

Collaboration

Key points

Collaborations are ‘working with others to achieve a common goal’

Collaborations are an opportunity to broaden and grow your audience, as well as stretch your creative practice in new and exciting ways

Motivations may include funding opportunities, a desire to enhance or expand your creative output, a wish to reach new audiences or networks, and create greater social impact

Collaborations however, aren’t for everyone, and aren’t suitable for every type of project or goal

Creative collaborations can take twice as long, and require an open minded approach, willingness to compromise and a dedication to the outcome. They are like a marriage, and you don’t want a marriage of convenience!

Shared goals are the most important aspect to a collaboration

Conflict and differences are to be expected from time to time in collaborations, and creative conflict can be helpful and useful! Deal with the conflict as soon as it arises, and set aside dedicated time to work towards resolution

See the full resource for many more tips and advice on collaborations

Can you channel a growth mindset?

- A growth mindset is the belief that intelligence and talents are growable and changeable. With this mindset, it’s normal and ok to fail before acquiring a new skill, and setbacks are viewed as learning opportunities
 - A fixed mindset is the belief that intelligence is fixed—so if you’re not good at something, you believe you’ll never be good at it. For those with a fixed mindset, any undue exertion of effort in a new task is an indicator that they (or the collaborator) don’t possess the required skill
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Ecosystems

- If you’re feeling protective of your patch and threatened by ‘competition’, then chances are you’re operating in a ‘silo’ and robbing yourself of many opportunities to grow, enhance your mahi, and even more joy. It can be a limiting and lonely place to operate from
 - If you look around you and see opportunity and potential, then you are operating from a powerful place, and probably viewing your community more like an ecosystem
 - Ecosystems are networks with whom we complement, collaborate, work symbiotically with, and at times compete with (see exercise below)
 - Your ecosystem can provide opportunities for exciting and innovative collaborations, particularly if you choose to look outside the box (think of other art disciplines or outside the arts sector)
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Exercise – Mapping your ecosystem

Draw yourself in the middle of an empty page

Now think about the community and networks you operate in (in person and online), the existing suppliers, partners, supporters, clients/customers/audience members, volunteers etc. Write them on the page with circles around them

Who have you already got strong connections with?

What other people or organisations (that are similar to you in some way) could you develop relationships with?

Where can you see potential synergy: where your combined value is greater than just one offering?

Who could you collaborate with? Think outside the square here. Have at least one potential collaboration that you'd never normally consider

Draw lines connecting the circles that you've already got relationships with

Think about where others in your ecosystem fit – if you're not connected, how can you be?

Look for opportunities, alignment, and potential growth

Nāu te rourou,
nāku te rourou,
ka ora ai te iwi

With your food basket
and my food basket
the people will thrive