Tip Sheet: Planning Equitable Collaboration Meetings

This tip sheet summarizes several practical approaches to promoting greater equity in collaborative meetings across sectors. Dynamics of power and privilege can adversely affect collaboration across sectors even when there is consistent communication. These tips can help partners to mitigate these dynamics in meeting situations.

1. **Set up structures that are inclusive of all partners to a collaboration.** Create a core team that includes someone from each major sector.

2. **Design agendas collaboratively and ensure that content is inclusive.** Frame agendas in a way that engages everyone by avoiding jargon, using open-ended questions, and exploring assumptions.

3. **Share leadership roles.** Rotate meeting facilitation where possible, and seek opportunities to involve all partners in all meeting roles.

4. **Establish a clear group decision making process.** Decide whether decisions with be made via vote or consensus, and how all perspectives will be considered.

5. **Establish group accountability.** These can include partnership norms, communication modes and methods, and clear ways of documenting of collective decisions.

6. **Include different learning styles.** Use visual, verbal and kinesthetic modes, and allow time for all to process information.

7. **Include the cultural approaches of all partners.** Ensure that your partnership supports and benefits from different and holistic points of view.

8. **Use small group or committee work in meetings.** Encourage full exploration of topics by regrouping participants into small groups so that all voices are heard and considered.

9. **Allow time for socializing and relationship building.** Build in adequate breaks, provide food, and create structured opportunities for participants to get to know one another. Also consider rotating meeting locations.

10. **Avoid common institutional pitfalls.** Allow adequate time to address meeting topics; prioritize topics that invite genuine discussion. Avoid gatekeeping and/or decision making outside of established group process.