TrainingConcepts

A TWO-DAY PRACTICAL WORKSHOP

Developing effective *collaborative partnerships*

Building cross-sector partnerships that deliver.

Cross-sector partnerships rarely fail for want of goodwill. They fail on unexamined assumptions — about what each partner brings, what each one risks, and who actually decides. This two-day workshop gives participants the tools to test those assumptions before the agreement is signed, and the practices to keep the partnership working long after it is.

2 days
0900 to 1700

12
phases of the partnering cycle

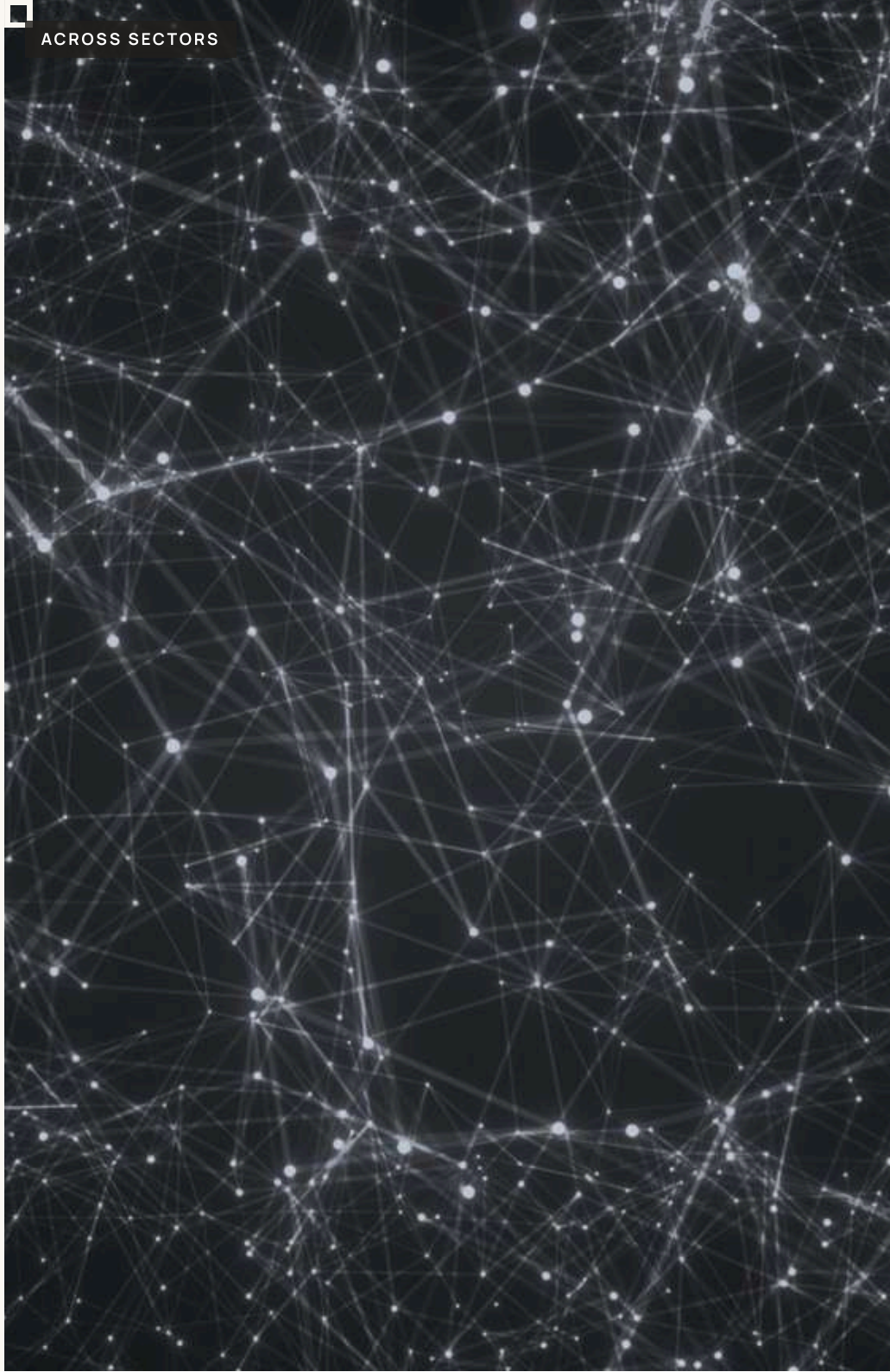
8
practical tools applied to your own case

3
core partnering principles

FORMAT
In-house, customised to the partnering organisations

LED BY
Shareef Jaffar

GROUP SIZE
Up to 20 managers and partnership leads



01 Working separately has been tried

Single-sector approaches to complex problems have a long record and a disappointing one. Working separately, organisations duplicate effort, compete for the same resources, and develop a blame culture in which failure is always someone else's department.

Partnering offers a different route — recognising what each sector is genuinely good at and finding ways to harness those competencies for a common goal. It is a mechanism, not an end in itself, and it is the harder road. This workshop is about walking it deliberately.

WHAT PARTICIPANTS BRING INTO THE ROOM

- Partnerships announced with enthusiasm, then left to one overworked individual
- Contributions never mapped, so cash is assumed to be the only resource that counts
- Agreements that record good intentions but not decision rights
- A partnership that has quietly become its own project, separate from the work it was meant to deliver
- Sectoral jargon that excludes anyone who did not grow up in that sector
- No agreed way to judge whether the partnership is working — or when it should end

THE WORKSHOP AIM

To equip participants with the essential skills to develop effective partnerships across sectors, and to ensure the effective working of those partnerships so that the goals of every partnering entity are met.



WHAT EACH SECTOR BRINGS

PUBLIC SECTOR

The rule of law

Creating frameworks for economic, political and social rights; setting regulation and standards; providing public services.

Rights driven — provides access, information, stability and legitimacy

BUSINESS SECTOR

Investment and trade

Creating goods and services; providing employment, innovation and economic growth; generating returns that fund further investment.

Profit driven — inventive, productive, highly focused and fast

CIVIL SOCIETY

Social development

Creating opportunities for individual growth; supporting those in need or excluded; acting as guardian of the public good.

Values driven — responsive, vocal, inclusive and imaginative

02 What you will be able to do

Five objectives, each worked on a partnership the participant is actually in — or actually considering.

01	Make the case for partnering — and judge honestly when a partnership is not the right mechanism
02	Identify, assess and select partners through structured assessment rather than an existing contact list
03	Map what each partner brings, cash and non-cash, and the risks each one carries
04	Negotiate a partnering agreement on interests rather than positions, with governance and accountability built in
05	Manage, review and sustain the partnership — including an agreed way to move on

HOW THE TWO DAYS RUN

DAY 1 AM	DAY 1 PM	DAY 2 AM	DAY 2 PM
The case and the cycle	Identifying and assessing	Agreements and governance	Managing and sustaining

WHAT YOU TAKE AWAY

- A completed assessment of a real prospective partner
- A resource map showing what each partner brings beyond cash
- A risk and reward register for your organisation and for your partners
- A drafted partnering agreement carrying governance and decision rights
- A review schedule and an agreed moving-on strategy

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

- Managers leading or joining a cross-sector partnership or alliance
- Public sector officers working with business and community organisations
- Corporate affairs, sustainability and community investment leads
- NGO, cooperative and association directors building institutional partnerships
- Programme and project managers accountable for joint delivery
- Anyone appointed as a partnership broker, coordinator or champion



03 Twelve phases, four movements

Every partnership follows its own pathway, but none of these phases can be skipped without the partnership drifting off course. The cycle gives a group a shared language for saying where it actually is.

MOVEMENT 1 · SCOPING AND BUILDING

Is there a partnership here at all?

1 · Scoping
Understanding the challenge, gathering information, consulting stakeholders and building a vision of and for the partnership.

2 · Identifying
Identifying potential partners, securing their involvement, and motivating them to work with one another.

3 · Building
Partners build the working relationship by agreeing the goals, objectives and core principles that will underpin it.

MOVEMENT 2 · PLANNING AND RESOURCING

What are we going to do, and with what?

4 · Planning
Partners plan a programme of activities and begin to outline a coherent project.

5 · Managing
Partners settle the structure and management of the partnership for the medium to long term.

6 · Resourcing
Partners and other supporters identify and mobilise resources — cash and, more importantly, non-cash.

MOVEMENT 3 · DELIVERING AND MEASURING

Is it working?

7 · Implementing
With resources in place and project details agreed, delivery begins to a pre-agreed timetable and specific deliverables.

8 · Measuring
Measuring and reporting on outputs and outcomes. Is the partnership achieving the goals it set?

9 · Reviewing
Reviewing the partnership itself: what is its impact on partner organisations? Should partners leave, or new ones join?

MOVEMENT 4 · REVISING AND MOVING ON

What happens next?

10 · Revising
Revising the partnership, the programme or the project in the light of experience.

11 · Institutionalising
Building structures and mechanisms that give the partnership longer-term commitment and continuity.

12 · Sustaining or terminating
Building sustainability — or agreeing an appropriate conclusion, and marking it properly.

THE THREE PRINCIPLES THAT HOLD IT TOGETHER

Equity
Not the same as equality. Equity means an equal right to be at the table, and validation of contributions that cannot be measured in cash or public profile.

Transparency
Openness and honesty are the preconditions of trust. Only transparent working makes a partnership accountable to its partners, donors and stakeholders.

Mutual benefit
Every partner contributes, so every partner is entitled to benefit — specifically, over and above the benefits shared by all. This is what sustains commitment.

04 Choosing partners with your eyes open

No partner is perfect — including your own organisation. What you are looking for is the best available match, assessed structurally rather than chosen from the contacts you happen to have.

OBSTACLES TO PARTNERING — NAMED BEFORE THEY BITE

General public	Prevailing scepticism · rigid preconceptions about particular sectors · inflated expectations of what is possible
Sectoral characteristics	Public sector seen as bureaucratic · business as single-minded and competitive · civil society as combative and territorial
Personal limitations	Inadequate partnering skills · restricted authority · too narrow a role · no real belief that partnering works
Organisational limitations	Conflicting priorities · competitiveness within a sector · intolerance of other sectors
External constraints	Local social, political and economic climate · scale of the challenge · inability to access external resources

ORGANISATIONAL RISK — EQUALLY, FOR EVERY PARTNER

Reputation impact
Every organisation values its reputation, and will rightly ask whether the partnership — or its failure — could damage it.

Loss of autonomy
Collaboration means less independence in the areas of joint work. That trade must be made knowingly.

Conflicts of interest
Partnership commitments can create split loyalties, and pressure to settle for an uncomfortable compromise.

Drain on resources
Partnerships demand heavy front-end investment, especially of time, well ahead of any return.

Implementation challenges
Once resources are secured, a fresh set of commitments falls on each partner as the work moves into delivery.

AND THE REWARDS, WHICH ARE ALSO SHARED

- Professional development of key personnel
- Greater reach into communities and markets
- More appropriate and effective products and services
- Enhanced credibility
- Better access to information and different networks
- Improved operational efficiency
- Greater innovation
- Increased access to resources



05 Agreement, governance and roles

A partnership is little more than a dialogue until someone commits. An agreement differs from a contract: not legally binding, negotiated between equals, readily renegotiable, entered into voluntarily — and always written down.

PARTNERING ROLES — AND WHO IS BEST PLACED TO CARRY EACH

Champion
Promotes the partnership using personal or professional standing to give it authority and profile.

Broker
Acts on behalf of the partners to build and strengthen the partnership, especially in its early stages.

Donor
Every contributing partner is a donor. External donors need a clear reporting line that does not undermine the partnership.

Manager
Appointed on a paid basis to run the partnership or its project, usually once implementation begins.

Facilitator
Usually external, appointed to handle a specific part of the process — a difficult meeting, a resourcing workshop.

Promoter
Argues the merits of the partnership on the strength of its track record rather than personal reputation.

LANGUAGE AS A PARTNERSHIP-BUILDING TOOL

~~Trust~~	→	Transparency
~~Profit~~	→	Benefit
~~Common objectives~~	→	Complementary objectives
~~Contract~~	→	Agreement
~~Business plan~~	→	Action plan
~~Funding~~	→	Resourcing
~~Committee~~	→	Focus or task group
~~Evaluation~~	→	Review
~~Exit strategy~~	→	Moving-on strategy

INTEREST-BASED NEGOTIATION

Not a hard-nosed deal

Listen carefully. Ask open questions rather than closed ones. Summarise to check you have understood. And agree to disagree when it is the only way to move the discussion forward.

06 Keeping it going, and knowing when to stop

The partnerships that endure are the ones most open to learning from their own mistakes — and the ones that decided, early, what moving on would look like.

FOUR MOVING-ON SCENARIOS — AGREED AT THE START, NOT AT THE END

Partners leave	Hand over to one partner	Create a new institution	Conclude by design
Succession is a fact of partnership life. Planning for it keeps the partnership alive when individuals depart, and lets newcomers catch up quickly.	One partner organisation is now best placed to carry the work alone. Assets and activities transfer; others may stay on in an advisory role.	Partners establish a new cross-sector body — alliance, foundation, agency — to take the work forward independently.	Some of the best partnerships are built to be temporary. Ending one on schedule is an achievement, and worth marking as such.

WHAT A SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP LOOKS LIKE

- The partnership is doing what it set out to do, against objectives agreed at the start
- It is having impact beyond its immediate stakeholder group
- It is sustainable and self-managing, or has been replaced by something that is
- Individual partners have gained specific benefits, not only shared ones
- Its experience is available for others to build on

Build on shared values	Be creative	Be courageous
because successful partnerships are values-driven	because every partnership is unique	because all partnerships involve risk

GOOD PRACTICE IN THE ROOM

- Work from facts, not from the interpretation of facts
- Treat a break-down as the opening for a break-through
- Make requests rather than complaints
- Agree ground rules early, and write them into the agreement



07 Eight tools, six activities

The programme is extensively customised to the partnering organisations and is built around tool kits, case studies, role plays and facilitated group work rather than presentation.

THE TOOLKIT — EACH APPLIED TO THE PARTICIPANT'S OWN PARTNERSHIP

Partner assessment form A checklist of the questions worth asking about any prospective partner before a conversation becomes a commitment.	**Coherence assessment** Flags the questions partners should ask about their own and each other's intentions, attitudes and commitment.	**Sample partnering agreement** A working template for a first agreement — not legally binding, renegotiable, entered into voluntarily.	**Roles and skills questionnaire** Lets individuals assess their own partnering competencies and where they need to develop.
Partnering conversations guide How to run the conversations through which partners create a shared future rather than defend positions.	**Partnership review template** Several approaches to reviewing a partnership, depending on what the review is for.	**Case study template** A simple format for capturing the partnership's story so that others can learn from it.	**Communications checklist** Audiences, channels and messages — who needs to hear what, and in which form.

SIX HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES

Assess a real partner Each participant works a live or prospective partner through the assessment form, and reports what the structure surfaced that instinct had not.	**Build a resource map** Cards on the wall, colour-coded by partner: people, expertise, relationships, information, accommodation, products. Cash comes last, not first.	**Risk and reward register** Each partner's risks named openly, alongside the rewards — including the rewards specific to each organisation rather than shared by all.
Stakeholder mapping Who is affected, who decides, who must be persuaded — and which relationships will determine whether the partnership has reach.	**Interest-based negotiation** A role play in which positions are set aside and underlying interests drawn out, then reconciled into a workable agreement.	**Draft the agreement** Partners draft the governance, decision rights and accountability procedures that will sit at the heart of their partnering agreement.

METHODOLOGY

- Extensively customised to the partnering organisations
- Case studies drawn from real cross-sector initiatives
- Tool kits applied to the participant's own partnership
- Role plays, including interest-based negotiation
- Structured activities and facilitated discussion
- Interactive group work across the two days



The workshop framework draws on The Partnering Toolbook (Ros Tennyson, International Business Leaders Forum) alongside Training Concepts' own practice in cross-sector and cooperative partnerships across Asia and East Africa.

08 Your trainer



Shareef Jaffar

PBS (Polis) · LLM Corporate Governance · MSc Strategic Planning · MEd · FCIM, FCGI, FMDIS, FInstAM

Shareef holds professional qualifications in Partnerships & Alliances, Strategic Planning, Corporate Governance, Project Management and Strategic Risk Management, and has more than 35 years in senior management and training design across 16 countries.

He has built and advised cross-sector partnerships from several sides of the table: as consultant to InWEnt on the IT@Coop project for the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, where he led a nationwide needs analysis with the Credit Union League of Thailand; as consultant to Nokia (SEA) on distributor development with Nokia Academy; and as a director of credit and service cooperatives in Singapore. He works closely with the Service & Development Inspectorate of the Singapore Police Force.

PARTNERING CREDENTIALS

- Professional certification in Partnerships & Alliances
- LLM Corporate Governance · MSc Strategic Planning
- Consultant to InWEnt (Germany) on cross-sector cooperative development
- Director, TCC Credit Cooperative and Secure Guard Cooperative

DELIVERED FOR

- Port of Singapore Authority and Singapore Police Force
- InWEnt and the Credit Union League of Thailand
- Nokia, Motorola, Western Digital and Neptune Orient Lines
- Singapore Council of Social Services and credit cooperatives

RELATED WORKSHOPS

Setting KPIs · Time Management for Technical Managers · Crisis Prevention & Management · Problem Solving Tools · Presentation Skills

BOOK THE WORKSHOP

Money should be the last resource you ask for, not the first.

Run in-house and customised to the partnering organisations — your sectors, your prospective partners, your agreement. Tell us who is at the table and the dates.

TrainingConcepts

Singapore · Serving clients across Asia Pacific

+65 8993 1155

enquiries@trainingconcepts.us

www.trainingconcepts.us