

# Leveraging Our Strengths for Collective Impact

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# Collaboration in Social Enterprise: a journey

## Background:

- Building a nonprofit network – OVCN & ONN
- Strengthening collaboration in Ontario's not-for-profit sector – Ontario Trillium Foundation
- Collaboration in the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector – Wellesley Institute
- Causeway's experience

# Causeway's Collaborators

	Purpose	Partners	Duration	Scope
<b>CISED</b>	To grow the social enterprise sector in Ottawa	Causeway, OCLF, Carleton U – 3ci, Algonquin college, Vanier Community Centre, RDEE	4 years	Ottawa & region
<b>Cycle Salvation</b>	Training and employment for persons with disabilities/challenges	Causeway, Recycles Bicycle Cooperative, Habitat for Humanity	7 years	Ottawa
<b>Pillar Non-Profit Network</b>	Develop an integrated approach for SE to strengthen the social economy in 3 communities (Sarnia, London, Ottawa)	Pillar, United Way of London & Middlesex, Causeway, Ivey School of Business, Sarnia Community Roundtable, ONN	3 years	Provincial
<b>RightBike</b>	Training & employment, reduce traffic congestion, streetscape interaction, economic activity	Causeway, SLOWest, Wellington West & Westboro BIAs, MEC, Cyclelogik, (City of Ottawa)	1 year	Ottawa
<b>RISE</b>	Financial loans to persons with mental illness/addictions to support self-employment	RISE Asset Development (Rotman School of Business), CAMH, Causeway	2 months	Provincial

# Why collaborate?

- Social problems are complex, requiring complex solutions
- More brains, more resources = wider, deeper, more creative solutions
- Funding is competitive – a little supports a mission more than nothing

# Who should collaborate?



3 Musketeers: “all for one and one for all” or social change and real impact are marginalized

# Critical factors to success

- Purpose is compelling and unifying – “mission intersect”
- Ownership and decision-making is shared (collaborative)
- Leadership facilitates and mobilizes (lead organization)
- Communication is fast, effective and accessible
- Funders are flexible and patient (collaborators)

# Critical factors to success

- Role of lead agency is clearly defined
- Role of each collaborator is clearly defined
- Inputs & expected outcomes are clearly defined
- Service agreements clearly define role, outcome and timelines
- Process for disengagement

# Successful collaboration: some myths & realities

Collaboration is less costly

- Collaborations can be large or small, simple or complex. There is a cost to build and maintain the structure.

Collaboration is best delivered as a bottom-up versus top-down initiative

- Often true, however different collaborators have different cultures. Bottom-up can complement a top-down initiated collaboration.

Collaboration is easy, straight-forward and fits with the service- and values-orientation of the NP sector

- Regardless of intended outcomes, collaboration consumes money, time and resources and is far from straight-forward



# Myths & realities (continued)

Funders know best what works in collaborative endeavors

- Collaboration is an emerging field and requires both funders and collaborators to improve their body of knowledge.

Existing funder practices regarding grant application and reporting supports a collaborative approach

- Grant application process and reporting differ from funder to funder and are often onerous
- Grant application often supports competition rather than collaboration
- Funding terms and permissible budget lines often do not support the needs of a collaborative

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