

## TOP TIPS: WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Collaborating with colleagues, external partners or collaborators is often fruitful and exciting, and can be essential to specific projects. Working in partnership can be mutually beneficial, with all contributors bringing their unique expertise.

Here we share some of our top tips for making the most of partnerships...

# 1

### FIND A GOOD FIT

If you can, find partners that share your values, interests and motivations. A good partnership should benefit each party. The best partnerships come from finding a shared passion and shared outcomes.

# 2

### GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER

Spend time in each other's worlds so that you understand each other's context. You may even find unexpected experience and talents that you can draw on in other areas of your work.



# 3

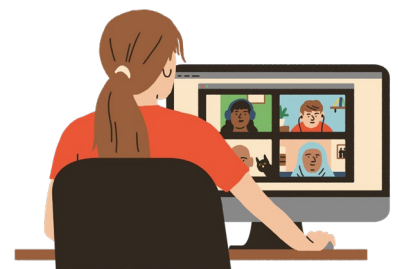
### WORK AS A TEAM

Work together as a team to draw on each other's knowledge and strengths. Clearly define roles and responsibilities, but also support each other through the process and work together to solve any problems or challenges you might face along the way.

# 4

### COMMUNICATE FREQUENTLY WITH OPENNESS AND HONESTY

The importance of having open, honest communication that allows everyone to have their say on equal terms cannot be stressed enough. Catch up regularly and acknowledge if anything is not going as expected. Face-to-face communication or online conversations are far more effective than email.



# 5

### SET OUTCOMES TOGETHER

Set outcomes that are observable, measurable and realistic, and agree these together. Is there anything you want to find out or validate from the experience you deliver together?

# 6

## LEARN EACH OTHER'S LANGUAGE

It is amazing how many terms and phrases seem the same but have different meanings in different contexts. We all have jargon, acronyms, phrases, etc that we use every day and it can be easy to assume everyone else understands them. Either define these early or replace them with general terms that can be understood by all in the partnership.

# 7

## BE REALISTIC WITH YOUR TIME

Working together does take time and the project planning, delivery and evaluation along with final reports should not be rushed. Keep in contact and work together to mediate time issues and to discuss topline findings – things that can help shape programmes and can be shared with colleagues, evaluators, funders and stakeholders. Be realistic when sharing timelines for outputs with stakeholders and manage expectations.



# 8

## EXPECT, AND EMBRACE, THE UNEXPECTED

Flexibility is essential. Be open to new ideas – some of the most creative and best ideas come from the unexpected. Work together to manage the expectations of any external stakeholders, such as funders and senior staff, and keep them updated.

# 9

## REACH OUT TO OTHERS

Maximise the opportunities and networks you have in common, at all stages of the project. Share and communicate so that as many people as possible know about your project and can access it, experience it and make use of its insights. Different perspectives and voices will help shape experiences and can make them more accessible; they will also help increase interest and widen reach.



# 10

## BUILD A LEGACY

It is important to feel that as partners you are working towards something together and to celebrate your successes as a team. Don't let the partnership stop at the end of the 'contract'; find ways to work together and support each other to bring the knowledge learnt into practice. A great legacy of the project is sustaining the relationships made.

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## EXPLORE MORE

To find out more about Science Museum Group Learning, including resources to use in informal learning experiences, at home and in the classroom, training opportunities, and insights and research around STEM engagement, visit: [learning.sciencemuseumgroup.org.uk](https://learning.sciencemuseumgroup.org.uk)

For further information, contact us at: [SMGAcademy@sciencemuseum.ac.uk](mailto:SMGAcademy@sciencemuseum.ac.uk)

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