

After your organization has assessed how supportive your organizational culture will be of strategic alliances, a good next step is going through the process of identifying your organization's motivations and priorities for engaging in such relationships. The contemplation of any alliance ought to be done *strategically* and with foresight to ensure that your organization is ready to make the right preparations to take on and sustain a fruitful collaboration. Considering your organization's motivations and priorities before considering what others might be able to offer will help your organization be more strategic in making these types of decisions.

**In assessing potential future alliances, consider these questions for your organization:**

Question	Considerations	Your Organization's Response
Why are we looking at an alliance now?	Think about what has motivated the conversation about strategic alliances within your organization.	
What do we want to achieve from the alliance?	Additional funding? Make funders happy? Find creative new solutions? Enhance our ability to achieve our mission? Help meet strategic goals?	
Is an alliance the best way for us to achieve our goals?	Consider if there would be other ways to achieve the goals identified above. What makes an alliance the best approach?	

What resources are we willing to commit to strategic alliances in terms of dollars and staff time?	Think about financial resources, staff time, in-kind donations, and other organizational resources.	
How is our organization most comfortable in the creation of alliance relationships?	Does your organization initiate or do you wait for others to approach you? Is it strategic or responsive?	
How much control are we willing to cede to an alliance partner?	Consider the level of control that your organization would need to have. If the organization likes to control its activities directly, formal partnerships might not be the best fit.	
Does your organization have the capacity to engage in an alliance?	Alliances take time to establish and implement. Is your staff already stretched thin or does your organization have the capacity to devote resources to these activities?	
Does your organization have any alliances in mind?	If so, do those alliances fit well with the answers provided above? If not, it may not be a good fit. If so, it might be worth assessing at a deeper level using tools included in this toolkit.	

Even if your answers to the Collaborative Culture Index and the motivations assessment do not indicate a high level of readiness for engaging in strategic alliances, it is important to remember that capacity for these types of relationships can be built and competencies can be developed over time. Building capacity is often a matter of identifying and taking advantage of the appropriate actions. This toolkit can be used to help identify some ways for your organization to build its capacity to engage in strategic alliances.

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