

Managing the execution and monitoring phases of a collaboration

Authored by Dr. Tanja Collavo





Who is this guide for?

This guide is for researchers who have secured a collaboration with a business or other non-academic organisation, have planned it thoroughly with their collaborator and now are working on it.

Like any relationship, collaborations need to be nurtured and carefully managed if they are to last and to deliver benefits for all the parties involved. This guide will provide you with tips that will support you in delivering the planned outputs and in maintaining a healthy and productive relationship with your collaborator.

You are ready to work on this guide if you finished co-designing a collaborative project (e.g. publication, workshop, multi-year research collaboration, etc.) and are working on it. If this is not the case, please have a look first at the online modules on “How to start a collaboration” (modules 1-5) and/or at the guide on “Managing the planning phase of a collaboration”.

CONTENTS

01 What are the common phases of a collaboration?

02 What shall I do in the execution phase?

Communicate frequently

Create and maintain the right conditions

Prevent and overcome common challenges

03 What shall I do towards the end of the collaboration?

Celebrate your success beyond outputs

Monitor impact

Think about the legacy of the project

04 Solutions to exercise 1

05 Links to helpful resources

01 —

What are the common phases of a collaboration?

What shall I do in the execution phase?

- Communicate frequently
- Create and maintain the right conditions
- Prevent and overcome common challenges

What shall I do towards the end of the collaboration?

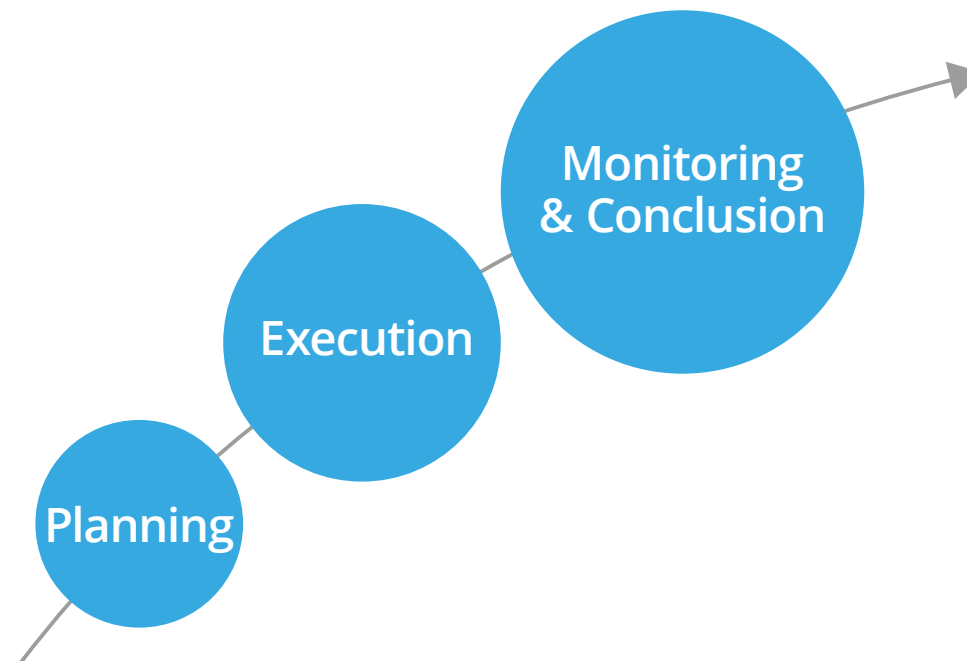
- Celebrate your success beyond outputs
- Monitor impact
- Think about the legacy of the project

Solutions to exercise 1

Links to helpful resources

What are the common phases of a collaboration?

Like any other project, a collaboration is characterised by three typical phases:



This guide will accompany you through the execution, and monitoring and conclusion phases.

02 —

What are the common phases of a collaboration?

What shall I do in the execution phase?

Communicate frequently

Create and maintain the right conditions

Prevent and overcome common challenges

What shall I do towards the end of the collaboration?

Celebrate your success beyond outputs

Monitor impact

Think about the legacy of the project

Solutions to exercise 1

Links to helpful resources

What shall I do in the execution phase?

The key objective of the execution phase is to keep things on track in order to achieve the desired output(s) and, in some cases, outcome(s) in the timeframe that you established during the planning phase.

Typically, you will be working on the collaboration while being busy with other commitments and projects. The same will be true for your collaborator(s). For this reason, it is vital to manage your time effectively, to make sure that your collaborator(s) is finding the time to work on the project and to support them if they are struggling. To do so, you should check your planned timeframe on a regular basis and compare it with what is actually happening.

The execution phase starts when you have signed a contract or finalised an agreement and you start working on the project. It finishes when you produce a tangible output or when the funds run out.

02

What are the common phases of a collaboration?

What shall I do in the execution phase?

Communicate frequently

Create and maintain the right conditions

Prevent and overcome common challenges

What shall I do towards the end of the collaboration?

Celebrate your success beyond outputs

Monitor impact

Think about the legacy of the project

Solutions to exercise 1

Links to helpful resources

There are three key activities that you should be doing in the execution phase of a collaboration, which might be needed in sequence, simultaneously or repeatedly (in varying order) throughout the whole phase:



A: COMMUNICATE FREQUENTLY

In most cases, you and your collaborator(s) will not be located in the same place. Even if you are, you will be busy with your own daily tasks and are unlikely to be working on the project at the same time and/or together. For this reason, you need to ensure that:

02

What are the common phases of a collaboration?

What shall I do in the execution phase?

Communicate frequently

Create and maintain the right conditions

Prevent and overcome common challenges

What shall I do towards the end of the collaboration?

Celebrate your success beyond outputs

Monitor impact

Think about the legacy of the project

Solutions to exercise 1

Links to helpful resources



If these conditions are not met, it is possible that problems will emerge only at the end of the project, when it will be too late to solve them, and that some collaborators might not feel engaged and/or motivated to contribute the necessary effort and resources.

What are the common phases of a collaboration?

What shall I do in the execution phase?

Communicate frequently

Create and maintain the right conditions

Prevent and overcome common challenges

What shall I do towards the end of the collaboration?

Celebrate your success beyond outputs

Monitor impact

Think about the legacy of the project

Solutions to exercise 1

Links to helpful resources

To ensure frequent communication across all parties you should:



SET UP REGULAR MEETINGS

Meetings can take place either in person (ideal, if possible) or virtually (Skype, Teams, phone, Zoom call, etc.). The definition of “regular” obviously varies depending on the length of the collaboration. For reference, we would suggest once a week for a monthly project, once a month for a three-month project and once per term in a multi-year project.

02

What are the common phases of a collaboration?

What shall I do in the execution phase?

Communicate frequently

Create and maintain the right conditions

Prevent and overcome common challenges

What shall I do towards the end of the collaboration?

Celebrate your success beyond outputs

Monitor impact

Think about the legacy of the project

Solutions to exercise 1

Links to helpful resources

ASK FOR A MEETING

It is important to talk to your collaborator(s) whenever you feel something is going wrong or you are encountering a significant obstacle and need to decide how to overcome it.

LEVERAGE TECHNOLOGY TO CREATE COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Use different media and online tools to share what you are doing with your collaborator(s). Examples of tools vary from a WhatsApp (or similar) group, which is helpful to share frequent and quick updates or questions, to a Slack group, SharePoint (or similar), which is helpful to work collaboratively and share files.

SEND REGULAR NEWSLETTERS

If you see that it is difficult to meet, even remotely, you should send regular “newsletters” or brief email updates in order to keep everyone informed about what you are doing and also encourage them to do the same. Written records will also help with the reporting at the end of the project and with tracing the origins of potential issues.

B: CREATE AND MAINTAIN THE RIGHT CONDITIONS

A study of previous and existing collaborations revealed the existence of six actions that can help you to sustain a productive workflow, a positive relationship with your collaborators and the adoption of a “problem-solving” attitude.

02

What are the common phases of a collaboration?

What shall I do in the execution phase?

Communicate frequently

Create and maintain the right conditions

Prevent and overcome common challenges

What shall I do towards the end of the collaboration?

Celebrate your success beyond outputs

Monitor impact

Think about the legacy of the project

Solutions to exercise 1

Links to helpful resources



ACTION 1: COMMIT THE NECESSARY TIME AND RESOURCES

It will be tempting, once you are working on a collaboration, to prioritise your other commitments, such as working on your publications. Remember that you are the proponent of this initiative and that, if you do not make it work, it is unlikely that your collaborator(s) will. Set aside a morning a week or a couple of hours every day to work just on the collaboration and be strict about it as you would be about your writing time. This will help you progress and will also show your collaborator(s) that you are proactive and committed. This will increase the chances that they will be too.

02

What are the common phases of a collaboration?

What shall I do in the execution phase?

Communicate frequently

Create and maintain the right conditions

Prevent and overcome common challenges

What shall I do towards the end of the collaboration?

Celebrate your success beyond outputs

Monitor impact

Think about the legacy of the project

Solutions to exercise 1

Links to helpful resources

ACTION 2: REMAIN FLEXIBLE

Some unexpected changes, opportunities and issues will emerge during the execution phase. Be ready to change plans and to adapt to circumstances accordingly. This way you will be able to grasp all the potential opportunities coming your way and to get the project going. According to researchers who collaborated before, remaining flexible is probably the most important thing that you can do to ensure the success of a collaboration. Check this out by reading about the experience of PhDs and Early Career Researchers who collaborated with businesses (www.socsci.ox.ac.uk/developing-researchers)!

ACTION 3: VALUE THE INPUT OF YOUR COLLABORATOR

Leverage both the planning and the execution phases to understand how your collaborator(s) thinks and works. Based on that:

- a) Make sure, through frequent communications (see above), that they are happy with the project
- b) Ask them for constructive feedback when you are experiencing issues or doubts
- c) Use their own language when communicating, avoiding academic jargon
- d) Listen to them whenever you are sharing information, making it possible for them to participate in the project and to speak up

02

What are the common phases of a collaboration?

What shall I do in the execution phase?

Communicate frequently

Create and maintain the right conditions

Prevent and overcome common challenges

What shall I do towards the end of the collaboration?

Celebrate your success beyond outputs

Monitor impact

Think about the legacy of the project

Solutions to exercise 1

Links to helpful resources

It might be helpful to develop your listening skills and questioning techniques to make sure you are equipped to receive the inputs coming from your collaborator(s). To learn more about listening and questioning skills have a look at:

mindtools.com/CommSkill/ActiveListening

mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMC_88

skillsyouneed.com/ips/listening-skills

skillsyouneed.com/ips/questioning

ACTION 4: EMBED YOURSELF IN THE COLLABORATION

If you are collaborating with an organisation rather than an individual, you should try to meet as many people as possible who work in that organisation and learn something about them, their way of working and their interest in the project. This will help you understand the context of your work, gain a reputation in your partner organisation and identify the right collaborator. This is someone who is motivated to see the project through and who can become your key supporter and point of contact in that organisation. Additionally, in any collaboration you can show your willingness to invest in the relationship by adapting to others' availability, for example meeting them when and where it is most convenient to them, and by taking the initiative to solve problems instead of always waiting for your collaborator's(s') support and input.

02

What are the common phases of a collaboration?

What shall I do in the execution phase?

Communicate frequently

Create and maintain the right conditions

Prevent and overcome common challenges

What shall I do towards the end of the collaboration?

Celebrate your success beyond outputs

Monitor impact

Think about the legacy of the project

Solutions to exercise 1

Links to helpful resources

ACTION 5: LEVERAGE NETWORKS TO SOLVE ISSUES

Over the course of a collaboration you might suddenly need rooms, advice, the contribution of additional stakeholders, of a designer, etc. To scout these resources in an effective way, you should leverage your network and that of your collaborator(s). This will solve problems faster and provide you with new and creative insights or resources that might not be available otherwise.

ACTION 6: MANAGE RISKS

In the planning phase, you should have identified key risks that could hamper the success of your collaboration. It will be important for you to monitor those risks and the factors that might transform them into actual problems. This will equip you to react as fast as possible and to assess when it might be the right time to switch to plan B or C or to ask for an urgent meeting with your collaborator to agree a new way forward.

In collaborations, risk is often associated with the temptation of either or all parties to freeride so a significant part of managing risks will be about negotiating shared ownership, expectations and contributions. You should never be shy if you see something going wrong or if you are worried that your collaborator(s) might steal your IP or mismanage your data and contribution. If you have such worries, talk to your supervisor/PI, colleagues or to a relevant University administrator to check if they agree with your concerns and to get suggestions about what to do.

02 —

What are the common phases of a collaboration?

What shall I do in the execution phase?

Communicate frequently

Create and maintain the right conditions

Prevent and overcome common challenges

What shall I do towards the end of the collaboration?

Celebrate your success beyond outputs

Monitor impact

Think about the legacy of the project

Solutions to exercise 1

Links to helpful resources

C: PREVENT AND OVERCOME COMMON CHALLENGES

As in every endeavour, there will be challenges when collaborating. Some challenges will be idiosyncratic and unexpected, and you will simply have to be creative and overcome them as they arise. Some others, however, are very common across many different types of collaboration. This means that you can work to prevent them and learn from others how you might come up with appropriate solutions.

Here is a list (in order of decreasing frequency) of the 10 most common challenges reported by researchers who collaborated with businesses and other non-academic organisations and the top tips to prevent and overcome them.

02

What are the common phases of a collaboration?

What shall I do in the execution phase?

Communicate frequently

Create and maintain the right conditions

Prevent and overcome common challenges

What shall I do towards the end of the collaboration?

Celebrate your success beyond outputs

Monitor impact

Think about the legacy of the project

Solutions to exercise 1

Links to helpful resources

CHALLENGE	KEY UNDERLYING FACTOR	PREVENT	OVERCOME
Collaborator not having enough time for the project	TIME AVAILABLE NEED TO SURVIVE LACK OF INTEREST FOR PURELY ACADEMIC OUTPUTS	Spend time in the planning phase asking what is feasible Plan a project that delivers tangible, timely and significant benefits for them Plan for slack time to accommodate their delayed input	Remain flexible Use technology to minimise face-to-face time Take over some of their activities Involve additional collaborators Apply for new funds to prolong the project Be ready to work on your own on any output that doesn't benefit your collaborator
Underestimation of the time needed to finish the project	TIME POOR PLANNING	Plan for slack time and resources Be overcautious when estimating the time needed and the amount of people who will be involved in decision making	See if you can realise a less ambitious output Ask for help as soon as possible Be ready to work overtime and sacrifice something else
Different timescales and expectations	TIME CULTURE EVOLVING NEEDS OF ORGANISATIONS (ESPECIALLY STARTUPS)	Take time to understand respective timescales, needs and expectations Communicate well academic procedures and timeframes Agree a plan that is feasible for you	Communicate regularly what you are working on Provide previews of findings or offer to do presentations for them while working on the project Adapt as much as you can
Finding the time for the collaboration	RESEARCH & TEACHING COMMITMENTS NEED OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE	Don't create overambitious projects – it is better to start small and get bigger later if you can Plan the collaboration for when you might have fewer commitments or something you can postpone or that gives you flexibility (e.g. data collection, waiting for viva)	Reserve a little time every day or every week to it and do not compromise it Notify your collaborator about your difficulties and agree on ways to reduce your workload Leverage the project plan you wrote to keep yourself on track Learn to say “no” to opportunities that are not priorities

02

What are the common phases of a collaboration?

What shall I do in the execution phase?

Communicate frequently

Create and maintain the right conditions

Prevent and overcome common challenges

What shall I do towards the end of the collaboration?

Celebrate your success beyond outputs

Monitor impact

Think about the legacy of the project

Solutions to exercise 1

Links to helpful resources

CHALLENGE	KEY UNDERLYING FACTOR	PREVENT	OVERCOME
Ensuring the participation of all stakeholders	TIME MONEY IDENTIFICATION OF RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS LATE OR BAD-TIMING CONNECTION TO STAKEHOLDERS	Think about all relevant stakeholders during the planning phase Talk to some of them to understand what constraints they might have Don't make assumptions about their willingness and opportunity to be involved Plan extra budget for stakeholders' involvement	Understand what is preventing participation and think creatively about how you can remove obstacles Change plans to reach out to stakeholders where and when it is most convenient for them
Measuring impact	IMPACT HAPPENING AFTER THE PROJECT LACK OF APPROPRIATE PLANS TO COLLECT FEED BACK UNCLEAR MEASURES UNCLEAR IMPACT	Define what impact means for you Plan what measures you want to use and how you will collect data Understand what can be measured before the reporting period and what, instead, you might want to track at a later date	Reflect on the conversations you have with your collaborators and other stakeholders Leverage events to collect feed back Use citations on popular media or website statistics Report on talks you gave because of the project and on the development of your network Explain what impacts take a long time to happen, and why you think they will ultimately happen
Collaborator losing motivation to engage	NO REAPING OF EXPECTED BENEFITS CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES POOR COMMUNICATION	Clarify expectations during the planning phase and ask what they absolutely need to get out of the collaboration Understand if they are in a critical phase that might quickly alter their strategy, survival and needs Plan activities as fun and interactive as possible	Talk to them and understand what is happening Work together on what you can change in the project to make it more interesting Take over some of their work See if you can shorten the project or simplify the outputs

02 —

What are the common phases of a collaboration?

What shall I do in the execution phase?

Communicate frequently

Create and maintain the right conditions

Prevent and overcome common challenges

What shall I do towards the end of the collaboration?

Celebrate your success beyond outputs

Monitor impact

Think about the legacy of the project

Solutions to exercise 1

Links to helpful resources

CHALLENGE	KEY UNDERLYING FACTOR	PREVENT	OVERCOME
Obtaining only partial access to needed data	COLLABORATOR IS WORRIED ABOUT DATA SENSITIVITY OR BAD REVIEWS WHO OWNS THE DATA IS NOT INVOLVED LEGAL AND GDPR CONSIDERATIONS	Be very specific in making demands and make sure you are talking with the key gatekeepers Spend significant time negotiating Create a project whose goal is not potentially threatening for your collaborator Address early the concerns of your collaborator	Try to make the most of what you get access to, even if it is not what you wanted Look for alternative or additional sources Talk to your collaborator to see if the terms of the project can change, offering something different in exchange for extra data
Sustaining activities once funds are over	PROJECT OVERRUNS WRONG BUDGETING IN THE PLANNING PHASE TIME PLANNED WAS NOT ENOUGH FOR REALISING THE OUTPUT WILLINGNESS TO KEEP COLLABORATING	When you are planning the project, think about its sustainability and what it would take to keep going beyond the existing opportunity	Be proactive throughout the project in looking and applying for additional funding with your collaborator Involve new stakeholders who can provide the necessary resources If nothing can be done, wrap up the project with what you have and stay in touch with your collaborator for future projects
Turnover (you changing institution or your collaborators leaving their organisation)	LENGTH OF PROJECT MORE FLEXIBLE CAREERS PROMOTIONS	Have this among the expected risks if appropriate See if you can work with more than one person from the same collaborator	Build connections with multiple people inside the organisation Keep in mind the collaboration when you are negotiating moving to a new post Be ready to wrap up when your collaborator is leaving, creating a smaller but still interesting output

02 —

What are the common phases of a collaboration?

What shall I do in the execution phase?

Communicate frequently

Create and maintain the right conditions

Prevent and overcome common challenges

What shall I do towards the end of the collaboration?

Celebrate your success beyond outputs

Monitor impact

Think about the legacy of the project

Solutions to exercise 1

Links to helpful resources

Other challenges that were reported by one or more researchers are:

- Agreeing on findings and outputs once they are upcoming or ready
- Discovering that the data you have is not fitting the needs of your collaborator
- Having clashes due to different cultures and goals that were not resolved in the planning phase
- Getting feedback from collaborators and stakeholders at the end of a project
- Predicting outputs and connections that will end up being particularly helpful
- Dealing with the collaborator's hierarchy and legal team
- Dealing with the main collaborator pulling out due to unforeseen circumstances

02 —

What are the common phases of a collaboration?

What shall I do in the execution phase?

Communicate frequently

Create and maintain the right conditions

Prevent and overcome common challenges

What shall I do towards the end of the collaboration?

Celebrate your success beyond outputs

Monitor impact

Think about the legacy of the project

Solutions to exercise 1

Links to helpful resources

EXERCISE 7.1 Be challenged

Look at the list of challenges that PhDs and Early Career Researchers have encountered when collaborating with businesses. Think about how you would solve those problems.

- A) Despite having complete independence from her collaborator and facing no pressures to alter data and findings, Susila Davis sometimes found that her colleagues were sceptical about her ability to conduct independent and rigorous research given that her PhD was funded by a business.
- B) Given that she was working remotely most of the time, Olivia Gable found it challenging at times to communicate effectively with her boss during her internship
- C) Alex Barnes was working on co-creating a social enterprise while collecting data for his PhD and he often found struggled to find the necessary time to work on both.
- D) The key challenge for Jane Doe during her multi-year research collaboration with a multination corporation was about setting and protecting boundaries. The business she was collaborating with, being the main funder, often felt authorised to get involved into how the research was being conducted or in challenging findings and publications.
- E) As principal investigator of a collaboration between researchers from different disciplines and three non-academic organisations, Thibaut had to ensure the engagement of all parties with the project and the satisfaction of their needs and objectives.
- F) Being placed in a large corporation to work on a joint research project, Tracey Denton-Calabrese sometimes found it hard to deal with very busy managers and with a hierarchical structure slowing down decisions and progress.

Once you have thought about this and come up with at least one solution (but possibly more) for each challenge, check out how each researcher overcame the challenge that they faced in the “Solutions to exercises” section on page 21:

[Click here to view
‘Solutions to exercises’](#)

03 —

What shall I do towards the end of the collaboration?

What are the common phases of a collaboration?

What shall I do in the execution phase?

Communicate frequently

Create and maintain the right conditions

Prevent and overcome common challenges

What shall I do towards the end of the collaboration?

Celebrate your success beyond outputs

Monitor impact

Think about the legacy of the project

Solutions to exercise 1

Links to helpful resources

When funds are running out, your output is about to be achieved or the planned time for the collaboration is coming to an end, you will enter the monitoring and conclusion phase. There are three key activities that you should undertake towards the end of the collaboration:



03 —

What are the common phases of a collaboration?

What shall I do in the execution phase?

Communicate frequently

Create and maintain the right conditions

Prevent and overcome common challenges

What shall I do towards the end of the collaboration?

Celebrate your success beyond outputs

Monitor impact

Think about the legacy of the project

Solutions to exercise 1

Links to helpful resources

CELEBRATE YOUR SUCCESS BEYOND OUTPUTS

A collaboration can achieve many things and lead to many benefits, some of which could not have been planned at the start of the project. Independently of the official outputs achieved, you should reflect on what you and your collaborator gained from working together and celebrate such accomplishments. This way, if the collaboration did not go as planned, you will still have something to “bring home” and to report. On the other hand, if the collaboration did deliver what you hoped, you will have even more reasons to see why it was worth it to go through the collaboration “rollercoaster”.

Examples of successes achieved by previous or existing collaborations are the following (but the list is not complete – there are many more positive outcomes deriving from collaborating!):

- A) Desire to continue the collaboration
- B) External awards
- C) New funds provided by the collaborator
- D) New insights
- E) Positive experience
- F) Chance to connect with ultimate beneficiaries
- G) Seeing the contribution to the collaborator’s work and/or impact

03

What are the common phases of a collaboration?

What shall i do in the execution phase?

Communicate frequently

Create and maintain the right conditions

Prevent and overcome common challenges

What shall i do towards the end of the collaboration?

Celebrate your success beyond outputs

Monitor impact

Think about the legacy of the project

Solutions to exercise 1

Links to helpful resources

MEASURE THE IMPACT OF THE PROJECT

While monitoring should be important throughout the project and continued even after the official end of a collaboration, the formal assessment of outputs and outcomes for reporting purposes is likely to happen towards the end of the project. This might be a requirement of the funder, a necessary step to prove your impact for REF purposes or, simply, something important for you and your collaborator to track the effects of what you did.

Impact measurement is tricky, also because in most cases it takes a long time before the impact even happens. However, you can find ways to measure the interest generated by your output or proxies of impact while waiting for proper effects to take place and be measured. Potential options used by researchers are listed in the boxes on the right.

THINK ABOUT THE LEGACY OF THE PROJECT

Before you consider the collaboration as officially over, it is important to talk to your collaborator about whether you see a way forward together and about what you think will be the medium-term and long-term impact of what you achieved.

This could help you:

- Identify new opportunities to collaborate and/or new research projects
- Identify new stakeholders of your work

NUMBERS

- Amount and diversity of potential beneficiaries reached
- Amount of events' participants
- Website views and statistics
- Citations in the media
- New data obtained

FEEDBACK COLLECTION

- Collecting feedback at events or through the collaborator's network
- Reporting of email exchanges with beneficiaries
- Analysis of comments or media reviews
- Reporting of "Thank you" received from participants

UNDERSTANDING RECEPTION

- Conducting observations at the collaborator's site or during an event
- Formal interviews
- Informal chats
- Collection of narratives and stories

TIES

- New relationships
- New connections brokered
- Requests of future collaborations
- Contributions to the project of new stakeholders
- Initiation of dialogue with people with different views
- Invitations to events

03 —

What are the common phases of a collaboration?

What shall I do in the execution phase?

Communicate frequently

Create and maintain the right conditions

Prevent and overcome common challenges

What shall I do towards the end of the collaboration?

Celebrate your success beyond outputs

Monitor impact

Think about the legacy of the project

Solutions to exercise 1

Links to helpful resources

- Map potential opportunities to make the collaboration sustainable beyond the current funding available
- Understand the socio-economic implications of your project and, as a consequence, of your work
- Reflect on serendipitous achievements, connections and activities as a way to improve your planning of your next collaboration
- Promote the outputs of your collaboration among people and organisations who might benefit from it or be interested in it

Well done for completing the last guide on collaborating!
We hope that your collaboration journey was successful.

04 —

What are the common phases of a collaboration?

What shall I do in the execution phase?

Communicate frequently

Create and maintain the right conditions

Prevent and overcome common challenges

What shall I do towards the end of the collaboration?

Celebrate your success beyond outputs

Monitor impact

Think about the legacy of the project

Solutions to exercise 1

Links to helpful resources

Solutions to exercises

- A) Susila applied for a PhD scholarship during the second year of her collaboration with Oxford University Press. While the collaboration continued as before, having a second funder made it easier for Susila to respond to critics.
- B) Olivia and her boss relied on a mix of emails, WhatsApp and phone calls to remain in touch on a daily basis during the internship and they informed each other promptly about their respective availability or changes thereof. This way each of them would know when to expect a reply or what to do if there was something very urgent.
- C) Alex gave up his free time during data collection. He worked on his PhD during working hours and spent evenings and weekends working on the social enterprise project. He also learnt how to delegate and ask for help to the rest of the team, to make sure things would keep evolving. As long as the others saw that he was working as much as he could on the project, they were willing to do the same and put in the extra time.
- D) Jane did not manage to solve the problem successfully during the collaboration, although one thing that improved the situation was to involve the project leader and the administrators of her department in what was going on. In hindsight, she believes she would have spent more time during the planning phase to specify respective competencies, duties and areas of control. Moreover, she would have said more “noes” when she felt it was needed and she would have stopped and re-negotiated the agreement in a systematic way instead of trying to solve issues on a day-by-day basis.

04 —

What are the common phases of a collaboration?

What shall I do in the execution phase?

Communicate frequently

Create and maintain the right conditions

Prevent and overcome common challenges

What shall I do towards the end of the collaboration?

Celebrate your success beyond outputs

Monitor impact

Think about the legacy of the project

Solutions to exercise 1

Links to helpful resources

E) Thibaut spent a significant amount of time at the beginning understanding the working habits, approaches and expectations of all collaborators, in order to reconcile them in a proactive way as best as possible. While this sometimes proved tricky, Thibaut felt that by leaving as much freedom as possible to each co-investigator and ensuring them the flexibility of publishing and presenting separately as well as together, in the end made the project work for all. As for the non-academic organisations involved in the project, Thibaut made sure to keep a constant communication channel with them, to adapt to the availabilities of their employees to access their collections and to always keep in sight what their own end goal was with regard to the joint project.

F) Tracey overcame this challenge by being as flexible as possible in scheduling and changing meetings and by thinking creatively about different means of communication that could compensate cancelled meetings. For example, she created a newsletter and sent it via email to share progress when meeting in person, by Skype or phone was not an option. She also learnt over time to understand the decision-making hierarchy of the organization and to account for it when designing plans and milestones for the project. Additionally, she found the strength to proceed with the plan or idea on her own when decision makers from the company were not available, informing them of the outcome afterwards.

05 —

What are the common phases of a collaboration?

What shall I do in the execution phase?

Communicate frequently

Create and maintain the right conditions

Prevent and overcome common challenges

What shall I do towards the end of the collaboration?

Celebrate your success beyond outputs

Monitor impact

Think about the legacy of the project

Solutions to exercise 1

Links to helpful resources

Links to helpful resources

[Warwick](#)

[Active Listening](#)

[Questioning Techniques](#)

[Listening Skills](#)

[Questioning Skills and Techniques](#)

[Best project management software list](#)

[Tips for doing knowledge exchange](#)

the
**COLLABORATION
JOURNEY**

