3MScotch Tape**

- **Money** - economic hard times
- **Manpower** - expertise, exuberance
- **Materials** - uniqueness, quantity
- **Space** - lack of, need to fill
- **Time** - short-term, long-term, flexibility

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### A Successful Collaboration, from Start to Finish

**Stage 1: Preplanning**
- To the preplanning stage of the partnership:
  - Complete a needs assessment to establish that the partnership is of mutual benefit to all institutions.
  - Ensure all partners agree on the reasons for partnering with one another.
  - Establish the goals of the partnership for each partner involved, and the benefits to each partner and to the community being served.
  - Prepare a budget and secure funding and grants.
  - Divide up guidelines regarding the level of commitment required from all partners. All partners should endorse these guidelines.
  - Ensure all partners are committed to open, honest and positive communication.
  - Become familiar with all institutions involved in the partnership.

**Stage 2: Planning Stages**
- In this stage, partners are laying the groundwork for the partnership by completing some or all of these objectives:
  - Ensure adequate representation from all partners. Be aware of the cultural needs and staff behavior and how it may affect the dynamics of the partnership.
  - Ensure that a staff member from each institution is responsible for documenting the partnership process for later publication.
  - Ensure all partners have the same idea of how the partnership will work. Create a policy document to establish the division of tasks and a timetable for the partnership.
  - Ensure that the partnership to seek commitment of others involved.
  - Gain professional support before the project is made public. Invite staff to your meetings in order to participate in planning and promote the project.
  - Be aware of your partners in order to participate in planning and promote the project.
  - Ensure all partners have the same idea of how the partnership will work. Create a policy document to establish the division of tasks and a timetable for the partnership.
  - Make sure that you have a plan to ensure open communication, update partners on the progress of each institution, and troubleshoot problems.

**Stage 3: Implementation**
- While the collaboration is ongoing, partners should follow these guidelines:
  - Ensure adequate representation from all partners. Be aware of the cultural needs of staff behavior and how it may affect the dynamics of the partnership.
  - Ensure all partners agree on the reasons for partnering with one another.
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  - Ensure all partners have the same idea of how the partnership will work. Create a policy document to establish the division of tasks and a timetable for the partnership.
  - Ensure all partners are committed to open, honest and positive communication.
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**Stage 4: Evaluation**
- Once the collaboration is complete or, at a suitable marker (e.g., one year after the start), evaluate the success of the collaboration. Be sure to consider:
  - The input of all participating institutions.
  - The impact on the communities involved.
  - The original goals of the collaboration.
  - Any changes or modifications to the collaboration that developed during implementation.
  - Measurable results (surveys, reports, statistics).

**Step 5: Share Your Experience**
- Publish your experiences in professional journals and community newsletters. Others can learn from your experience.
- Discuss your experiences at conferences and workshops.
- Develop a rubric for collaboration.

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