

Continuum of Collaboration

← ← **Low intensity, low risk, limited benefit potential** **Deeper trust, higher stakes, bigger potential benefit** → →

Our Healthy Alliance is oriented toward the profile presented here as “Strategic Alliances”. We believe many collaborative efforts will benefit from using the Alliance Assessment and this Collaboration Spectrum to build common vision around how their goals and relationships might evolve over time.

CONTINUUM of COLLABORATION	Cooperation	Networks of organizations and/or individuals	Campaign-based Coalitions	Strategic Alliances	Merger/ Structural Affiliation
Purpose	Purely tactical: for efficiency or coordination	Connect a set of organizations and/or individuals to learn or strategize together	Work together for some mutual benefit, usually structured around specific campaign goals	Bigger impact, longer-term vision. Jointly launch/ manage 1 or more projects	Combine most or all resources for impact, effectiveness, unity
Time Horizon	Short term, sporadic	As needed, but can be longer term	Depends on time needed to win a campaign or complete a project	Intentional and long-term	Permanent
Vision, Value, Political beliefs	Not necessarily shared	Depends on purpose. Can be issue-based, role-based, geographic, etc.	Often a single-issue focus, may have diverse political beliefs but a common constituency or goal	Share common long-term vision, strategy, world-view and systemic change goals	Deeply aligned, unified around a common joint purpose that bring together separate groups
Decision-Making	Informal	Varies – Dispersed; Staff-centric; or sometime more formal structures	Some form of agreement and structure, varies dependent on voluntary level of engagement.	Driven by formal, written agreements. High level of expectations. Shared decision-making.	Merger results in a new entity and new decision-making body. Formal, written accords.
Level of Relationship	Limited, non-permanent	Varies. Can be very tight or very loose. Individual bonds can be stronger than organizational	Varies. Joint planning; info sharing. Potentially deep relationships among core and less developed relationships among all members.	Members agree to act in the best interest of the collaboration, sometimes above individual groups’ interests. Deep trust and solidarity.	Creation or dissolution of one or more organizations. Period of transition results in new relationships.
Mutual Accountability	Limited to none	Depends on structure.	Defined mutual expectations related to joint work. Limited consequences to low-performance.	Clear expectations, and formal and informal mechanisms for accountability to commitments.	Organizational vision and priorities. Formal and informal mechanisms.
Time Commitment	Limited	Depends on structure.	Limited based on project or goal	Long lasting, significant investment of time	Significant leading up to merger
Examples	Service coordination collaboratives, Planning Councils	Engage, National Organizers Alliance	Ballot Campaigns (Yes on Prop 30), Legislative campaigns (Living Wage)	Statewide environmental or immigration coalitions.	Chapter organizations with unified name.