

A brief Introduction to *The Power of Co* collaborative pathway

The Power of Co Pathway is a simple process guide, grounded in practical experiences of working with others on complex problems to create and deliver solutions.

It has a simple logic:

1. Challenging problems require enduring and implementable solutions.
2. Solutions are enduring and implementable when relevant stakeholders share ownership of and accountability for implementing those solutions.
3. High levels of ownership and accountability for solutions come from co-creating those solutions.
4. When tackling challenging issues to find solutions, the commitment to work together constructively comes from sharing decisions about the process, such as *how will we work together on this, with what information, people and processes?*
5. The energy and commitment to talk about process comes from a strong collective sense of the dilemma(s) being tackled, and the realisation that this is a dilemma that has multiple aspects that we must work on together to resolve.
6. The willingness to listen to how others see the situation and to understand the dilemma(s) together both requires and reinforces a commitment to work together.

Using this logic, *the Power of Co* was developed as a five-step process:

1. Commit to Collaboration

Generating a shared sense that this is a situation in which collaboration is necessary.

2. Co-define the Dilemmas

Working together to look at the situation from all perspectives. Listen to diverse voices, learn from each other about the dilemmas. Understand the problem before trying to solve it. Building relationships by working together.

3. Co-design the Process

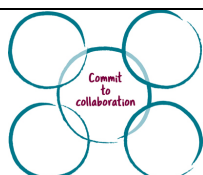
Ensuring that everyone has their fingerprints on the process and feels some ownership of it. Building ownership of the process fosters trust and builds commitment to working together on the hard aspects of the dilemmas. Building relationships by working together.

4. Co-create the Solutions

Working together to co-create something none could have created alone. Tapping into the experiences, perspectives and innovation of all to do something new. Building relationships by working together.

5. Co-deliver the Actions

Working together to implement the solutions and to share accountability for that. Building relationships by working together.



Linear v Cyclic?

The *Power of Co Pathway* was conceived as a rigorous, step-by-step process where collaborators would begin at the beginning with building commitment to work differently together, and then move through each step – co-define, co-design and so-on to co-deliver actions.

In practice, applying the *Power of Co* on a collaborative project is often a more iterative than step-by-step sequential process. Committing to collaboration is not a single step at the outset, but an integral and essential part of each step. A team working effectively together to *co-define the dilemma* needs a commitment to collaborate. At the same time, the act of working together on the dilemma builds and strengthens that commitment.

Working together to *co-create the solutions* can bring new insights about the dilemmas to be solved or the process for working together. As progress is made, collaborators' commitment to this approach grows and they are more willing and able to behave collaboratively, both individually and as a team.

In other words, when applying *The Power of Co* you can **start anywhere and go everywhere**.

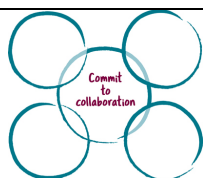
So *The Power of Co* can be depicted as a cycle, with *Commit to Collaboration* at the heart, connected to and part of each of the other four steps. Everything we do as collaborators should build further commitment to working together.

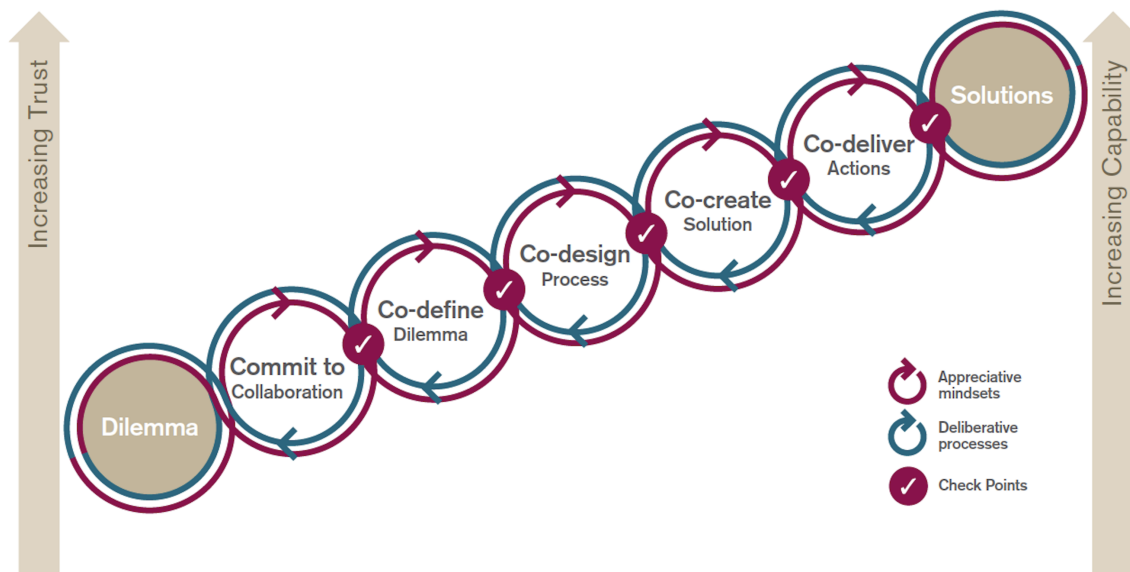
Scalable Collaboration

The Power of Co applies at all scales. That is, defining the dilemma, designing the process and creating solutions together are just as relevant for a single meeting as they are for on a large-scale, long term, complex project. Each may be relevant at any time in our projects as we confront emerging dilemmas, large and small.

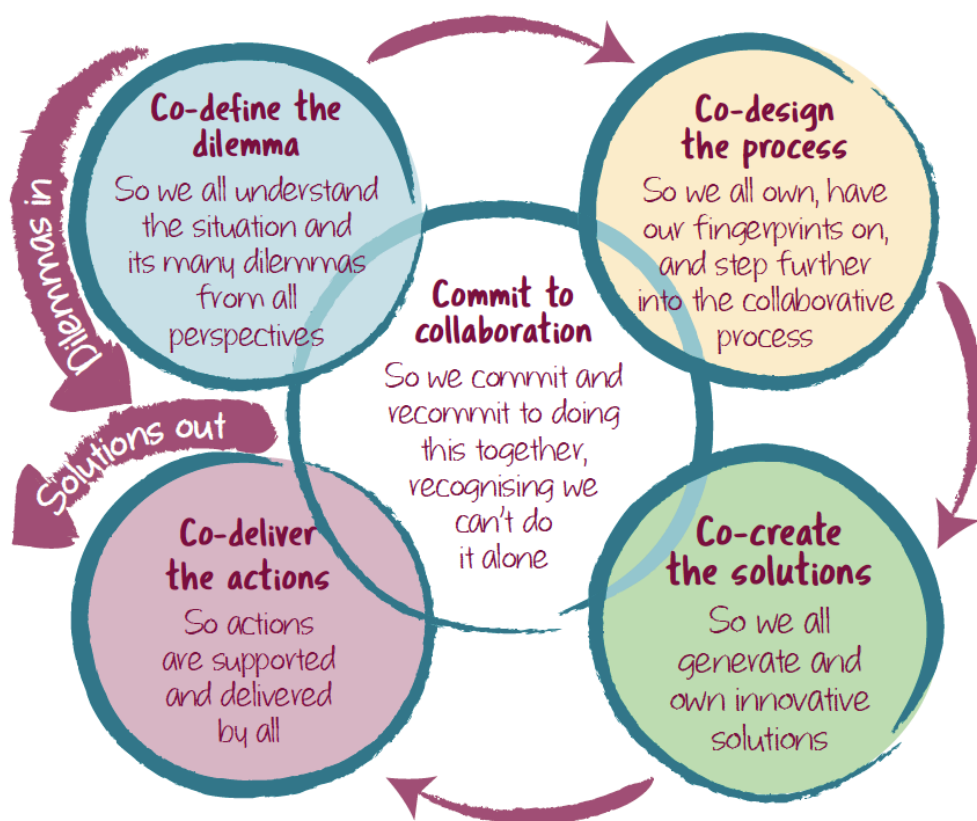
Rules of Thumb for Collaborators

At their most powerful and fundamental, the five steps of the pathway are rules of thumb, or heuristics to guide our work with others. Keep them in mind and draw on them, wherever you are in your project, and whatever the scale.





The Power of Co as a step-by-step process



The Power of Co as a cycle – start anywhere, go everywhere

