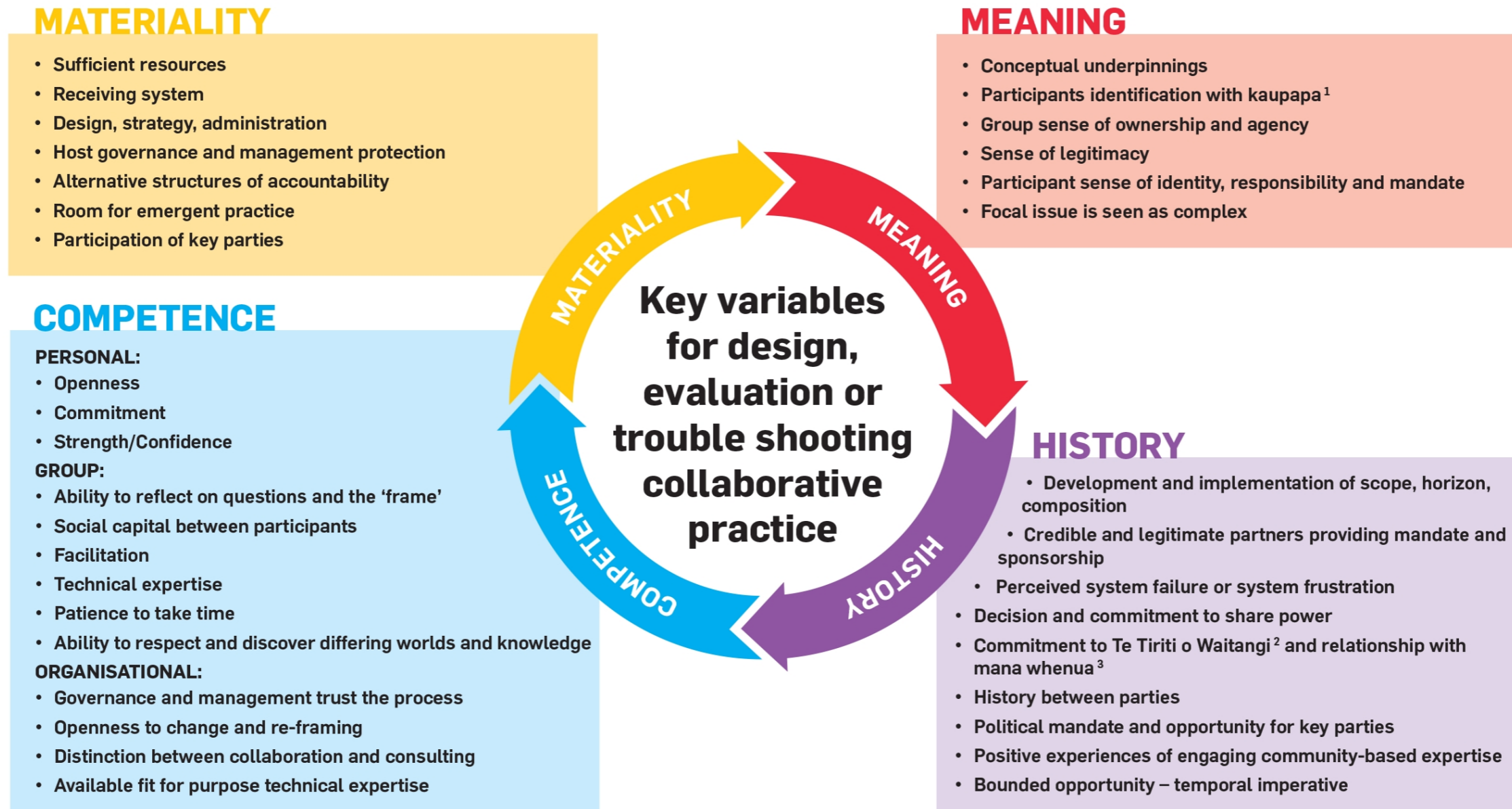


Enabling collaborative practice

what conditions, capabilities and capacities influence the success of collaborative processes?



¹ Agreed basis for action (Māori)

² A treaty establishing partnership between the British Crown and NZ indigenous tribes

³ Indigenous people with local authority over land (Māori)

See further explanations over

Materiality - resources for a collaborative process

Sufficient resources

For example, **time, funding, technical support and facilitation**

Organisational receiving systems

Systems for receiving outputs need to be in place, known and accessible

Design, strategy and administration

A framework of design, strategy and administration requires at least these attributes:

- Participating institutions committed to **Māori rangatiratanga**
- Key partners and stakeholders perceive design and implementation **processes** as credible and legitimate (probably through the involvement of key partners)
- **Scope** of the proposed collaboration is defined: interim goals, targets and outcomes; long-term desired outcome; relationship with selected leadership at various levels of governance
- Participants understand and agree to **processes of deliberation and decision-making**
- Allowance for time and processes required to **build relationships** and mutual appreciation of motivation within the collaboration
- Commitment to nurture, review and renew the various aspects of **enabling soft-infrastructure** throughout the collaborative practice

'Protection' by governance and management

Host organisations have structures of governance and management that understand the **nature and requirements of collaborative processes** and protect the opportunity to grow and practice collaboration

Alternative structures of accountability in organisations

Participating organisations **accountability and reporting** expectations

Room for emergent practice

Ability to **avoid rigidity or standardisation** of what is involved in collaborative practice

Participation from key parties

Degree to which all the relevant parties to a problem are **seen to be involved**

History - features of the particular period of history, its politics, institutions and dynamics

Development and implementation of scope, horizon and composition

How the **scope and horizon** of a collaborative practice have been developed

Credible and legitimate partners providing mandate and sponsorship

Credible and legitimate sponsors mandating the process help other parties to take it seriously and commit to it

Perceived system failure or systemic frustration

Partners and stakeholders believe it is **worth trying something new**, because other approaches have failed

Decision and commitment to share power

Potential participants who hold power decide, before embarking on a collaborative process, to **share power**

Commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Treaty of Waitangi) and relationship with mana whenua

The degree to which the role and priority of mana whenua as expressed in the **Treaty is honoured**

History between parties

How parties to a collaborative practice have related to one another in **the past**

Political mandate and opportunity for key parties

The degree to which participants have **authority to make commitments and take actions**

Positive experiences of engaging community-based expertise

Participants' **experiences of engaging** with other forms of expertise

Bounded opportunity or temporal imperative

The extent to which this moment in history has some **urgency and/or distinctive opportunity** that could constrain or drive collaboration

Meaning - how key parties make sense of their situation, role and opportunity

Conceptual underpinnings

The **conceptual underpinnings** that organisers and participants bring to the practice

Participant identification with the principles and ideas underpinning the work

Participants have sufficient **'stake' in and commitment to the kaupapa** guiding the work

Group sense of ownership and sense of agency in relation to the process and outcomes

Confidence or belief that the process can **result in decisions and action**

Sense of legitimacy

Perception of appropriate involvement and processes in **establishing the collaboration**

Participant sense of identity, responsibility and mandate

The extent to which participants see themselves as **participating as individuals or as representatives**

The extent to which participants **identify with the good of a community**, beyond personal or more limited advantage

Focal issue is seen as complex or 'thorny'

Shared perception that the focus of a collaborative practice has sufficient complexity that it **needs a new approach**

Competence - skills, attitudes and knowledge that parties bring to a collaborative process

Participant competence

Openness to change; to the other; and to other worldviews and knowledge systems

Commitment to the kaupapa (agreed foundation for action); to the common good and long-term outcomes; and to respectful relationships

Strength and confidence to cope with critique; to contribute knowledge and perspectives; to represent the collaborative process and outcomes to stakeholders beyond the collaboration

Group competence

Ability to **reflect on questions and the 'frame'**; to not take the obvious or presenting question for granted

Collaborative practice both depends on and contributes to **social capital between participants**

Facilitation: help the group focus on solutions and move to decisions, communicate well and inclusively, focus on relationships, group-work skills, conceptual underpinnings, put own ego to one side, personal resilience and being self-referenced, willing to own authority (not waiting for permission)

Technical expertise:

- to help participants consider the likely consequences of possible courses of action in a particular situation
- to source and present credible data
- responsive to community and 'lay' questions and data

Patience to take time:

- for building and sustaining relationships and trust
- to take in and consider the inherent complexity of issues and the social complexity of diverse perspectives

Ability to **respect and discover differing worlds and knowledge**

Organisational competence

Governance and management **trust the process**

Capacity for political risk, alternative forms of accountability and some measure of power sharing

Openness to change and re-framing

Competence to reconsider assumptions about how the world and the organisational role are framed

Distinction between collaboration and consulting

Capacity to distinguish between working together (collaboration) and asking for input (consulting).

Available and **fit-for-purpose technical expertise**

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Forthcoming publication: Nicholas, Graeme, Maria Hepi, and Wayne Duncan. in preparation. Enabling collaborative practice: a practical model.