

RETHINKING OVERHEAD

THE NONPROFIT CENTERS
NETWORK

Discussion Questions: Connective Mechanisms

1. How can connective mechanisms increase collaboration and prepare your organization for future shared services? For many, these kinds of strategies feel very low risk but offer high rewards.
2. What types of connective mechanisms are available?
 - A geographic community or mission-related listserv, Google, Facebook, or Yahoo group
 - A shared e-newsletter, events calendar, or community resource map
 - A shared preferred service provider
 - Peer learning groups, professional development training, mentorship, or networking
3. Which connective mechanisms are a fit for your organization?
 - What support can you offer?
 - What information is OK to share?
 - To find them, look where the nonprofit community gather or get its news? Who are the capacity building organizations in your community?
 - Do you trust that the information that is shared will be used for the benefit of all?
4. If your community is without a connective mechanism of any kind, should one exist?
 - What is the guiding purpose that you think the community would benefit from? Who else shares this belief?
 - Convene a gathering of nonprofit leaders to share this idea. Perhaps an in-person gathering would be welcome on a regular basis. Questions to ask the group are:
 - Are you interested in sharing resources with a membership or community?
 - What examples of connective mechanisms appeal to us?
 - What are you seeking to receive from the group?
 - What are you willing to contribute to the group?
 - How much time are you willing to dedicate to connecting with the wider community of social change-makers?
 - If this conversation goes well, and you decide to collectively create a new connective mechanism, make sure to consider:
 - Who should be at the table? Who will make these conversations more valuable? Who will bring diverse perspectives?
 - Who will be responsible for the ongoing organization and support of this platform?

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