

# Effective Partnering: what does it take?

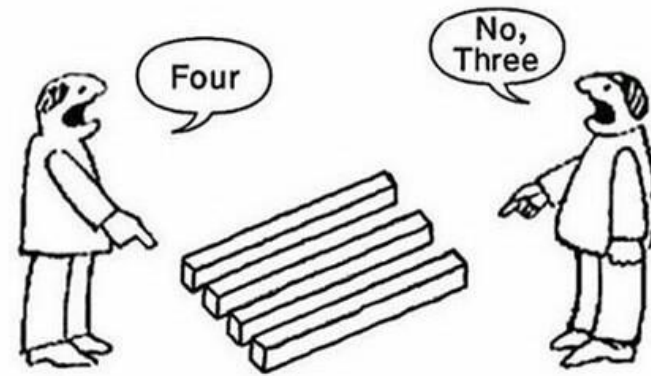
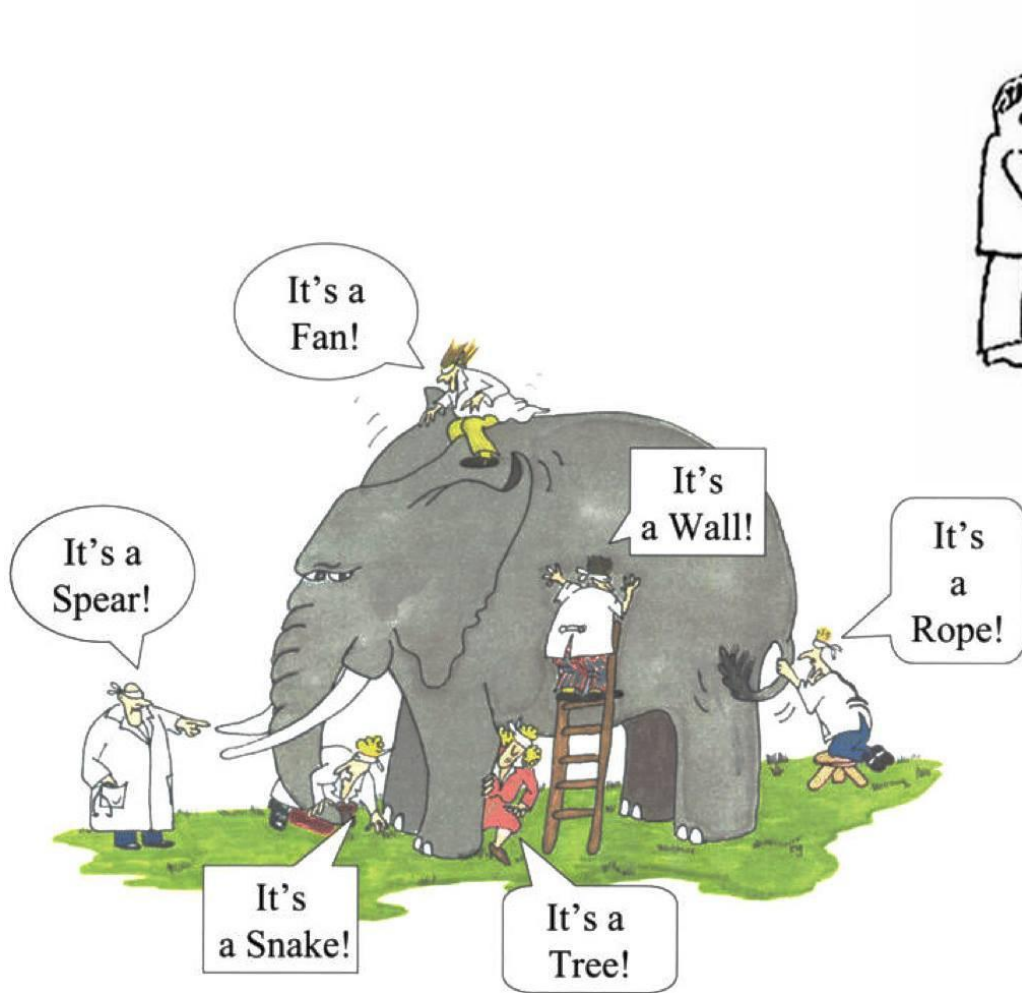
Dynamics of Youth Conference  
Utrecht - 18 April 2024



*“We do not learn from experience...  
We learn from reflecting on experience.”*

John Dewey

# Diverse perspectives on interdisciplinary collaboration



# PARTNERSHIP: what's in a name?

*“An on-going working relationship where risks and benefits are shared”*

Additionally, each partner is co-creating purpose and activities, contributing different resources and committing to shared accountability.

Many mechanisms described as partnerships do not meet this definition. Do yours?  
Do your partners share the same definition for partnerships?



# Input group on helpful characteristics in interdisciplinary collaboration in practice

Equality

Common goal

Collaboration

Agreed roles

Agreement between each other

Commitment

# Where do your partnerships sit?

Appropriate for problems we know how to solve

## TRANSACTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

## COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

### PARTNERING CONTINUUM

Service contracts

Co-created activities

One-way accountability

Mutual accountability

Funding relationships

Layered relationships

Siloed decision making &  
problem-solving

Collaborative decision making &  
problem-solving

Transferred risk

Shared risk

Compliance-based

Alignment-based

Necessary for solving complex issues

# Common challenges and principles

[Overview](#) → [Conceptual framework](#) → [Partnering principles](#) → [Embracing diversity](#)



**Common partnering challenge:**

**ANXIETY ABOUT DIFFERENCE**



Key principle:  
**EMBRACING DIVERSITY**

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**Common partnering challenge:**

**POWER IMBALANCE**



Key principle:  
**BUILDING EQUITY**

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**Common partnering challenge:**

**HIDDEN AGENDA'S**



Key principle:  
**CREATING OPENNESS**

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[Overview](#) → [Conceptual framework](#) → [Partnering principles](#) → [Ensuring mutual benefit](#)



**Common partnering challenge:**

**COMPETITIVENESS**

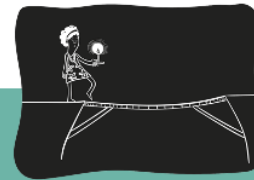


Key principle:  
**ENSURING MUTUAL BENEFIT**

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**Common partnering challenge:**

**UNCERTAINTY**



Key principle:  
**BEING COURAGEOUS**

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**Do you recognize these challenges? Do you have agreed on principles in your partnership/ collaboration?**

Discuss the responses that come immediately to your mind with your neighbour.





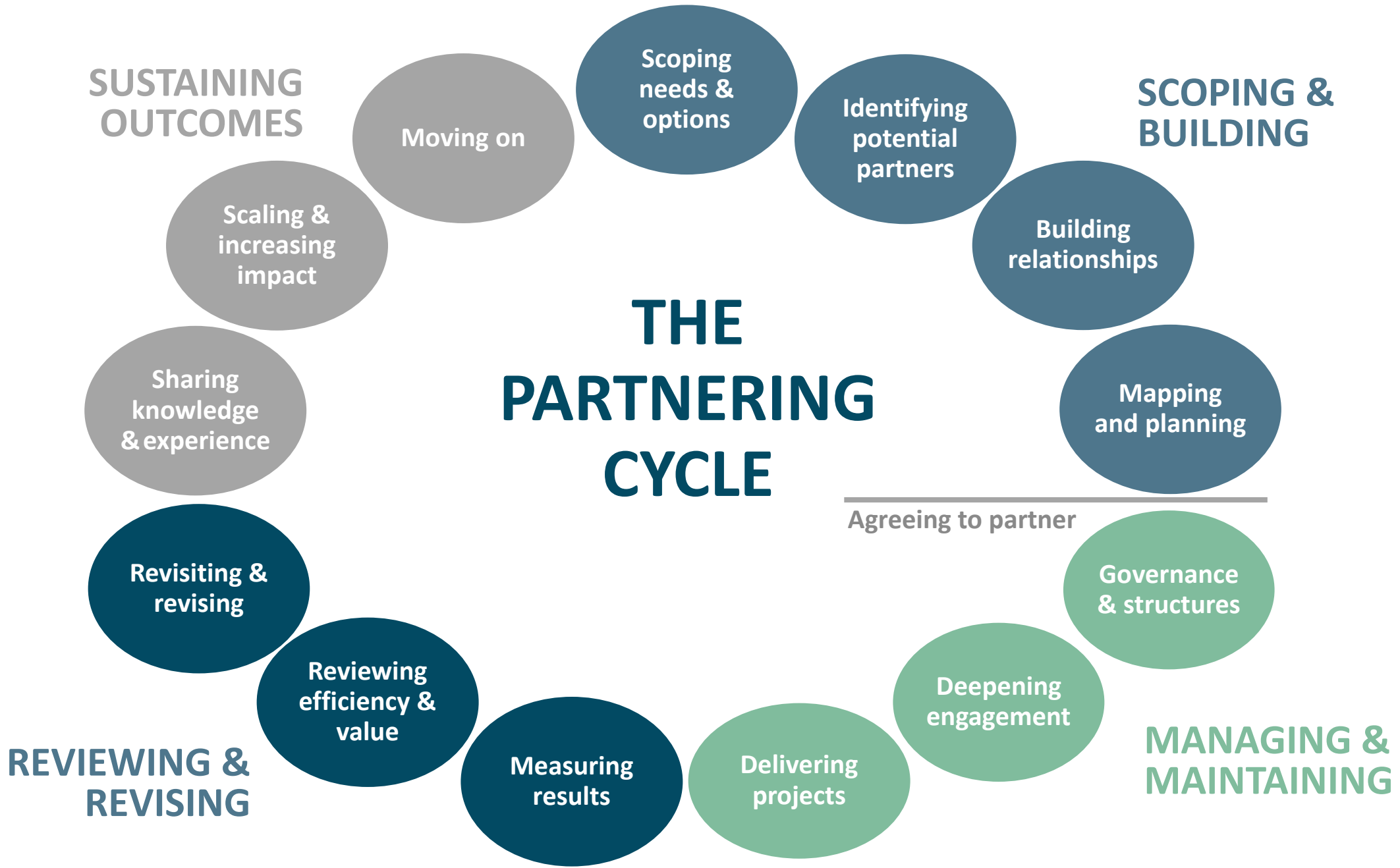
# Input group on challenges and principles

## *Helpful tools/practices to deal with challenges*

- (internal or external) facilitation in meetings when managing power differences
- Rituals when convening as a group (e.g. check in, check out)
- Create informal opportunities to meet outside of formal meetings/convenings, during lunch, have drinks, joint celebration of success
- Partnership health check to see how the collaboration is doing, to check assumptions and make expectations explicit
- Decision journal to help new arrivals (staff turn over and/or new partners) understand the narrative/story of the partnership (why were decisions made, what were considerations)

# Time for a short flip chart game





## SUSTAINING OUTCOMES

**Exploring** moving-on options and supporting decisions

**Managing** moving-on processes collaboratively

**Helping** partners celebrate and learn from their partnership 'story'

**Ensuring** outcomes are able to be sustained / embedded / scaled /transferred

## REVIEWING & REVISING

**Supporting** partners review added value and effectiveness

**Assisting** in revising the collaboration agreement

**Helping** partners implement changes to improve the partnership

**Guiding** partners to plan for sustaining outcomes and moving on

Potential partnership brokering roles at different stages in the partnering cycle

## SCOPING & BUILDING

**Scoping** the partnership's potential

**Exploring** drivers, expectations and underlying interests

**Embedding** key partnering principles

**Enabling** partners to differentiate between the partnership and project

**Negotiating** a detailed agreement to underpin the partnership

## MANAGING & MAINTAINING

**Co-creating** appropriate governance arrangements

**Helping** partners to work through complex internal & external challenges

**Building** partner capacities to strengthen and optimise the partnership

**Enabling** partners to explore new ways of transforming systems



# Partnership attributes



PBA's current thinking about fundamental characteristics of partnerships

# Input group key take aways

Set goals from the beginning and revisit them

Need to be flexible

Challenges and principles are important to talk about

Partnership cycle is the life cycle of the collaboration. Important to be conscious about it evolves

Be mindful of the partnering process; what is (not) working well

Appreciative of having an hour to make implicit things explicit

Wondering: is this really a partnership? Where are we in the cycle?

Increase consciousness about collaboration: where are we on the spectrum from transactional – collaborative

Importance of a common purpose

Relations may live longer than the funding period

# Thank you and feel free to reach out!



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