

1. Purpose

This policy establishes a clear and consistent framework for developing, assessing, approving, managing, and reviewing partnerships. It ensures that all partnerships align with the CUC's mission, values, strategic priorities, and legal obligations, and that associated risks are identified and managed appropriately.

2. Scope

This policy applies to the CUC staff and Board members involved in initiating, negotiating, approving, or managing partnerships on behalf of the organisation. It covers all partnership types, including (but not limited to):

- Strategic partnerships
- Funding partnerships
- Service delivery collaborations
- Research or evaluation partnerships
- Corporate or philanthropic partnerships
- Community and cultural partnerships

3. Policy

A. Definitions

Partnership: A formal or informal arrangement between the organisation and another entity to achieve shared objectives, exchange resources, or deliver mutual benefit.

Partner: Any organisation, agency, business, or community group entering a partnership with the organisation.

Agreement: A written document outlining roles, responsibilities, expectations, and obligations (e.g., MOU, contract, funding agreement).

B. Principles

Partnership opportunities may arise through strategic planning, community need, sector collaboration, or direct approaches from potential partners. Partnerships must be:

Aligned: Support the CUC's mission, values, and strategic goals.

Ethical: Uphold human rights, cultural safety, anti-racism, and child-safe principles.

Transparent: Documented, monitored, and communicated appropriately.

Accountable: Governed by clear roles, responsibilities, and reporting requirements.

Safe and compliant: Meet all legal, regulatory, and contractual obligations, including privacy, child safety, and risk management requirements.

Mutually beneficial: Deliver value to both parties and the communities served



Partnerships may be classified as:

- Informal collaborations (e.g., collaborative events and projects, information exchange)
- Formal partnerships (e.g., formal agreements, MOUs)
- Contractual partnerships (e.g., funded service delivery, subcontracting)

C. Forming Partnerships

Any staff or Board member can identify partnership opportunities within the community and conduct preliminary assessments of the organisation through available sources. Before forming a partnership, CUCNI Board and management must assess alignment, capability, risk, and the potential for sustainable, respectful collaboration.

Partnership formation must be supported by appropriate due diligence, risk assessment, and documentation to ensure safe and effective collaboration. Before entering a partnership, the Board must assess alignment with the CUC mission, values, and strategic priorities as well as the potential partner's reputation, governance, and financial stability to ensure a good fit for both parties. Any potential conflict of interest should be taken into consideration as well as risks, legal and regulations and information sharing requirements including intellectual property.

CUCNI will:

- Develop clear selection criteria for initiating partnerships, focusing on alignment with the CUC's strategic goals, values, and community impact.
- Adhere to any partnership guidelines issued to ensure all partnerships are established and managed in compliance appropriately.
- Ensure that any potential partnerships or advocacy efforts with the Federal government is coordinated and managed centrally to maintain consistency and maintain the standards of the Network.
- Conduct a review of potential partners to assess their ability to meet agreed-upon standards and commitments, including basic legal compliance.
- Evaluate the potential for long-term collaboration and mutual benefit before initiating a partnership.
- Establish formal agreements in writing for all partnerships, in compliance with all existing policies, legal and funding requirements.

All formal partnerships must be documented through an MOU, contract, or agreement outlining:

1. Purpose and objectives
2. Roles and responsibilities
3. Resource commitments
4. Governance and communication arrangements
5. Reporting and evaluation requirements
6. Privacy, confidentiality, and data-sharing provisions
7. Dispute resolution
8. Term and exit clauses

D. Managing Partnerships

Roles and Responsibilities

To ensure success, partnerships must be grounded in trust, respect, and a clear understanding of roles, responsibilities, and expectations. CUC will clearly define and document the roles and responsibilities of each partner to ensure all parties are aware of their commitments and



expectations. In doing so it will establish communication processes that specify regularity, modes of communication, and key contacts to facilitate effective collaboration and information sharing. This includes:

- Development of regular joint planning and discussion sessions as required to ensure alignment and foster mutual understanding and respect among partners.
- Implementing a communication plan to manage correspondence, document sharing, and project management efficiently.
- Ensuring that all partners have access to the necessary resources and support to fulfill their roles and responsibilities effectively.

Monitoring and Compliance

- Set performance metrics and monitoring processes to evaluate the effectiveness of the partnership and ensure it delivers mutual benefits.
- Agree on confidentiality and intellectual property protocols to protect any shared data and proprietary information, aligning with data protection laws and best practices.
- Ensure all partnership agreements are compliant with relevant legal regulations.
- Regularly review partnership agreements as required to adapt to changes in legal requirements and ensure ongoing compliance.
- Conduct regular compliance audits as required to ensure that all partners adhere to the terms of the agreement.
- All partnership documentation must be stored securely and in accordance with privacy, confidentiality, and records management requirements.

Risk Management

All partnerships must undergo a risk assessment proportionate to their scale and complexity. Mitigation strategies must be documented and monitored.

Risks may include:

- Reputational harm
- Financial exposure
- Privacy breaches
- Child safety concerns
- Cultural safety issues
- Legal or contractual non-compliance
- Operational or service delivery risks

Financial Management and Conflict Resolution

CUCNI will outline financial arrangements clearly in partnership agreements, including funding responsibilities, and resource allocation and establish mechanisms for transparent financial reporting and accountability between partners. The partnership will also develop a formal conflict resolution process to address disagreements or disputes effectively, aiming for resolution at the lowest level possible before escalating.

Partnership Review

Partnerships must be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain effective, safe, and aligned with organisational priorities using the pre-defined performance metrics. This includes:

- Seeking feedback from partners and stakeholders to enhance the effectiveness of partnership management and compliance processes.
- Discussing and planning for the sustainability of partnership outcomes, ensuring that projects and initiatives have the foundations to be sustainable can be sustained beyond the life of the



agreement. Include provisions for revising or ending partnerships based on performance reviews, ensuring flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances.

Reviews should consider:

1. Achievement of objectives
2. Partner performance
3. Community impact
4. Compliance with agreements
5. Emerging risks
6. Whether the partnership should continue, change, or conclude

Where a partnership has a defined end point, ensure that the conclusion is mutually agreed upon and clearly communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

Termination

The CUC may end a partnership if:

- Objectives are no longer being met
- Risks become unacceptable
- The partner breaches obligations
- Values or ethical standards are compromised
- Funding or strategic priorities change

4.

Resources

- [MOU Template.docx](#)