ANZSOG

School Of Government

RESEARCH INSIGHTS

Co-Governance –

A Guide

CO-GOVERNANCE – A GUIDE

Practical guidance from ANZSOG's project on co-governance and trust in government

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Acknowledgement of country

We value the cultures, knowledge and practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and how this contributes to quality research. We are committed to not perpetuating harms that have been caused by research on and about Indigenous Peoples. We embrace and honour Indigenous knowledges and continue to learn from Indigenous Peoples where we work.

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Social Policy Research Centre

The Social Policy Research Centre is based in the Faculty of Arts, Design and Architecture at UNSW Sydney. The Social Policy Research Centre makes a positive impact through independent and leading research that tackles critical social issues. For more information see https://www.unsw.edu.au/research/sprc.

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CONTENTS

About this guide

This guide has been developed **for both community stakeholders** <u>and</u> **public servants** interested in co-governance. The guide includes:

1. When to consider co-governance

2. Setting up co-governance

3. Implementing co-governance

4. Outcomes from co-governance

5. Other factors to consider across the co-governance process.

Each part of the guide includes a description of factors that enable and sustain the co-governance process, the challenges that may be faced, and how they might be overcome. Each part of the guide is also supported by a summary of publicly available tools and resources – presented in part 6.

The guide was developed using evidence from around the world. This evidence was then tested in the Australian context using three case studies of co-governance in action – the results of this research are published separately (Bates et al. 2025). This guide includes learnings from community organisations, researchers and government from a range of sectors and locations.

What is co-governance?

Co-governance is one mechanism to enable public participation and shared decisionmaking, increase perceived value of initiatives and build trust in public services. Co-governance enables communities to have a collaborative role in public administration (Figure 1) but is not necessarily used in isolation of other public participation activities.

Figure 1 IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation (linear)

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION

| INFORM | CONSULT | INVOLVE | COLLABORATE | EMPOWER |

Source: https://iap2.org.au/resources/spectrum/

Co-governance refers to **collective decision-making**, **formal arrangements**, **deliberative and constructive processes**, **involving government and other stakeholders**, **including community members** (Smyth & Bates, 2022). Co-governance arrangements may range from informal networks to the creation of formal governance entities.

Co-governance involves **sharing power between the public sector and civil society**, recognising that power comes in various forms (such as decision-making, resources, information and knowledge). When the original decision-making power rests with government, government ministers may need to formally establish co-governance and define its parameters. In these cases, government delegates elements of decision-making to a co-governance group. In these situations, co-governance arrangements then make recommendations to government with the government retaining decision-making power. How the co-governance arrangement operates may shape participants understanding of whether something is co-governed or not.

Co-governance is useful when shared decision-making is beneficial, such as:

- Addressing complex issues where input from multiple stakeholders may lead to better outcomes than when each stakeholder tackles those issues alone

- Resolving longer-term or ongoing issues that have been unable to be resolved through traditional approaches.

- Building trust and social licence.

Table 1 Essential components and components that support co-governance

Essential component	Components that support co-governance
• **Delegation of decision-making power** to the co-governance group to make decisions or recommendations, recognising decisionmaking power may include decisions about recommendations to ultimate decisionmakers (e.g., ministers) • **Formal arrangement to collectively make decisions** between government and community through deliberative and constructive processes • **Representative membership** of government and non-government organisations, including	• **Secretariat or coordination support (in collective impact terms, a 'spine')** that facilitates the operation of the co-governance group. • **Accountability and transparency** mechanisms (structures, processes and documentation) to enable participants and community members to understand how and what decisions are made hold co-governance participants (mutually) accountable. • **Agreed principles and ways of working,**

Essential component	Components that support co-governance
community stakeholders and researchers (if relevant) • **Mutually agreed area of focus and goals** encompassing topic and geographic/population scope	including shared values and a common understanding of the issues, goals and expectations. • **Shared leadership** of co-governance group either through shared or rotating chairs • **Members having delegation from their respective organisations to make decisions**, recognising members may need to seek internal sign off for decisions formally.

Other terms used in this guide

Term	Definition
Co-governance or Collaborative governance	Collective decision-making, formal arrangements, deliberative and constructive processes, involving government and other stakeholders, including community members.
Stakeholders	Any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's [or in this context, initiative's] objectives (Freeman, 1984).
Government	The formal institutions and processes through which binding decisions are made for a society, including elected officials, public service agencies, and statutory bodies at all levels that exercise authority in governing a country or state (Binder et al., 2008)

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1 WHEN TO CONSIDER CO-GOVERNANCE

| Identifying when co-governance may be beneficial | Establishing co-governance | Implementing co-governance | Identifying and reporting outcomes |
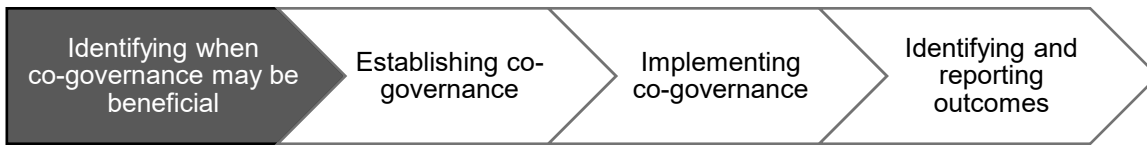
Co-governance may require significant time and resources to establish and implement compared to continuing to operate as business as usual. Co-governance is not expected to look the same everywhere it is used and must be tailored to suit each circumstance – drawing on lessons from elsewhere when relevant. The decision to develop a co-governance arrangement must be well informed to ensure its success.

Co-governance might be considered when:

- There is evidence of a **complex issue** ('wicked problem', 'grand challenge') that is unresolved due to fragmented or uncoordinated operating environment and there is an **ongoing need to make decisions**

- There **are multiple stakeholders with a shared goal**, with similar and differing expertise and responsibilities, that brought together through sustained collaboration, could address the complex issue over time

- There are **compelling benefits** (relative to time and cost) for those involved and the wider community to work together than continue to work alone – these might relate to reducing power imbalances, generating knowledge, and providing economies of scale and scope[1]

- There is an **enabling environment** – e.g. co-governance aligns with organisational priorities of those involved (through policy or strategy) – and government can delegate power to a group.

Co-governance is a potential mechanism, through shared decision-making, to address complex issues that involve multiple stakeholders and take time to resolve. As co-governance takes time, it **may not be suited to address short-term issues** unless the co-governance mechanism is already established.

1.1 Who can initiate co-governance

There are no set rules about who can initiate co-governance – it may be initiated by the community, by government or jointly. However, ultimately, in most cases, the government needs to delegate decision-making and anyone initiating the use of co-governance will need to seek this delegation of decision-making to the group.

A 'champion' may be needed to drive this process and provide a central point of contact.

1.2 Why should stakeholders engage in co-governance

The table below identifies some of the reasons why different stakeholders may want to engage in co-governance.

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[1] See Table 2, The Collaboration Playbook: A leader's guide to cross-sector collaboration.

Table 2 Expected benefits of co-governance for community and government and both

Shared benefits	Community-specific benefits	Government-specific benefits
A structured framework for proactive collaboration between government and community stakeholders to make decisions and take coordinated action on complex issues	Greater access to and influence over decision-making processes that affect local communities	Access to community knowledge and expertise about local issues and community needs
Enhanced information sharing and mutual understanding of roles and responsibilities	Opportunity to build expertise in working with government systems and processes	A mechanism to build knowledge and expertise, recognising that community actors may have a longer history and knowledge of an issue
An opportunity to change the language and tone of a conversation, and bring new perspectives	Direct channel for community advocacy and representation ensuring community priorities are heard and addressed	Ability to overcome internal resistance ('veto actors') through demonstrated community support
Increased trust and strengthened relationships between government and communities	Opportunity to shape solutions that work for local contexts	More effective program and policy implementation through diverse stakeholder input, buy-in and engagement
Clear mechanisms for mutual accountability	Direct access to decision-makers and government processes	Stronger social license for government initiatives

1.3 What is the scope of co-governance?

The scope of a co-governance arrangement is determined by need, by stakeholders, and may vary over time.

Scope may be a factor of:

- **Place** – from small local initiatives to national initiatives

- **Time** – from medium-term to ongoing

- **Population** – from specific cohorts to everyone

- **Policy** areas – from individual to multiple.

The final scope of a co-governance arrangement is based on need and defined in a collaborative process with key stakeholders involved (described in Section 5).

1.4 Enablers and challenges

Key enablers that may support the initiation of a co-governance arrangement include:

- Having a 'champion' to lead the establishment

- Mapping stakeholders

- Building on existing relationships
- Gaining leadership buy-in
- Having the authority to establish and participate in co-governance
- Stakeholders committing to common objectives
- Having resources to establish the arrangement.

The challenges that may be experienced and how they might be addressed are described in Table 3 below.

Table 3 Challenges to initiating co-governance and how they might be overcome

Challenges	How challenges might be overcome
Building new relationships	Stakeholder mapping can help identify connections between existing participants and other stakeholders which the group can build upon. Other external engagement may be needed to promote the initiative and engage others – this may require explanation of co-governance itself, as well as the focus of this initiative.
Seeking agreement from all involved	The process of seeking agreement may differ between the organisations involved but may be similar by types of organisation (such as government organisations and non-government organisations).
Time needed to establish the arrangement	Allow and plan for sufficient time to establish the arrangement. Co-governance is not a 'quick fix' and may take months to establish. This may be quicker where relationships and buy-in already exists, and longer where the initiative is new.
Overcoming structural and cultural barriers	Structural and cultural barriers may exist between organisations and between professions. These differences need to be understood (mapped) to be able to navigate them. This may include governance structures, risk appetite, resources, priorities, and willingness or ability to share information.
Power differences between partners (real or perceived)	Much like structural and cultural barriers, power differences are likely to exist (whether real or perceived) and need to be understood to be managed. Power differences may be associated with organisation size, resources, data, and knowledge. It may also exist between professions.
Differences in what participants and organisations may contribute to co-governance	Co-governance benefits from different capabilities, resources, data, knowledge of its members and is a strength to co-governance arrangements. However, such differences may also impact the capacity of different stakeholders to participate based on organisational priorities and resources. These differences should be mapped and contributions maximised according to capacity.
History of mistrust and failed initiatives	Previous failures should be identified, acknowledged and understood to ensure they are not repeated. Trust may be rebuilt through the process of engagement and by achieving early wins. Trust is likely to change over time.

Additional tools and resources are presented in Appendix A

2 SETTING UP CO-GOVERNANCE

| Identifying when co-governance may be beneficial | Establishing co-governance | Implementing co-governance | Identifying and reporting outcomes |

2.1 Design process

The design process includes engaging with key stakeholders from communities and government to **jointly**:

Negotiate the overall purpose (objective, reason co-governance is needed rather than business as usual)**, scope** (policy areas, place, people, duration), **and shared goals** (aims, objectives, measures of success) of the co-governance arrangement

Identify and **map key stakeholders** (relative to place and people) – go beyond the 'usual suspects' to consider seldom listened to groups, and their roles. Consider approaches such as stakeholder salience model for stakeholder mapping.

Identify dynamics, willingness to collaborate, and how to engage.

- Consider whether engagement is forced (e.g. through a statutory requirement) or voluntary.
- Identify the potential benefits of collaboration for different stakeholders.
- Identify barriers to participation.
- Identify whether participants require resources to participate.
- Identify any potential power imbalances.

Appoint a strong chair(s) (considering both leading organisations and leaders as people) – while also considering how the group is sustainable beyond individuals leading the group

Identify any existing organisational policies, procedures, and protocols that may enable or constrain the work of the group

Identify what arrangements need to be put in place to give effect to co-governance

- Delegation of decision-making by government to group
- Arrangements between organisations (if needed)
- Arrangements within organisations (if needed) to enable participation and support

Identify how co-governance will be supported (backbone, secretariat) –

- Consider is this best placed in government, a community organisation, or shared in some way

Identify how co-governance will be resourced

- Identify resource requirements needed by group and by its members
- Identify whether existing resources meet that need or new resources required
- Consider ways to manage tension between resources and power

Carry forward the momentum of design into the establishment phase

2.2 Design outcomes

Common outcomes from establishing co-governance include having:

- **Delegated power** – and/or an agreement to share power ensures that the group has authority to make decisions (including decisions about what to recommend to decision makers such as Ministers) and take action.

- **Terms of reference** – establishing the scope, role or mission, objectives and expectations of the group, and how it will operate. Terms of reference are strategic and operational and sometimes extend to other documents outlining ways of working.

- **Clear leadership** –either single or joint chairs appointed by the group. The chair of the co-governance arrangement does not have to be the initial champion for the initiative, but someone with the skills and authority to enable the collaborative process and manage stakeholder engagement helping to facilitate collaboration, manage conflicts, and drive progress.

- **Representative membership** – including senior and operational staff, and recognising full representation is not necessarily feasible, ensures that diverse perspectives and interests are considered in decision-making

- **Resourced secretariat** – to support the co-governance group, recognising there are strengths and challenges whether located in government or non-government organisations and that some tasks might be delegated to others.

- **Structured and transparent decision-making** – such as by consensus supports transparency and accountability.

2.3 Enablers and challenges

Key enablers that may support the establishment a co-governance arrangement include:

- Being transparent

- Working inclusively

- Having a strong advocate for change (not necessarily the chair who may be appointed later)

- Having a clear process.

In addition, there are several challenges that may be experienced when setting up a co-governance arrangement. Table 4 below identifies some of the anticipated challenges and explains how they might be overcome.

Table 4 Challenges to setting up co-governance and how they may be overcome

Challenges	How challenges may be overcome
Lack of resources	Additional resources may not be available for the co-governance group. This in some ways makes the arrangement more sustainable as it is not at risk of funding cuts. Some organisations may be able to support others in participating. In some arrangements, the co-governance may be a form of mutual reinforcement where existing resources are further aligned to the objectives of the co-governance arrangement.
Power imbalances	Power imbalances are likely to exist (whether real or perceived) and need to be understood to be managed. Power differences may be associated with organisation size, resources, data, and knowledge. Imbalances may also exist between professions. Identify what power imbalances exist and discuss how they might be navigated.
Lack of authority or delegation	Ideally, members should have delegation to contribute to decisions as part of the group. Where members lack authority or delegation to implement decisions, the process by which decisions can be implemented should be facilitated in other ways – for example, a memorandum of understanding with the group, or clear process and timelines which the group needs to consider to translate decisions into action.

3 IMPLEMENTING CO-GOVERNANCE

Identifying when co-governance may be beneficial	Establishing co-governance	Implementing co-governance	Identifying and reporting outcomes

3.1 Strategic implementation

The strategic implementation of co-governance includes working together to **jointly**:

- **Agree objectives**; short-, medium- and long-term **priorities**; and a work plan– being realistic and aiming for initial wins to build trust in the process.

  o short-term outcomes may include enablers for change, medium-term outcomes may include local changes, and long-term outcomes may relate to population impact.

- **Develop a joint understanding of and commitment to the objectives** – and check in regularly to ensure this understanding is maintained

- **Support members to understand organisational differences** – different cultures, different timeframes (may be misaligned), different ways of working, different sign off processes; different professions; different sizes of organisation (smaller may have less resources but be more agile, larger may have more resources, need more than one representative, and be less agile); different risk appetites

- Develop a program logic or **theory of change** on which to inform action

- Develop **agreed ways of working** together. This includes understanding commonalities and differences between members – both at an organisational level and an individual level.

- Build in **review points** to ensure the group can identify and respond to **changes in context and priorities**. **Check for power imbalances** and **changes in trust.**

- Identify **what is required to sustain the group's operation** – whether engagement, information, resources or other support

- Develop a **communication plan** to ensure the work of the group is transparent and the group can be held accountable

3.2 Operational implementation

Operational implementation considers *what* the group does to deliver its strategic plan. This included:

- Ensure there is **continual engagement** with members to discuss issues and make decisions. Consider when it is better to meet in person and when to convene remotely.

- Ensure stakeholders are **represented and engaged** in meetings.

- Ensure **different types, depths and breadths of expertise are recognised and respected** – including **lived experience**.

- Ensure **informed decision-making** through use of evidence, discussion of issues, and voting.

- **Translate decisions into action**.

- Encourage stakeholders to **engage with the community** they represent.

- Provide **operational support and evaluation** through a secretariat – considering whether secretariat (or

tasks) are best located in government organisations or other stakeholder organisations.

3.3 Reviewing the arrangement

Review processes need to be integrated into the implementation of co-governance to ensure the arrangement remains fit for purpose in terms of both scope and operation. Reviews may be undertaken at different changes of maturity of the arrangement (early-, mid-, mature stages) or due to changes in external factors.

The scope of the **co-governance arrangement** should be reviewed to ensure:

- Policy areas remain relevant
- Geographic scope remains relevant
- Priorities remain relevant

Membership requires a health check to ensure it enables the group to operate and achieve its objectives and reflect any change in requirements from its members. A regular review ensures:

- Membership remains **representative** and reflects changes in public organisations and community interests
- Members are **engaged** (attend and participate in meetings) and are supported
- **Turnover** in membership allows the group to be refreshed to reflect any change in scope, to remain sustainable in the future, but not too high to cause disruption
- Any **change in membership** requires support to build new relationships and to ensure the history and learnings were not lost.

Groups work well when they know and support the mission of the collaborative. Establishing and maintaining relationships between members is key to group functioning.

The **operational mechanisms** should also be reviewed to ensure

- **Strategies and operational plans** remain relevant and reflect outcomes achieved, new data and information, changes in priorities, resources available, and changes in needs.
- **Decision-making processes** remain fit for purpose.
- **Resources** are available to enable participation, including the ongoing development of capabilities.
- **Secretariat support** is an enabler (rather than a gatekeeper) to the operation of the group.

3.4 Enablers and challenges

Key enablers that may support the implementation of a co-governance arrangement include:
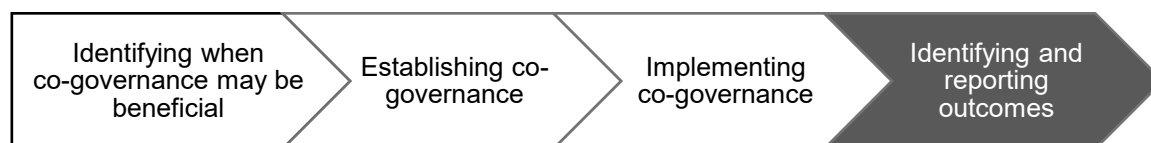
- **Clear mission**, mission promoted, and members support and advocate for that mission.

- **Genuine opportunity to participate** – not tokenistic – and different strategies and opportunities to engage.

- **Understanding who does what** – and by extension, who can do what.

Challenges, and how to potentially overcome them, are presented in Table 5 below.

Table 5 Challenges to implementing co-governance and how to overcome them

Challenges	How to overcome the challenge
Low attendance or participation due to lack of time and resources, lack of trust, or due to trusting the process or other participants.	Given non-attendance could indicate trust or lack of trust in the process, it is important to understand why participants have disengaged. Where this is due to a lack of time and resources may be overcome through alternative forms of engagement, or by resourcing where resources are available. Where this is due to a lack of trust, the group may need to work through a way to rebuild trust.
Poor relationship between stakeholders or a lack of understanding of each other.	This can be mitigated by setting aside time to get to know each other (preferably face to face). If there is a high turn-over of participants, this should be repeated as needed.
Limitations in what decisions can be made.	Decision-making may be only one role of co-governance. Relationships formed through co-governance, and information shared, may spill over into other activities. Therefore, it is important to capture the direct and indirect outcomes of the group. Having a clear understanding of the scope of the group, the decisions that are expected to be made, and other outcomes, can manage expectations of participants.

4 OUTCOMES FROM CO-GOVERNANCE

| Identifying when co-governance may be beneficial | Establishing co-governance | Implementing co-governance | Identifying and reporting outcomes |

Outcomes should be monitored and reported to build trust in the process for all stakeholders and the broader community. This provides accountability for the group's actions.

Outcomes arise from:

- The process of co-governance (process outcomes)

- What co-governance achieves over and above what would have been achieved by individual members (direct outcomes)

- Spillover effects, such as transferring process and direct outcomes to other contexts (indirect outcomes).

4.1 Process outcomes

Process outcomes include:

- **Outputs of the co-governance process**. This includes the terms of reference, strategic and operational plans, charters, work plans, minutes from meetings, ways of working, that are an outcome of the process and provide accountability for the groups work.

- **A mechanism to monitor and report operational outputs and outcomes**. Given co-governance is tailored to specific contexts and no two arrangements may look the same, it is critical to establish a mechanism to monitor, evaluate and report on the outcomes of co-governance. This provides an opportunity to build confidence in the process and identify where changes may be required.

- **Increased understanding and awareness of how other organisations work.** While government agencies and public servants often understand how government 'does business', this is not always well understood by other organisations. Similarly, non-government organisations have different governance mechanisms, risk appetites, and delegations, depending on organisation and sometimes associated with size.

- **New relationships formed and existing relationships strengthened**. Often non-government organisations have a long history in a context and have developed strong relationships with others. It is important to monitor how new relationships were established and existing relationships strengthened.

- **Sharing of information, power and resources within the group**. Co-governance can be used to address imbalances in information, power and resources. This should be monitored to understand whether this sharing is effective or further work is required.

- **Sharing of information with the broader community**. This increases transparency, accountability and can build broader trust in the process.

- **Informed decision-making** – having sufficient information and discussion to understand issue and decision made

- **Trust increased in other stakeholders** – this could be trust in government, trust in the co-governance process, or trust between stakeholders

- **Other needs identified** such as training

- **Incorporation of other 'co-' activities as needed**

- **Trust in process and willingness to continue**.

4.2 Direct outcomes

The time taken to establish the process and achieve process outcomes should not be underestimated. Direct outcomes are likely to be:

- Incremental and case specific

- A mix of early wins to demonstrate the functioning of the process and short-term outcomes that build trust in process

- Mutually reinforcing activities – where work of individual partners or collaborations contribute to mutual goals, or stopping activities that undermine, compromise or threaten mutual goals

- Mechanisms to hold government to account – publishing plans and reporting progress against those plans

- Agreement to continue.

Mechanisms need to be established to measure direct outcomes, for example, documenting outcomes against a work plan.

4.3 Indirect outcomes

There are also likely to be indirect outcomes arising from the co-governance arrangement. Such outcomes should be captured periodically to highlight the broader benefit of co-governance; for example, through a membership survey/health check. Indirect outcomes may include:

- **Spillover effects**, such as **benefiting from relationships** built through co-governance in different contexts. Spillover effects also included forming **new partnerships** as a result of the co-governance group, such as working on separate projects with a member of the group.

- **Transferring lessons to other areas** (policies and contexts). This includes using co-governance elsewhere or transferring the outputs of co-governance to other contexts.

4.4 Enablers and challenges

Key enablers that can support the achievement and recording of outcomes from a co-governance arrangement include:

- Having a **clear workplan and monitoring plan** to track outcomes

- Having **regular check ins** with members to ensure healthy functioning of the group

- Identifying **short-term outputs** which may be the enablers of change, **medium term outputs** which may be early evidence of change, and **long-term outcomes** which may be a population level impact.

Table 6 Challenges to achieving and recording outcomes co-governance and how to overcome them

Challenges	How to potentially overcome challenges
Slow to show progress.	Develop some work items that are 'quick wins' to build confidence in the process.
Lack of data.	Data needs should be identified early in the co-governance process, along with meaningful data that is available either publicly or through organisations that may help monitor outcomes. New data may be collected as part of the process; for example, surveys of co-governance participants, community members, and program data from any changes implemented.
Different value attached to different data types and different data sources.	Different organisations and disciplines place different values on different data types and sources. During initiation phase, include explicit discussion and agreement for how different forms of knowledge and evidence will be considered and valued. This includes recognising the value of community-generated data and lived experience alongside traditional data sources. Consider: o Seeking agreement on how different types of evidence will inform decision-making o Developing processes for transparent documentation of all data sources and their limitations o Identifying mechanisms for addressing disagreements about data interpretation.

5   OTHER CROSS-CUTTING FACTORS THAT ENABLE AND SUSTAIN CO-GOVERNANCE

In addition to the four-step process, there are several other linked cross-cutting considerations that enable and sustain co-governance. They relate to engagement with First Nations communities and organisations; engagement with other priority populations; data usage; trust building and power sharing, transparency and accountability; and resources (including capabilities, time and financial resources).

5.1   Engagement with First Nations communities and organisations

Some co-governance arrangements are initiated and led by First Nations communities and groups. In other circumstances First Nations communities and organisations and participants may be stakeholders when the co-governance arrangements are initiated. Recognising each co-governance context is likely to be unique, in establishing co-governance, consider:

- Ensure Aboriginal leadership in:
    - o   Identifying different nations and community leaders, and relevant organisations, to engage in co-governance
    - o   Identify cultural needs and cultural protocols
    - o   Identify relevant stakeholders
- Work with First Nations communities and organisations to develop ways of working. Considerations include:
    - o   Incorporating Aboriginal ways of being, doing and knowing
    - o   Who, how and when to collaborate
    - o   What resources are required to enable collaboration
    - o   Mechanisms to ensure transparency with communities, communicating outcomes through different channels.
- Develop ongoing processes and governance structures to ensure First Nation communities are engaged and being heard

5.2   Identify any other cultural or population specific considerations, including adjustments required to ensure engagement

Identify population specific considerations that need to be identified and addressed. This may relate to priority populations or organisations. This includes:

- Identifying specific populations or groups - taking an intersectional approach to take account of different social identities, life experience, power relations and how they interact with context.

- Understanding local context and history of relationships between stakeholders including addressing past experiences that may affect trust and willingness to engage

- Recognising and addressing challenges posed by 'business as usual' government practices including:

    - o   bureaucratic complexity

    - o   inconsistent communication

    - o   lack of consideration for unequal levels of resourcing

    - o   capacity and power.

- Identifying mechanisms to ensure different groups are included. For example:

    - o   Providing interpreters

- o Providing plain English or easy read material

- o Following cultural protocols and creating culturally safe spaces

- o Developing a common working language, definitions and style guide to ensure language is inclusive

- o Ensuring access needs are met

- o Ensuring processes, ways of working, and language used are not stigmatising.

5.3 Data

Data has a key role across the co-governance process alone, and in combination with trust/power and transparency.

Data may inform:

- The need for co-governance

- The priorities of co-governance

- Whether outcomes are achieved

- The health and functioning of the group to inform the review process (see Section 3.3).

Consider:

- What data exists that meets these requirements, how data can be accessed and used.

- What new data needs to be collected and how, including any ethics, data governance issues and data sovereignty.

- Whether different stakeholders place different values on different sources of data and how this might be resolved.

- How data is shared and reported.

5.4 Trust and power, transparency (and accountability)

Trust, power, transparency and accountability are interrelated as shown in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2 The interrelation between trust, power, accountability and transparency

Trust

Accountability

Power
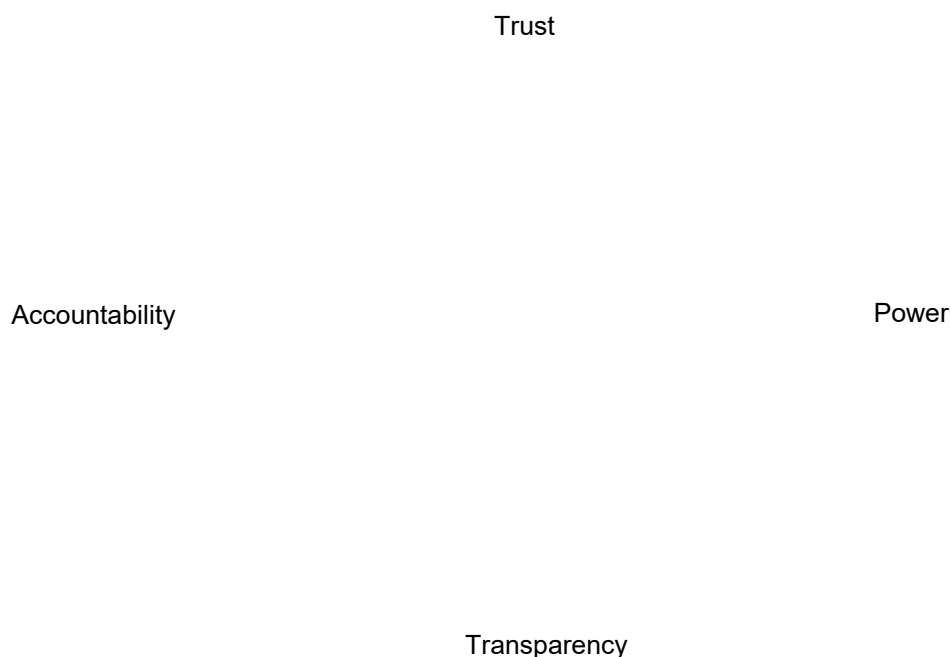
Transparency

Transparency in operations is likely to build trust in the process and outcomes of co-governance for both participants and other stakeholders. Consider how the terms of reference for the group and its work are made public (where it is made available, how stakeholders know where to find it, what type of information is available).

To provide transparency, consider:

- Establishing clear and accessible communication channels

- Sharing information about the timelines, process, membership, work plan, meeting outcomes, progress updates, feedback and decisions in formats accessible to all stakeholders, including marginalised groups

- Ensuring information shared is accurate, current, accessible, reflective of ongoing developments and culturally appropriate.

The interplay between trust, power, and accountability is dynamic and context specific. While co-governance can act as a mechanism to address pre-existing mistrust, it requires sustained effort to uphold transparency and demonstrate accountability. Building trust through transparent power-sharing is a gradual process, particularly in contexts where historical grievances and systemic inequities persist. Strategies may include:

- Co-designed accountability frameworks
- Inclusive reporting structures
- Ongoing dialogue among stakeholders to align priorities and foster mutual respect.

Embedding transparency and accountability into every stage of co-governance can help to balance trust and power more effectively, laying a strong foundation for sustainable collaboration.

5.5 Capabilities of individuals and organisations

Consider:

- Identifying capabilities of individuals and organisations needed for the co-governance group to function –

recognising that a diversity of skills and knowledge is important, but need a common level of understanding and language to engage

- Mapping capabilities of individuals and organisations – including skills, knowledge, resources (e.g. data, systems, financial resources), and constraints (e.g. ability to publish information)

- Identifying any gaps that need to be addressed, including training or support needs that enable participation in co-governance

- Providing a mechanism for knowledge sharing and sense-making among stakeholders

- Succession planning and succession processes, particularly where there is a high turnover of members.

5.6 Time

Each step in the process takes time, and taking time to go through different processes itself is important to build trust. Co-governance may not be a good option to consider if there is not sufficient time to design and then implement the arrangement.

Consider:

- Developing an understanding of the time required and ways to manage expectations

- Identifying short, medium and longer-term initiatives and outcomes, allowing quick wins to build trust in the process

- Recognising process outcomes (such as strategic plans) as well as operational outcomes (such as projects bringing about change)

- Identifying opportunities to expedite the timeline where possible

- Whether a short-term goal or long-term plan is required.

5.7 Resources

Resourcing can be considered when setting up co-governance and during its operation. Consider:

- Resources required to participate in co-governance

- Whether participants have resources to participate or whether additional resources are required for some or all participants (recognising that not being reliant on precarious funding can create some sustainability for those who can afford to participate)

- Whether resources are required to implement work plan or bring about change or whether change relies on existing resources of participating organisations

- Differences in resourcing and their impact on participation and power imbalances

6 TOOLS, RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

The additional references are organised by section of the guide to enable easy use. References may appear in more than one section and signpost what part of the reference is most relevant to that stage of co-governance.

6.1 About this guide: Additional tools and resources

- **Would adopting more co-governance arrangements with communities build public trust? A scoping study** produced by the Social Policy Research Centre for ANZSOG, available from https://anzsog.edu.au/research-insights-and-resources/research/would-adopting-more-co-governance-arrangements-with-communities-build-public-trust/.

  This scoping study, developed during the first stage of the current project is the foundational academic and research basis for our subsequent case studies, this study explores methods to operationalize and implement co-governance. It highlights key findings and implications for policy and practice.

- The **Collaboration Playbook: A leaders guide to cross-sector collaboration**. By Ian Taylor and Nigel Ball, The Whitehall & Industry Group (WIG) and the Government Outcomes Lab (GO Lab) University of Oxford. https://golab.bsg.ox.ac.uk/knowledge-bank/resource-library/collaboration-playbook/

  This evidence-based guide is designed to support leaders in cross-sector collaboration. It addresses the complexities of collaboration highlighting practical tactics using 4 case studies. Page 10 provides a useful overview of five elements of collaboration: leadership, trust, culture, power, and learning. Page 17 provides useful definition of collaboration.

- **IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation** – see https://iap2.org.au/resources/spectrum/. Developed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2).

  The linear model outlines five levels of public participation: Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, and Empower. Each level defines the public's role in decision-making processes providing a useful resource for identifying and explaining levels and implications of types of engagement.

- **Working together collaboration for health: A practical guide** https://www.unsw.edu.au/content/dam/images/medicine-health/cphce/websites/2323-02-cphce-website/Working%20Together%20-%20Collaboration%20Guide%20for%20Health%20-%20Digital%20Version%2011-2023.pdf

  This guide provides practical guidance for collaboration both between health and other sectors. Is intended for people and organisations that have identified a complex social problem that can only be resolved through collaboration with other parties, necessitating work across sectoral organisational, professional and personal boundaries. Outlines a conceptual framework of the core elements of intersectoral collaboration for health.

- **Skills, attitudes and behaviours that fuel public innovation: A guide to getting the most from Nesta's Competency Framework for Experimenting and Public Problem Solving**. https://www.nesta.org.uk/toolkit/skills-attitudes-and-behaviours-fuel-public-innovation/

  The toolkit presents a competency framework that includes essential skills such as creative facilitation and systems thinking, along with attitudes like curiosity and empathy. This resource is useful for understanding and implementing co-governance, as it outlines attitudes and skills

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necessary to support innovation and collaboration within public institutions.

- **Australian Public Service Framework for Engagement and Participation** (updated August 2021) produced by the Australian Public Service, available from https://www.industry.gov.au/publications/aps-framework-engagement-and-participation

  This decision tool helps public servants pick the right engagement technique for the problem at hand and includes a catalogue of techniques to apply. It consists of principles for engagement and participation, ways to engage, standards, what citizens and stakeholders should be encouraged to do, and a series of engagement tools.

- **Place-based approaches: A guide for the Victorian Public Service** available from *https://www.vic.gov.au/place-based-approaches-guide*

  This best practice guide developed by ANZSOG for Victorian Public Service Employees provides overview of the key concepts and elements that underpin best practice place-based approaches. Chapter 7, titled "Collaborative Governance," is particularly relevant for understanding co-governance. It outlines how collaborative governance structures can be established and maintained, emphasizing the importance of cooperation between various stakeholders to plan, implement, and monitor place-based initiatives.

- **The Place-based capability framework** produced by the Victorian Public Sector Commission available from https://www.vic.gov.au/place-based-capability-framework

  This framework complements the "Place-based Approaches: A Guide for the Victorian Public Service, outlines 6 competency areas required for effective place-based approaches; adaptive and facilitative leadership, balancing power ad sharing accountability, information and data sharing, joined up work, knowledge and application of place based approaches, and place based monitoring, evaluation ad learning.

- **Collaborative governance: An introductory practice guide** produced by PlatformC, available from https://platformc.org/sites/default/files/2020-07/Collaborative%20Governance%20Guide%20June%202020.pdf

  This guide provides an overview of collaborative governance principles and ways of building and sustaining the collaborative governance structures and practices. It addresses questions such as the need for collaborative governance, its evolution over time, and the roles of government and other stakeholders. See 'What are the principles that guide collaborative governance?'

- **Sustaining Collective Impact Efforts Tool**, Tamarak Institute, 2017 available from https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/hubfs/Resources/Publications/Sustaining%20Collective%20Impact%20Efforts%20Tool.pdf?hsCtaTracking=60099437-beff-405a-9ff0-6195645617b4%7Cc907aaee-03ca-41f4-bcf0-acb58243a3c3

  This tool focuses on maintaining and sustaining collective impact initiatives. It emphasises 7 factors to ensure long-term sustainability and success: leadership competence, effective collaboration, understanding the community, demonstrating results, strategic funding, staff involvement and integration and community responsivity.

- **Toward a theory of stakeholder identification and salience: Defining the principle of who and what really counts.** Ronald Mitchell, Bradly Agle and Donna Wood. *The Academy of Management*

6.2 When to consider co-governance: tools and resources

- Nesta. **Skills, attitudes and behaviours that fuel public innovation: A guide to getting the most from Nesta's competency framework for experimenting and public problem solving**. Nesta https://www.nesta.org.uk/toolkit/skills-attitudes-and-behaviours-fuel-public-innovation/

  Nesta is The UK's innovation agency for social good. This guide was developed to develop competencies needed to successfully solve public problems. It can be used to prompt conversations about some of the soft skills needed to work together, accelerate learning, and facilitate change.

- **A framework for place-based approaches: The start of a conversation about working differently for better outcomes, produced by the Victoria Government**, *available from* https://www.vic.gov.au/framework-place-based-approaches

  This framework recognizes that working with communities is a key capability for government and government organisations should increase capability to support civic engagement. While focusing on place-focused and place-based approaches, the framework provides useful guidance on community and government readiness (P28) and the time it takes to demonstrate impact (P36).

- **Place-based approaches: A guide for the Victorian Public Service** available from *https://www.vic.gov.au/place-based-approaches-guide*

  This best practice guide developed by ANZSOG for Victorian Public Service Employees provides overview of the key concepts and elements that underpin best practice place-based approaches. Chapter 7, titled "Collaborative Governance," is particularly relevant for understanding co-governance. It outlines how collaborative governance structures can be established and maintained, emphasizing the importance of cooperation between various stakeholders to plan, implement, and monitor place-based initiatives.

- **The Place-based capability framework** produced by the Victorian Public Sector Commission available from https://www.vic.gov.au/place-based-capability-framework

  This framework complements the "Place-based Approaches: A Guide for the Victorian Public Service, outlines 6 competency areas required for effective place-based approaches; adaptive and facilitative leadership, balancing power ad sharing accountability, information and data sharing, joined up work, knowledge and application of place based approaches, and place based monitoring, evaluation ad learning.

- **Would adopting more co-governance arrangements with communities build public trust? A scoping study** produced by the Social Policy Research Centre for ANZSOG, available from https://anzsog.edu.au/research-insights-and-resources/research/would-adopting-more-co-governance-arrangements-with-communities-build-public-trust/.

  This scoping study, developed during the first stage of the current project is the foundational academic and research basis for our subsequent case studies, this study explores methods to operationalize and implement co-governance. It highlights key findings and implications for policy and practice.

- **Co-governance case studies**:

- o Waterloo human services collaborative

- o National Disability Data Alliance

- o Maranguka.

The co-governance case studies provide examples of how different co-governance arrangements came about.

- The **Collaboration Playbook: A leaders guide to cross-sector collaboration**. By Ian Taylor and Nigel Ball, The Whitehall & Industry Group (WIG) and the Government Outcomes Lab (GO Lab) University of Oxford. https://golab.bsg.ox.ac.uk/knowledge-bank/resource-library/collaboration-playbook/

  This evidence-based guide is designed to support leaders in cross-sector collaboration. It addresses the complexities of collaboration highlighting practical tactics using 4 case studies. See the chapter 'Why collaborate (and why not?)' about when to collaborate and the risks of collaboration.

- **Justice Reinvest toolkit** developed by Just Reinvest, available from https://www.indigenousjustice.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/mp/files/resources/files/jr-toolkit-v13-250119-1.pdf

  Just Reinvest is a NSW initiative, bringing together over 20 organisations and individuals to address the over-representation of Aboriginal young people in the justice system through investment in initiatives that reduce crime. Just Reinvest developed a toolkit to help communities learn how to invest in community initiatives that reduce crime. See 'Part 1: Preconditions for exploring JR. 'Is your community ready to explore a JR approach – Are you committed for the long term?' which sets out questions to think about when considering a new approach.

6.3 Setting up co-governance: tools and resources

- **Place-based approaches: A guide for the Victorian Public Service** available from
  https://www.vic.gov.au/place-based-approaches-guide

  This best practice guide developed by ANZSOG for Victorian Public Service Employees provides overview of the key concepts and elements that underpin best practice place-based approaches. Chapter 7, titled "Collaborative Governance," is particularly relevant for understanding co-governance. It outlines how collaborative governance structures can be established and maintained, emphasizing the importance of cooperation between various stakeholders to plan, implement, and monitor place-based initiatives.

- **The Place-based capability framework** produced by the Victorian Public Sector Commission available from https://www.vic.gov.au/place-based-capability-framework

  This framework complements the "Place-based Approaches: A Guide for the Victorian Public Service, outlines 6 competency areas required for effective place-based approaches; adaptive and facilitative leadership, balancing power ad sharing accountability, information and data sharing, joined up work, knowledge and application of place based approaches, and place based monitoring, evaluation ad learning.

- **Place-based approaches in action – designing place-based approaches** available from
  https://www.vic.gov.au/framework-place-based-approaches

This document complements the "Place-based Approaches: A Guide for the Victorian Public Service. See Section 3, 'Place-based approaches in action – designing place-based approaches', for guidance on designing and implanting place-based approaches.

- **Funding place-based approaches: A toolkit for the Victorian Public Service**, available from https://www.vic.gov.au/place-based-approaches-funding-toolkit

  This toolkit complements the "Place-based Approaches: A Guide for the Victorian Public Service. See 'formalising a partnership' (P36) and Flexible Funding Spectrum (P31).

- **Getting stakeholder engagement right**. Australian Public Service Commission, available from https://www.apsc.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/aps-mobility-framework/taskforce-toolkit/stakeholder-engagement/getting-stakeholder-engagement-right.

  This resource from the Australian Public Service Commission provides guidance on stakeholder engagement within the APS Mobility Framework. The stakeholder mapping section outlines methods for identifying and categorising stakeholders based on their influence and interest. It includes a template to support in the mapping process.

- The **Collaboration Playbook: A leaders guide to cross-sector collaboration**. By Ian Taylor and Nigel Ball, The Whitehall & Industry Group (WIG) and the Government Outcomes Lab (GO Lab) University of Oxford. https://golab.bsg.ox.ac.uk/knowledge-bank/resource-library/collaboration-playbook/

  This evidence-based guide is designed to support leaders in cross-sector collaboration and recognises you 'need to be vulnerable to win' (P15). It addresses the complexities of collaboration highlighting practical tactics using 4 case studies. See P18 'Leadership'

- **Good Practice Guidelines for Engaging with People with Disability**. https://www.disabilitygateway.gov.au/document/9881

  This guidance explains how to engage people who have not been traditionally engaged in different processes. While targeting engagement of people with disability, there are key learnings that can help ensure design, planning and delivery is accessible and meaningfully engages people who have not traditionally been engaged.

- **Systems thinking: An introductory toolkit for Civil Services,** produced by the UK Government Office of Science available from https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/systems-thinking-for-civil-servants/toolkit

  This explainer for public servants providers an overview of systems thinking concepts. See 'Principle 1: Identify the key issues and establish a collaborating community with a shared goal', and 'Principle 2: Reach a shared understanding of the problem'.

- **Co-governance case studies**:

  - Waterloo human services collaborative
  - National Disability Data Alliance
  - Maranguka.

The co-governance case studies provide examples of how different co-governance arrangements came about.

6.4 Implementing co-governance: tools and resources

- **Place-based approaches: A guide for the Victorian Public Service** available from *https://www.vic.gov.au/place-based-approaches-guide*

   This best practice guide developed by ANZSOG for Victorian Public Service Employees provides overview of the key concepts and elements that underpin best practice place-based approaches. See Chapter 9 'Sustainability of place-based approaches' (P102).

- **A framework for place-based approaches: The start of a conversation about working differently for better outcomes, produced by the Victoria Government**, *available from* https://www.vic.gov.au/framework-place-based-approaches

   This framework recognizes that working with communities is a key capability for government and government organisations should increase capability to support civic engagement. While focusing on place-focused and place-based approaches, the framework provides useful guidance on the time it takes to demonstrate impact (P36).

- **Place-based approaches: A guide for the Victorian Public Service** available from *https://www.vic.gov.au/place-based-approaches-guide*

   This best practice guide developed by ANZSOG for Victorian Public Service Employees provides overview of the key concepts and elements that underpin best practice place-based approaches. Chapter 2, 'Working with local communities and government agencies', is a usual resource to identify ways to work with different types of organisation.

- **Collaborative governance: An introductory practice guide** produced by PlatformC, available from https://platformc.org/sites/default/files/2020-07/Collaborative%20Governance%20Guide%20June%202020.pdf

   This guide provides an overview of collaborative governance principles and ways of building and sustaining the collaborative governance structures and practices. It addresses questions such as the need for collaborative governance, its evolution over time, and the roles of government and other stakeholders. See in particular, 'How does collaborative governance evolve over time'.

- **Systems thinking: An introductory toolkit for Civil Services,** produced by the UK Government Office of Science available from https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/systems-thinking-for-civil-servants/toolkit

   This explainer for public servants providers an overview of systems thinking concepts. See 'Principle 3: Explore interventions using and understanding of the system and its possible leverage points'.

- **Justice Reinvest toolkit** developed by Just Reinvest, available from https://www.indigenousjustice.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/mp/files/resources/files/jr-toolkit-v13-250119-1.pdf

   Just Reinvest is a NSW initiative, bringing together over 20 organisations and individuals to address the over-representation of Aboriginal young people in the justice system through investment in

initiatives that reduce crime. Just Reinvest developed a toolkit to help communities learn how to invest in community initiatives that reduce crime. See 'Part 6: Developing and Implementing your JR plan' which draws on the collective impact approach to (1) set a common agenda, (2) measure change, (3) have mutually reinforcing activities, (4) encourage continuous communication, (5) implement backbone support.

- **Co-governance case studies**:

    o   Waterloo human services collaborative

    o   National Disability Data Alliance

    o   Maranguka

The co-governance case studies provide examples of how different co-governance arrangements came about.

6.5 Outcomes from co-governance: tools and resources

- **A framework for place-based approaches: The start of a conversation about working differently for better outcomes, produced by the Victoria Government**, *available from* https://www.vic.gov.au/framework-place-based-approaches

This framework recognizes that working with communities is a key capability for government and government organisations should increase capability to support civic engagement. While focusing on place-focused and place-based approaches, the framework provides useful guidance on the time it takes to demonstrate impact (P36).

- **Place-based approaches: A guide for the Victorian Public Service** available from *https://www.vic.gov.au/place-based-approaches-guide*

This best practice guide developed by ANZSOG for Victorian Public Service Employees provides overview of the key concepts and elements that underpin best practice place-based approaches. See Chapter 4 'Monitoring, evaluation and learning' which includes key considerations, case studies and additional tools and resources (P50), and Chapter 5 'Data and evidence'.

- **Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning for place-based approaches: A toolkit for the Victorian Public Service**, available from https://www.vic.gov.au/place-based-monitoring-evaluation-and-learning-toolkit

This is a collection of tools developed to monitor, evaluate and learn from place based approaches. The toolkit highlights why monitoring, evaluation and learning is important. Chapter 2 provides an overview of what to consider when setting up a monitoring, evaluation and learning framework. Chapter 3 provides examples and guidance, including how to overcome challenges. The toolkit also includes economic assessments.

- **Systems thinking: An introductory toolkit for Civil Services,** produced by the UK Government Office of Science available from https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/systems-thinking-for-civil-servants/toolkit

This explainer for public servants providers an overview of systems thinking concepts. See 'Principle 5: Monitor, evaluation and learn with the community'.

- **Co-governance case studies**:

    - Waterloo human services collaborative

    - National Disability Data Alliance

    - Maranguka.

The co-governance case studies provide examples of how different co-governance arrangements came about.

6.6 Other considerations: tools and resources

Tools and resources are organised by theme and therefore may appear more than once.

Engaging First Nations communities and organisations

- **Place-based approaches: A guide for the Victorian Public Service** available from *https://www.vic.gov.au/place-based-approaches-guide*

    This best practice guide developed by ANZSOG for Victorian Public Service Employees provides overview of the key concepts and elements that underpin best practice place-based approaches. See Chapter 3 'Working with diverse communities' and the section on working with First Nations communities (P43)

- **Cultural Capability Resources by the Australian Public Service Commission**: available from https://www.apsc.gov.au/working-aps/diversity-and-inclusion/first-nations-employment/cultural-capability?utm_source=chatgpt.com

    The APS provides information, practical guidance, resources, and tools to promote culturally safe and inclusive practices across the public service. These resources aim to uplift cultural capability and support the design and delivery of better products and services.

- **Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Toolkit**: Developed by the Victorian Public Sector Commission, available from https://vpsc.vic.gov.au/workforce-programs/aboriginal-cultural-capability-toolkit/

    This toolkit supports public sector workplaces in building their capacity to attract, recruit, and retain Aboriginal employees. It provides guidance on creating culturally safe and inclusive environments. While not directly on community governance, it provides important information on the cultural history, protocols, capacity and potentials of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in the work environment, which can be useful references for government stakeholders and in the setting of community governance.

- **Justice Reinvest toolkit** developed by Just Reinvest, available from https://www.indigenousjustice.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/mp/files/resources/files/jr-toolkit-v13-250119-1.pdf

    Just Reinvest is a NSW initiative, bringing together over 20 organisations and individuals to address the over-representation of Aboriginal young people in the justice system through investment in initiatives that reduce crime. Just Reinvest developed a toolkit to help communities learn how to invest in community initiatives that reduce crime.

- **Indigenous Governance Toolkit**: available from https://aigi.org.au/toolkit

Developed by the Australian Indigenous Governance Institute, this comprehensive online resource assists Indigenous organizations, communities, and individuals in building and strengthening their governance. It covers various aspects, including cultural legitimacy, leadership, and decision-making, providing practical tools and examples to support culturally informed governance practices.

- **Local Government Aboriginal Cultural Capability Toolkit**: published by LGA South Australia, Available from https://www.lga.sa.gov.au/members/services/research-and-publications/library/2023/local-government-aboriginal-cultural-capability-toolkit?utm_source=chatgpt.com

   This toolkit offers practical guidance and resources related to reconciliation and cultural competence. It aims to support councils in developing culturally appropriate governance practices and fostering effective engagement with Aboriginal communities.

Working with other cultural groups and communities

- **Place-based approaches: A guide for the Victorian Public Service** available from *https://www.vic.gov.au/place-based-approaches-guide*

   This best practice guide developed by ANZSOG for Victorian Public Service Employees provides overview of the key concepts and elements that underpin best practice place-based approaches. See Chapter 3 'Working with diverse communities' which includes guidance on engaging with culturally and linguistically diverse communities, engaging people with disability, engaging with different age groups, engaging LGBTIQ+ communities, and links to additional resources.

- **UN Womens' Intersectionality Resource Guide and Tool Kit: An intersectional approach to leave no one behind,** produced by UN PRPD and UN Women, available from **https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-01/Intersectionality-resource-guide-and-toolkit-en.pdf**

   This toolkit aims to help organisations and individuals address intersectionality in policies and programs to ensure no one is left behind. It recognises intersectionality is a process – not an add on. It identifies eight enablers and provides a framework to provide an intersectional approach – drawing on practical examples – to help identify who is affected and how, and to include those affected in policy and program design.

- **Good Practice Guidelines for Engaging with People with Disability**. https://www.disabilitygateway.gov.au/document/9881

   This guidance explains how to engage people who have not been traditionally engaged in different processes. While targeting engagement of people with disability, there are key learnings that can help ensure design, planning and delivery is accessible and meaningfully engages people who have not traditionally been engaged.

- **Cultural Competence Tools by the Centre for Culture, Ethnicity & Health**, available from ceh.org.au

   This resource offers two tools—one for organisations' to assess their cultural competence (https://www.ceh.org.au/cultural-competence-assessment-for-organisations/) and another for practitioners to reflect on their cultural competition https://www.ceh.org.au/cultural-competence-

reflection-tool-for-practitioners/ These tools assist in assessing and improving cultural competence by focusing on policies, systems, practices, and individual self-reflection. These toolkits include discussions of immigrants and refugees.

Data

- **Government administrative data sources for evaluation in Australia**, provided by the Australian Centre for Evaluation (ACE), Commonwealth Treasury, available from https://evaluation.treasury.gov.au/publications/government-administrative-data-sources-evaluation-australia

  This resource explains what Australian Government routinely collected administrative data is available to inform evaluations – from both Commonwealth agencies and states and territories.

- **Website: Share data**, provided by the Australian Government, Office of the National Data Commissioner, available from https://www.datacommissioner.gov.au/share-data

  This resource, prepared by the Office of the National Data Commission, explains what Australian Government data can be shared and sets out the five safes for deciding if it is safe to share data.

- **Five Safes Framework – Data Confidentiality Guide**, produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, available from https://www.abs.gov.au/about/data-services/data-confidentiality-guide/five-safes-framework

  This framework provides information on disclosure risk and data, providing useful information to data custodians which can include co-governance groups if generating new data as part of their work.

- **Place-based approaches: A guide for the Victorian Public Service** available from *https://www.vic.gov.au/place-based-approaches-guide*

  This best practice guide developed by ANZSOG for Victorian Public Service Employees provides overview of the key concepts and elements that underpin best practice place-based approaches. See Chapter 5, 'Data and evidence'

- **Website: How to find local data**, produced by the Victorian Government, available from https://www.vic.gov.au/finding-local-data-tips-community-led-iniatives

  While this resource has been created by the Victorian Government and relates to Victorian government agencies, it provides a useful overview of the policy framework for accessing public data, key agencies, and how to request data.

- **Taking Control of Our Data: A Discussion Paper on Indigenous Data Governance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People and Communities**, prepared by the Lowitja Institute, Melbourne, available from https://www.lowitja.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Taking-Control-of-Our-Data-Discussion-Paper.pdf

  Part One provides the history of the Indigenous Data Sovereignty Movement about the rights of Indigenous people to govern the creation, collection, ownership and application of their data and the provisions of the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People*. The part explains what data is, its different formats, and provides a model for operationalising Indigenous data sovereignty (P19). Part Two outlines key considerations for a guide for data sovereignty for discussion with the community. The paper provides case studies.

- **Justice Reinvest toolkit** developed by Just Reinvest, available from https://www.indigenousjustice.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/mp/files/resources/files/jr-toolkit-v13-250119-1.pdf

  Just Reinvest is a NSW initiative, bringing together over 20 organisations and individuals to address the over-representation of Aboriginal young people in the justice system through investment in initiatives that reduce crime. Just Reinvest developed a toolkit to help communities learn how to invest in community initiatives that reduce crime. See 'Part 5: Data and justice reinvestment'.

Developing capabilities to build trust, address power imbalances, and increase transparency and accountability

- **Place-based approaches: A guide for the Victorian Public Service** available from *https://www.vic.gov.au/place-based-approaches-guide*

  This best practice guide developed by ANZSOG for Victorian Public Service Employees provides overview of the key concepts and elements that underpin best practice place-based approaches. See Chapter 7 'Skills, capabilities and mindsets' (P96).

- **Putting People First: Transforming social services in partnership with people and communities**, developed by the Centre for Policy Development, available from https://cpd.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Putting-People-First-FINAL-Web.pdf

  This report describes the fragmented and complex service system and the need to work in partnership with people and communities to resolve this. The report emphasises the work required to build relations and connections, and resolve power dynamics through relational change (Fig 1, P16). In particular, relational change can include collaborative governance that 'challenges existing power dynamics, deepen trust, and promote transparency' (P17). Section 4 includes the need to ground relationships in trust and transparency, sharing and devolving power, being flexible and adaptable, and learning and sharing knowledge.

- **Conversations in the Middle: Practitioner perspectives on people- and place-centred social services**, developed by the Centre for Policy Development, available from https://cpd.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Conversations-in-the-middle-formatted-FV.pdf

  This report covers seven key themes for moving to a system that centres people and place. They are, (1) having a shared purpose, (2) grounding relationships in trust and transparency, (3) coordinated and cooperative approaches, (4) sharing and devolving power, (5) flexibility and adaptability, (6) learning and knowledge sharing, and an overarching theme (7) of growing community, provider and government capability and capacity.

- **Recommendation 2.3: Transparency and Collaboration Build Trust in Decisions, Available from**: https://www.infrastructureaustralia.gov.au/2021-australian-infrastructure-plan-implementation-and-progress/recommendation-2.3

  This recommendation emphasises building community trust in infrastructure decision-making by ensuring transparency and reflecting place-based community needs. It provides guidance on inclusive decision-making and long-term planning processes that connect various stakeholders.

- **Strengthening Australian Democracy: published by** Department of Home Affairs, available from : https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/about-us-subsite/files/strengthening-australian-democracy.pdf
  https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/about-us-subsite/files/strengthening-australian-democracy.pdf

This document discusses the importance of transparency, accountability, and public trust in governance. It offers insights into tools and strategies to enhance democratic processes and address power imbalances within the Australian context.

Time

- **Justice Reinvest toolkit** developed by Just Reinvest, available from https://www.indigenousjustice.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/mp/files/resources/files/jr-toolkit-v13-250119-1.pdf

  Just Reinvest is a NSW initiative, bringing together over 20 organisations and individuals to address the over-representation of Aboriginal young people in the justice system through investment in initiatives that reduce crime. Just Reinvest developed a toolkit to help communities learn how to invest in community initiatives that reduce crime. In relation to time, the tool kit recognizes the impact of time on collecting and reporting data, the time taken to develop plans and strategies and the importance of taking time to do so, the time needed to engage and coordinate stakeholders, time requirements of participants, and the importance in taking take to build understanding and to build trust.

Resources

- **Justice Reinvest toolkit** developed by Just Reinvest, available from https://www.indigenousjustice.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/mp/files/resources/files/jr-toolkit-v13-250119-1.pdf

  Just Reinvest is a NSW initiative, bringing together over 20 organisations and individuals to address the over-representation of Aboriginal young people in the justice system through investment in initiatives that reduce crime. Just Reinvest developed a toolkit to help communities learn how to invest in community initiatives that reduce crime. The toolkit identifies resources as a potential circuit breaker to bring about change. Resources can include data and financial resources to invest in new programs. Resources can also be created in the form of savings from investment. See 'Part 8: Reinvesting the savings – making your case for reinvestment'

- **Co-governance case studies:**

  - Waterloo human services collaborative
  - National Disability Data Alliance
  - Maranguka

The co-governance case studies provide examples of how different co-governance arrangements came about.

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