Volunteering Victoria

Multicultural Volunteering Conference:
Empowering People, Connecting Communities

23rd August 2016

Join the Dots Workshop Notes

Facilitated by Linda Rowley

Approximately 40 conference attendees participated in the two "Join the Dots" workshops facilitated at the conference.

Participants were encouraged to brainstorm at their table groups what great collaboration looks like. The table below illustrates the elements they see as being central to great collaboration.

What Great Collaboration looks like
- Shared /common goals and values (may have different priorities)   - Shared understanding of the collaboration   - Agreed outcomes   - Transparency of intentions   - Law of reciprocity – mutual benefit   - Mutually supportive (volunteers / people/community)   - Collaboration at an organisational level (not dependent on individuals)   - Open discussion – all parties have input   - Communication processes are understood and inclusive / accessible   - Identify conflict of interest   - Better use of resources   - Leveraging respective strengths   - Trust   - Accountability, reliability   - Interests of others are taken into account (bigger than self-interest)   - Differences are set aside for the greater good   - Compromise   - Extending networks   - Adjusting goals   - Good communication   - Sustainable   - Recording – documentation   - Investing in others first   - Celebrating   - Evaluation

Again at their table groups, participants were encouraged to share stories and identify what is working well for them in relation to collaboration and what is not working as well as they would like. Each group them reported back to the entire group. Here is what they shared:

What's working	What's Not Working
• Shared need • Common goals • Involving consumers/community voice • Community participation • Good communication • Increasing knowledge • Increase to resources • Challenge old ways of working • New Hope / CVS Funding • Volunteer Care team (team Leading conference) • Cultural Training (bigger – stronger) • Cross fertilization of ideas • Connecting community • Volunteer plans (focus) • Sharing of resources ($, tasks across staff) • Sharing of networks (e.g. housing support) • Community House / Gardens (Whittlesea) collaboration between Bunnings, secondary college, mens shed, bowls club, Council • Attracting funding by joining together • Regular meetings • Evaluation • Sharing information • Formal collaboration environment • Respect • Initiative • Collaborations between people / organisations are carefully considered • Support • Stakeholder relationships • Newsletter for volunteers • Activity evaluation and decision making • Agreed goals • Sharing of volunteers	• Not supported by organisational management • If management do not see direct benefit • Limited resources to put into "good" collaboration • Power play • Structure/process that limit innovation/creativity (e.g. vol recruitment) • Not taking enough of a risk to get the reward • Limited buy in from stakeholders • Administrative accountability • Communication between silos / regions • Engaging with CALD groups (don't create suitable roles, rates • Duplication between not for profits • Lack of trust leads to a lack of willingness (between ethnic groups) • No common goal or goal too big • No structured / formal agreements • Lack of documentation • Collaboration relies on personal connection • Systems/policies don't allow for change • Lack of skills – people involved in collaboration • Work culture • Change of staff (paid/unpaid) • Nor involving all participants • Preconceived ideas • Top down informed decision making about projects / project aims • Bureaucracy • Personal agendas (individual or group, misinformed) • Confusion – philosophy fundraising vs. volunteering • Partnership for ticking boxes • Working in silos • Processes • Turnover / succession planning • Organisational support • Not following through

What's working	What's Not Working
• MS In-service training (communicating with broader number of staff) • Western Health – identifying opportunities to share resources for a common purpose / creating strategic networks (strong leadership, clear roles and instructions, feedback and recognition) • Procedures and structures • Recognition of input • Flexibility and support • Spirit of goodwill • Articulated outcomes- purpose • Periodic review, touch points • Documentation (handover, continuity, in-kind support) • Offering resources (skills, time) • Networking • Peer support	• Lack of resources – financial resources • Conflict of values • Partnership buy in • Historical differences • Reporting being timely, costly, not shared • Valuing smaller organisations contributions/ knowledge • Change in staff relationships • Need more creative innovative funding opportunities • Inconsistency • Funding opportunities dried up

People participated in a "snowball exercise" around the room, identifying strategies that could assist in improving networking, sharing of resources and gaining support for volunteering both within their organisations and across the sector. Their thoughts are outlined in the tables below.

1. Strategies for Networking

- Speed dating / networking
- Take risks and be creative/ innovative
- Introductions to a person you know in the room
- Sponsor / advocate
- Open days
- Networking meetings (monthly, quarterly)
- Community of practice
- Invite external groups to team meetings
- Going to then
- Leverage already existing partnerships
- Educating in a different way (e.g. social networks, entertainment)
- Identifying a champion – use them as a mentor
- Clear vision - get people to buy in
- Outcome other than networking
- Facilitated shared experiences
- Peer support network
- Join industry, advisory, committees and groups
- Identifying who to talk to
- Developing relationship with sustainable numbers and groups
- Seeking open feedback from other groups
- Open communication
- Speakers at volunteer events
- Documentation / formalisation of partnerships
- Sustainable connections – mutual benefit
- Identifying why you are networking
- Spend time / energy/ playing "getting to know you" games/icebreakers at the beginning of every event
- Networking outside your organisation (e.g. attend meetings/ conferences)
- Attend local area network groups (be given staff time to attend PD)
- Blogs – service, volunteer social media

2. Opportunities for cross promotion

- Use of websites – community, group
- Leveraging of brand recognition
- Shared information portals / online spaces
- Talk to peak body or organisation to gain knowledge of what's out there and who to connect with
- Conducting information sessions about programs / project etc.
- On referral of volunteers / enquiries
- Shared events
- Sharing good news stories
- Newsletters
- Forums
- Gatherings / chats/ events
- Cultural days / events / festivals
- Social media (FB, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram etc.)
- Attending each other's functions
- Guest speakers from other organisations
- Share information material (e.g. each other's website)
- Attending other organisations meetings
- Promoting each other's website
- Promoting via email lists / social media
- University students / CALD / gyms / disability / CALD
- Newsletters / e-bulletin
- Morning tea sessions
- Include other organisations promotional material
- Good new stories
- Giving recognition in formal documents (e.g. annual review etc.)
- Exposure via public events
- Professional development sessions
- Word of mouth

3. Strategies for sharing resources

- Identifying resources (to give and to receive)
- A database/website/portal by peak body for resources (location based – "dating service)
- Secondments and shared training
- Sharing resources in different areas of need i.e. firefighters / local / interstate /overseas
- Sharing venue spaces "in kind"
- Internet
- Cost distribution and more spread
- Sharing forms – policies and procedures
- Advertising other organisations information (e.g. who they are)
- Newsletters
- Attend each other's events
- Share promotional opportunity / events
- Combined training
- Sharing volunteers
- Workload and research
- (factors that may inhibit sharing of resources:
    - Ownership
    - Competition
    - Conflict on split of resources
    - % of benefit to each stakeholder)

4. Strategies for influencing change within your organisation

- Return on investment
- Have a clear vision – easily communicated
- Change initiative plan
- Think tanks (involve leaders)
- Cake
- The "drip effect" planting the seeds of an idea and persistent advocacy
- Evidence based practice / approaches
- Statistics (case studies)
- Lobbying
- Sell your idea up. Network with other departments in your organisation
- Identify: influencers, resisters, challenges. Invite others to events / luncheons
- Sharing success stories
- Overcoming what is not working (learnings)
- Keep demographic data
- Embed participation policies
- Use diverse volunteers in marketing
- What do they need that you could provide?
- Voice organisation / departments / program strengths
- Evidence based data
- Shared vision
- Flexible CEO

5. Strategies for influencing others to gain support within the sector

- Showcase / apply / win awards
- Best practice – leadership
- Showcase case studies / stories / success
- Community education
- Be proactive – increase profile
- Bee seen. Be present. Be heard
- Understanding the influencers. (Stats, stories, show collaborations
- Identify your purpose
- Marketing and engagement (current / modern / social media)
- Networking and make connections
- Reaching out to private sectors instead of only government sectors
- Being a good role model / advocate
- Education and training
- Raising awareness
- Promotion – sharing marketing resources
- Engaging senior management / people of power
- Celebrity endorsement (e.g. Patron)
- Offer services
- Provide data and marketing opportunities for politicians
- Participating in networking e.g. meetings
- Clear communication
- Presentations

Lastly, participants were asked what they thought Volunteering Victoria could do to assist. Following is their thoughts and ideas:

Suggestions on what Volunteering Victoria can do
- Provide a copy of the notes of this workshop   - Provide a contact list of people attending the conference   - Publish the list of attendees to conferences / workshops prior to the event so people can choose to get in contact with other attendees prior to the event   - Link with peak bodies / diversity groups   - Showcase / promote best practice models re: multicultural volunteering   - Develop an online group (e.g. hosted on VV website)   - Provide leadership at engaging CALD communities   - Publish outcomes from this conference to leaders within organisations (e.g. CEO's) to assist people who manage volunteers to gain more organisational awareness and support   - Provide more direction to the sector e.g. government policy direction   - Promote sharing of resources to reduce duplication of time and effort   - Provide ideas / templates for administrative and process requirements (e.g. the CALD checklist)   - Share organisational stories / showcase achievements (e.g. profile member organisations)   - Provide resources   - Promote benefits for CALD   - Provide leadership mentoring   - Provide information for rural regions especially regarding the changing demographics (e.g. areas where CALD people are settling)   - Provide a member only discussion board (e.g. "virtual village"   - Undertake an audit of what is happening in the multicultural volunteering space   - Develop cross pollination between centerline and VV.