



Capacity Building Code of Practice

Definition of Capacity Building

Capacity building is:

‘Empowering activity that strengthens the ability of voluntary and community organisations to build their structures, systems, people and skills so that they are better able to:

- define and achieve their objectives
- engage in consultation and planning
- manage projects
- take part in partnerships, social enterprise and service delivery
- realise their full potential’

For the purpose of this Code, capacity building does not mean increasing the finances of voluntary and community groups.

Role of Infrastructure Organisations

The role of infrastructure organisations is to:

- provide a range of support, information and services to front line voluntary and community sector organisations, including: volunteer brokerage, mentoring, training, capacity building
- promote the interests of the voluntary and community sector (VCS)
- facilitate good partnerships
- facilitate evidence based lobbying and policy development
- enable development and sharing of best practice
- facilitate consultation

Undertakings

All partners recognise the importance of:

- the continued development of a vibrant, independent and healthy VCS
- providing a wide range of capacity building in order to achieve this

A range of good quality and effective capacity building can take place when:

The Statutory Sector:

- supports the work of infrastructure organisations through funding, information sharing and help to access resources
- listens to VCS infrastructure organisations
- recognises and values the independence of the VCS and works with VCS infrastructure to nurture and grow new community-led initiatives

The VCS:

- includes the cost of capacity building activities such as training, in organisational and project budgets
- considers capacity building as part of any planning, including business planning
- develops training plans (for staff, volunteers, board members)

Voluntary sector infrastructure organisations:

- work collaboratively with each other
- deliver high quality capacity building services
- are user-led organisations which respond to the needs and views of the VCS in Sandwell
- help organisations to access support from appropriate sources, including regional and national infrastructure, specialist infrastructure, small business support

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