

More than the sum of its parts

An exploration of co-located centres (NFP Centres), as a model to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of not-for-profit human services in Australia.

Dr Karen Hart
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About the Author

Since 2005, Dr Karen Hart has been the CEO of The Youth Junction Incorporated, the not for profit entity that governs and manages the largest co-located youth service centre in Australia, the Visy Cares Hub in Melbourne.

Karen has almost 30 years of experience in working with government and nonprofit organizations in direct service delivery and for over 15 years at senior executive level both in the UK and Australia. Throughout her career, she has become an expert in the fields of not-for-profit management, grant funding, social purpose program design, delivery and evaluation.

Karen's qualifications include a PhD from the College of Law and Justice at Victoria University, attained for investigating the efficacy of community justice interventions to increase social capital and reduce incarceration for young adults aged 18-25 years, an MSc in Social Science Research Methods, a BA Honours in Social Work (CQSW), and a Diploma in Not-for-Profit Business and Governance.

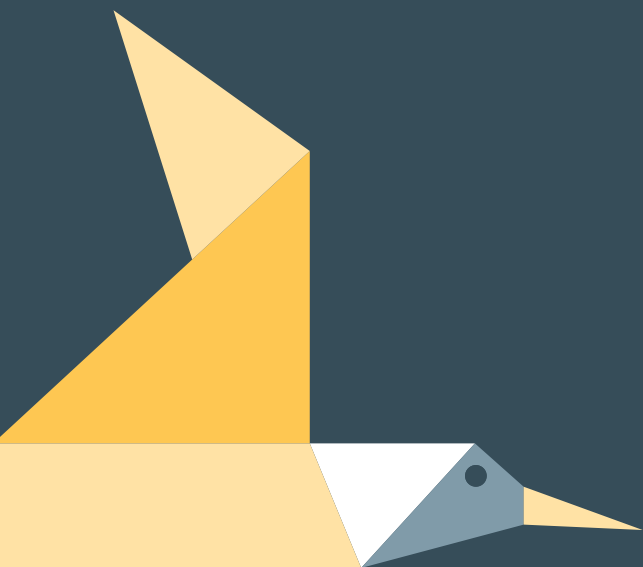


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Introduction

The area of nonprofit co-located and shared space is still a relatively small, but burgeoning ecosystem of complex arrangements of social purpose real estate, elaborate funding and financing tapestries, driven by an array of missions and visions, with the underlying motivation to continue to improve what we do as a global nonprofit community. Symptomatic of the nonprofit sector per se, the importance of developing and nurturing interpersonal relationships has provided the greatest insight into how these centres are created, developed and sustained.

As different as they might seem, they are all building a stronger, more effective nonprofit sector and helping to ensure vibrant and just communities...

The idea of NFP Centres delivering social and human services for a range of client groups holds appeal and promise, as they seem to offer multiple benefits, rather than challenges, for individual nonprofit organisations. Oddly, the concept has not gained momentum, much less evidence, that it works within an Australian context, despite many stakeholders of NFP Centres being aware, at least on a day to day level, that these models are effective.

The Fulbright Scholarship Award provided the opportunity to explore the critical success factors of these types of centres in North America and Canada. Borrowing NCN's definition of shared spaces helped to frame the overall study:

Shared spaces, or multi-tenant nonprofit centers, serve a diverse array of constituencies from youth activists and seniors, to environmentalists, people of color, and artists. They include historic facilities, green buildings, and new construction. They are located in small rural towns, on reservation lands and in national parks, inner-city neighborhoods and major downtown centers. They house direct service advocacy and community organizing agencies. As different as they might seem, they are all building a stronger, more effective nonprofit sector and helping to ensure vibrant and just communities (NCN (2015), <http://www.nonprofitcenters.org/>)

Broadly, the rationale for a co-located human services centre is to counter 'silo effects' through re-alignment of multiple services, effective use of resources to avoid duplication, timely transfer of information and development of a transparent and seamless response, all particularly relevant when responding to the complex needs of individuals who use the centres. Professor Diana Vinokur-Kaplan defines co-location and outlines the broad merits of NFP Centres as:

A building or defined, geographic building or area, in which primarily nonprofit organizations are located in proximity to one another, with an expectation of some mutual cooperation...(Vinokur-Kaplan, 2013:6).

However, in the absence of action research to build concrete evidence of what is actually happening on the ground, we lack the know-how to establish and sustain such centres.

The Australian context

The Australian community sector encompasses a diverse range of not-for-profit organisations. Increasingly, there has been a shift to corporatize the sector and a shift within the last five years to regulate and make it more accountable through the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission (ACNC). This closer scrutiny calls to action a more effective ‘social business sector’. Business concepts and terminology permeate the nonprofit environment, borrowing from our corporate counterparts, a greater emphasis on mergers, competitive tendering, performance indicators, risk analysis, stringent auditing processes, strategic and business planning, all in an attempt to encourage transparency and accountability by the sector, to governments, funders and the general public. Moreover, the sector attracts and expends a considerable monetary and human investment in order to deliver its missions and values in Australia, as highlighted by the Productivity Commission 2010:

This sector has grown rapidly over the past decade, and now makes up just over 4 per cent of GDP (just under \$43 billion), with nearly 5 million volunteers contributing an additional \$14.6 billion in unpaid work (Productivity Commission 2010:iii).

This growth means that the sector has to work harder each year, to manage its operations, retain good staff, engage volunteers, build robust evidence to justify and defend its service delivery, be accountable to an increasing number of regulators and stakeholders, market itself effectively and compete for funding in a rapidly changing society. There is an increasing need to galvanise the sector and to seek out new methods and models that can sustain this vital contribution made to building social capital within disadvantaged communities. One obvious question that warrants consideration by the not-for-profit sector (and government) is whether there are opportunities within this changing landscape, to innovate alternative collaborative models, with the potential for greater viability and sustainability within Australian communities?

The ACNC set out to reform the NFP sector in five primary areas. First, to build knowledge systems that support improved understanding of the sector; second, to ensure clearer governance and accountability; third, to develop the sector through improved business planning and promotion of a sustainable workforce; fourth, to encourage social innovation through tackling social problems in new ways and fifth, to emphasise relationship building to strengthen collaboration across the sector (Productivity Commission 2010).

...different services chip away at different parts of the problem and don't join up to maximise their impact (Edwards 2003:7).

It could be argued that the development of NFP Centre's for a diverse range of client target groups, across metropolitan, regional and rural Australia, could adequately achieve the five primary objectives for the Commission. However, whilst this notion might suggest a convincing case for good practice in the not-for-profit sector in Australia, there is still little evidence to substantiate it, primarily due to the lack of well evaluated co-located projects and centres. Unfortunately, policymakers and practitioners in the NFP sector in Australia still face the longstanding challenge of evolving the service system to recognise and respond to the multifaceted, interrelated and challenging needs of people experiencing complex social issues (Beadle 2009). Fragmentation, autonomy and inflexibility between and within health and social services have been identified as particular obstacles in this process (Edwards 2003; Rankin and Regan 2004). Rogers (2005) suggests that, in Australia, autonomous rather than collaborative services result from different funding streams, philosophies and credentials across services. The result is that rather than a single service encompassing multiple needs:

...different services chip away at different parts of the problem and don't join up to maximise their impact (Edwards 2003:7).

This in turn places unreasonable expectations on service users to negotiate a confusing labyrinth of mission driven services. Furthermore, a service user seeking assistance is unable to simply compartmentalise their personal needs and presenting problems to suit single issue driven not-for-profit services. It seems counterproductive to attempt to meet the often multiple, interconnecting and complex client needs, through services operating in a fragmented and 'siloed' landscape.

This research responds to a gap in our knowledge for the potential of co-located NFP Centre's and shared spaces and aims to improve our understanding of the enablers and impediments to effective and efficient NFP co-located service delivery. It is anticipated that by exploring the emerging expertise in this field in the U.S. and documenting effective models, organisational structures, governance, and good practice, will assist in building not for profit capacity by informing government policy and securing funding for co-located NFP centres in Australia, resulting in more effective use of public and private resources (Bradbury, Edwards and Maher, 2011).

Nonprofit Centers Network (NCN)

By surrounding myself with experts at the Nonprofit Centers Network (NCN), I was well positioned to investigate and build a robust case for policy and practice for the delivery of NFP Centres in Australia. Mt. Auburn Associates were commissioned in 2011 by NCN to carry out an impact study of (intentional) shared nonprofit facilities in the U.S. and Canada (2011:3) and they provide a succinct overview of services provided by NCN:

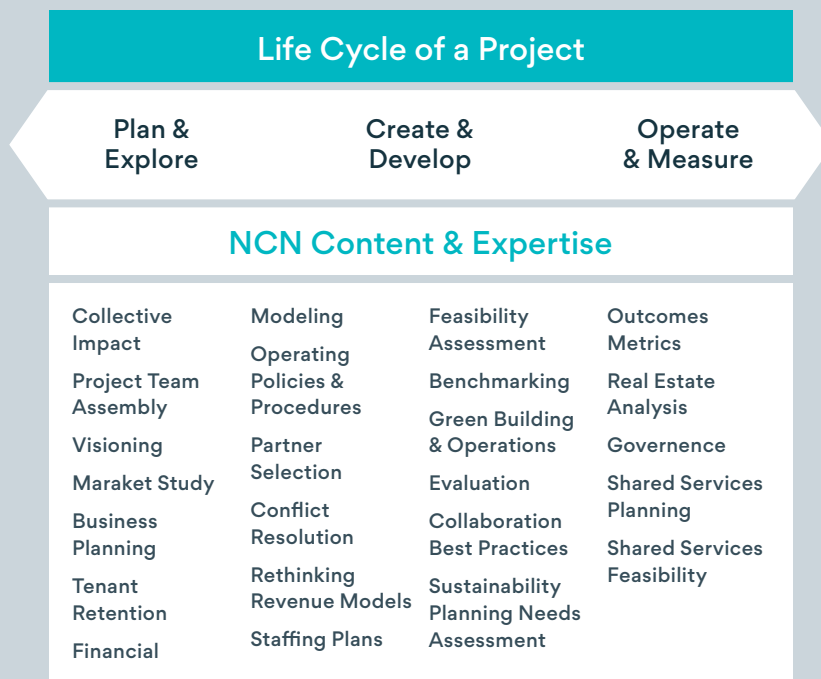
NCN provides training, technical assistance, and project consulting for community leaders creating and operating facilities that house multiple organisations, known as nonprofit centers (Mt. Auburn Associates 2011:3)

The mission of NCN is to increase the effectiveness of the nonprofit sector by supporting the development and ongoing operations of shared collaborative workspace, back-office services for nonprofits, and other quality nonprofit workspaces. It is therefore an international community of nonprofit practitioners, real estate experts, funders and public sector partners that understand how physical infrastructure can positively impact groups of nonprofit organisations to maximise their mission and vision.

NCN suggest a project life cycle in Figure 1 that incorporates three phases of planning, development and sustainability of NFP Centres and they outline how their expertise can support nonprofit entities in tackling the challenges of NFP Centre development.

It will become evident from the findings of this research that the life cycle of these complex projects is not always as logical as the diagram suggests, but the majority of projects certainly include many if not all elements at some point in their life cycle. What makes NCN unique is the ongoing support through real time dialogue and being able to exchange ideas, methods of working, advice on the pitfalls and barriers to progress and the opportunity to celebrate and share the innovation and success of many of the most sustainable NFP Centres in the world.

Figure 1: Life Cycle of a Shared Space Project (NCN)



Significance of this Research

The Fulbright scholarship enabled me to carry out a participatory action research study into the rapidly growing field of NFP Centre development, essentially from the ground up. This has been a very exciting undertaking, as there is little research on the policy and practice needed to achieve the goal of NFP Centre development and sustainability, particularly in the human services realm, which posed both a challenge and opportunity for the project.



Research objectives

The research study had several clearly-defined objectives, however, the overarching theme was to increase understanding of the critical success factors for implementation and ongoing operation of co-located NFP Centres. More specifically, having the opportunity to investigate the nature of co-located models, how they were initiated, by whom, how they operate and how they are sustained in the U.S. has revealed much about how we can strategically plan to develop them within an Australian context.

The nine key research objectives included:

1. Understanding the dynamics of NFP (human service) Centre's that optimize functioning of the co-located model.
2. Understanding the impact of co-location within NFP Centres by exploring the range of co-located configurations, leadership, governance and management models, operations policy, protocol tools and finance modelling to promote growth and best practice in co-location, innovation and expansion in Australia.
3. Formulating a compelling case that NFP Centre's best target and address service user need, more effectively and more efficiently than in a fragmented and individualized service system.
4. Investigating why NFP Centre's are enjoying success and sustainability in the American landscape and not yet within an Australian context.
5. Assessing how NFP Centre's promote, publicise and market use of multiple services to benefit their service users.
6. Examining the data collection methods that build strong evidence to sustain NFP Centre's.
7. Examining the mission and vision of the Nonprofit Centers Network that champions the need to increase NFP Centre's for different client groups in the U.S.
8. Assessing the importance and types of human relationships, specifically those that pertain to leadership, that make NFP Centre's sustainable.
9. Highlighting tools and strategies that enable initiation and replication of NFP Centre's.

Research questions

The overarching research question for this exploratory study was:

What are the external and internal factors (critical success) that contribute to long-term organizational sustainability for youth / human service focused nonprofit centres?

The sub-questions underpinning the research are:

1. What are the primary elements of the NFP Centre's with respect to leadership, infrastructure, service mix, funding and finance models, governance structures, human resource models and operations policy?
2. What are the leadership attributes and collaborative arrangements and initiatives in relation to sustainability for the NFP Centre's, what contributes to this and why?
3. How is information shared across individual not-for-profit services in the NFP Centre's and how does this promote effectiveness and efficiencies for the provision to service users?
4. What role do political and stakeholder influences have on how the NFP Centre's function?
5. Overall, what are the outcomes in social and economic terms for service users accessing the NFP Centre's?
6. What are the access and referral points for service users into and within the NFP Centre's?
7. What are the joint working practices and partnerships operating through the NFP Centre's and how do they create efficiencies and amplify impact in service provision?

Review of the literature

Through the Nonprofit Centers Network (NCN) I was able to extrapolate the human service centres and further, the youth specific centres from their extensive database across North America and Canada. Parallely, I carried out a review of the literature to examine existing co-located models with a specific focus on governance structures, financial modeling, space configuration, staffing and management, as a foundation for the research design. This was undertaken to document current practices in the U.S. and Canada in order to synthesise existing research, document good practice principles and identify exemplary models of service delivery. Based on issues highlighted from the field, three key questions guided the review:

1. What evidence is there in the literature that would support NFP Centre service delivery as being effective?
2. To what extent is NFP Centre service delivery already being implemented in the U.S. and what has the impact been?
3. How does a NFP Centre shared service model facilitate and support good practice principles?

There are a number of assumptions relating to the capacity of NFP (human service) Centre's to provide high-quality, affordable space that can increase the capacity of people to work together, to collaborate and ultimately to provide the most effective and efficient responses to service user issues and needs. These NFP Centre's, numbering approximately 150 in North America and Canada, is a growing field of social purpose real estate, which is redefining how communities use space to improve people's lives. There is a rapidly growing body of literature concerning the concepts of shared space, co-located services and collaborative practice, commensurate with the development of NFP Centre's, not only in North America and Canada, but increasingly around the world. Essentially, the commonsensical premise for NFP Centre's is to create cohesion across what has historically been a fragmented and oftentimes inaccessible service system. The World Health Organisation (2007) in response to this pressing need, urged the way forward as:

...a comprehensive, integrated approach to service delivery. We need to fight fragmentation (WHO Director-General, 2007:1)

and seven years later there has been significant progress in responding to this dilemma as outlined by The AgriHub in 2014:

Shared workspaces are themselves an innovation – an entirely new way of working. The dominant workplace model has been separate organizations working separately. That may have made perfect sense at one time and it may still make perfect sense in some instances, but it is by no means a universal or desirable approach. The nature of work is changing – and with it, the workplace. These changes offer incredible potential for economic, social, cultural and environmental progress in the coming years (The AgriHUB 2014:1)

Broadly, our understanding of the development and functioning of NFP Centres is hampered by a number of factors. Primarily, there is no blueprint on how to go about establishing such centre's and we have lacked until relatively recently, the benefit of effective research highlighting the need, development strategy, potential for replication and ongoing sustainability of such centre's. NCOSS (2007) highlights that:

A significant barrier to small NGOs involved in developing shared service arrangements is the lack of information about how to proceed, the expertise to carry through the change process, and a need for support and guidance (NCOSS, 2007:20).

A small number of literature reviews carried out in Australia (see Lennie 2007; Bond 2010) and North America (Bradbury et al. 2011; TIDES) prove helpful in highlighting the challenges and issues that need to be overcome in NFP Centre development (Lennie 2007:3) and sustainability. Defining the concepts of co-location and collaboration, both of which increasingly present in lockstep, is a helpful starting point:

Co-location is a type of collaboration in which two or more partner organizations share physical space on a regular basis, ranging from providing programming in a common space to sharing permanent offices. While some are connected by a shared service focus, co-location sites can house any number of organizations with widely different missions (Bradbury et al. 2011:v).

For many human service centre's one of the key drivers to establish and participate in the NFP Centre appears to be the potential for collaboration in the interests of the end service user. Collaboration, however, is an elastic concept, that can embody a variety of meanings, contexts and local interpretations, but is generally treated as cooperation between two or more entities, working together toward a shared goal (Frey, Lohmeier, Lee, and Tollefson, 2006:384). A number of models outlining the process of collaboration have been suggested (see Peterson 1991; Bailey and Koney, 2000; Gajda 2004) and it seems useful to view collaboration as both a process and an outcome. Most writers and practitioners would agree that it is effortful and time consuming to build collaboration and once in motion, it is vulnerable and susceptible to the loss of key drivers and motivators (community animators) and can be damaged or destroyed by ineffective communication. The following non-exhaustive factors can complicate the collaborative effort; high turnover of staff, cessation of funding, inadequate and limited spatial configurations within centre's to engender collaboration and one or more of the key drivers falling away. On this last point, a change in collaborative leaders can affect momentum, create confusion and result in diminishing interest, commitment and group attrition.

The literature indicates that collaboration occurs on a number of levels and this research highlights that within co-located NFP Centres, comprising a range of separate entities, is often best evidenced in relationships and friendships between individuals within the separate organizations. These key relationships can be instrumental in reducing tensions, distrust, suspicion and secrecy between services, and barriers between agencies.

Lennie (2008) carried out an evaluation in Australia of three multi-tenant service centre (MTSC) pilot projects on behalf of the Queensland Government. The projects had been established four years prior to the evaluation, to create effectiveness and efficiencies in client services through co-location. Lennie (2008) explored the governance and collaboration models in each of the centre's from the tenants perspective and concluded that:

This evaluation shows that developing and implementing shared and collaborative arrangements is a complex process that presents many risks, challenges and barriers to success, but can have many potential benefits for non government organizations (Lennie 2008:4)

The challenging aspects of implementation and operation that the centre's grappled with, are highlighted in Lennie's report and are consistent with the findings of my research. These include the size and location of the building that houses the individual projects, management of relationships and maintaining commitment and retention of key stakeholders, leaders and staff, being able to reach a consensus on vision, a lack of funding and resources, infrastructure issues, lack of clear and transparent lines of communication, a reluctance to share information and a perceived distraction of the collaborative effort, being somehow disconnected and disruptive to daily mission-driven service provision (Lennie 2008:4). Consistent with evaluations carried out in the U.S. and conceptual notions around co-location and collaboration in the literature, Lennie (2008) discovered some prerequisites to efficiency and effectiveness that resonates again with the findings of my research. These include NFP Centres having synergy and alignment between tenants in an attempt to avoid competition for funding and sometimes service users, having a similar target population of services users, sharing a similar philosophy, having a vision and mission that binds the organisations together and a willingness to share (particularly information).

However, the ingredients of what drives and sustains those shared practices within NFP Centres is scant in the literature and even more so, in the research evidence investigating these shared aspects. Although the setting is somewhat different, Volpe, Batra and Bomio (1999) in their research on integration of school-aged programs in Ontario has identified three key challenges to the success of collaboration as:

'...funding, turf and autonomy...' (Volpe et al. 1999).

They state that the strategies to overcome this 'parochialism' is through shared policies, funding, institutional leadership and a climate of trust. These are also common themes raised by the NFP Centre leaders in the current study.

Another challenge for NFP Centre leadership is ensuring that the right balance and mix of relevant services operate out of the centre to fulfill the mission's potential. However, It is difficult to determine exactly who should be in the service mix of organizations to ensure the optimum response for human service users. It is not necessarily the case that the greater quantum of services will provide the best outcomes for service users. On the contrary in fact, there is sufficient evidence from lessons learnt in the field, to suggest that a canny and resourceful service user will be able to maximize the immediate benefits of a range of services, but not necessarily reap the long term outcomes they may need. Even co-located under one roof, the neighbouring services may be unaware of the interventions that are being provided by other services and often service users are protected by confidentiality, which can operate as a natural prohibiting factor to not sharing information outside of the client / professional relationship. Moreover, a higher number of services, with a variety of entry points and individual boundary and funding restrictions can create incoherence in a co-located model, which is why a case management program providing one coordinated approach for the service user, not only provides the glue, but a central position from which other resources within the co-located model can be mobilized.

Kerry Sullivan (2015) from the Bank of America Charitable Foundation from a funders perspective, argues the need for strong leadership in the sector, underpinned by sound metrics to measure not-for-profit success, and encourages the sector to develop a greater eagerness to work together. The aim to achieve long term (financial) sustainability is highlighted as important and Sullivan states that this must be balanced against short term needs. She states that this concept for NFP organisations is almost a contradiction in terms, as reactive services at the front end to keep up with demand is not a healthy mechanism to ensure long term financial sustainability.

Another challenge highlighted the need for the sector to retain staff that they have invested in and how difficult it is to do that in the current climate, citing that:

...oddly the recovering economy means that workers within the sector can have better choice about their employment, but this does not serve well the nonprofit sectors need for retention (Sullivan 2015:Webinar)

Sullivan suggests the NFP sector be responsive and dynamic, on the basis that sustainability implies striving for a level position, which does not take into account the changes in the economy, client need and other external and internal risks and factors; to look for ways that build reserves, rather than facing constant financial stress; to be able to articulate the impact you make; to demonstrate how the staff resourcing, links to the overall organisational mission, as drawing direct correlations increases morale and motivation; to have an open dialogue with funders and to be able to have long term adaptability in the face of what often appears to be intractable social problems.

Conceptual Framework

There is significant diversity across NFP Centre's, however, despite this, there are common themes running through NFP Centre's, that can offer a conceptual framework from which to create a set of organizing principles, eventuating in a model that has utility regardless of the centre's purpose, client population, demography and geography. This conceptual model proposes three primary intersecting and integrated components common to all centre's – people, property and place – that coalesce to strengthen the purpose underpinning NFP Centre's.

The P-Model depicts the marriage between people (human and social capital), property (infrastructure and capital resources) and place (community and location) that underpins the concept of NFP (human service) Centre's. These elements interlink to define the unique characteristics and purpose of the co-located model which in turn, creates cohesion and animates the NFP organizations to produce amplified benefits for their end service users.

However, in order for the P-Model to operate effectively, there must be both integration and interaction between each of the components. The challenge for leaders of NFP Centre's therefore, is to invest adequate resources in terms of time and money to do this effectively. There are a range of risks at the interface and within the inter-space of each of the elements that must be successfully tackled and overcome which include:

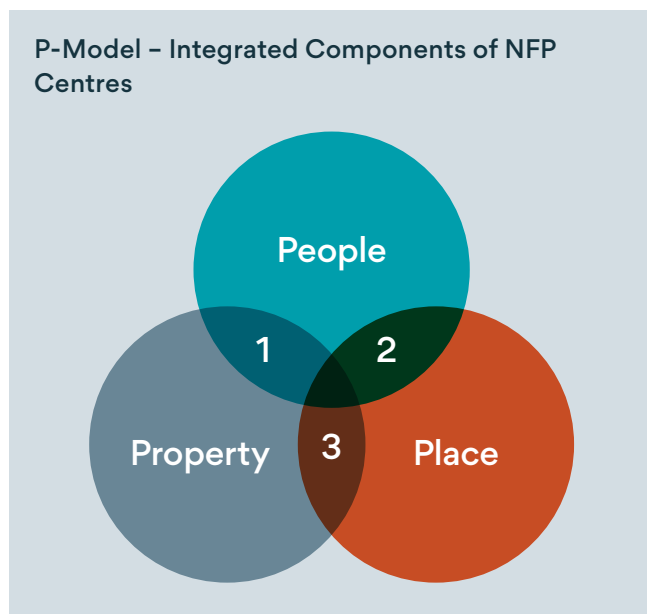


Figure 2: P-Model

...there are common themes running through NFP Centre's, that can offer a conceptual framework from which to create a set of organizing principles, eventuating in a model that has utility regardless of the centre's purpose, client population, demography and geography...

People and Property

The interspace between people and property involves the functionality and comfort of the building to enhance the service provision delivered by the NFP tenants within the building and ultimately the end users of the building. Dysfunction in this component can include poor design and layout, irregularities and problems with basic services and amenities (heating and cooling systems), lack of adequate parking, poorly maintained common spaces such as restrooms and kitchen areas, inadequate and limited common areas and cramped working spaces. There is a balance that needs to be achieved between large cavernous common spaces and small inadequate working spaces, that heavily weighted in either direction, pose challenges of proportion to their usefulness. In short, the building must be fit for its intended purpose, as failure in this interface can strain relationships between the landlord / tenant (e.g lack of quality space to deliver services effectively and efficiently), tenant / tenant (pressure and competition for shared amenities, confidential meeting rooms and training spaces), tenant / service user (disruption in response time and appropriate service interventions due to competitive room bookings, lack of confidential spaces and inaccessible computer and telephone resources).

People and Place

The interspace between people and place refers to the local community and the service users from that community who access the NFP Centre. Adverse effects within this space involve, lack of community consultation to get the local community 'buy-in' for the NFP Centre in the first place (in order to prevent NIMBY-ism) and lack of ongoing accountability to and inclusiveness with the local community, that is critical for maintaining interest and support. Risks associated with a lack of consultation and maintaining involvement and interest of the local community may present threats to its ongoing viability. If the community does not utilise the centre which is primarily located and intentionally established to serve the needs of that community, it can become redundant. It is inordinately difficult to reverse and invigorate local community perception on the usefulness of the NFP Centre within their community if it does not feel relevant and useful to the population it is intended to serve.

Place and Property

The interspace between place and property pertains to the relevance and appropriateness of the location of the building and its capacity to respond effectively to local community needs. Limited appropriate building availability, particularly in the current climate of competitive and expensive real estate, can often overshadow the prevailing factors required for optimum service provision that are required to satisfy the needs and accessibility of client populations. If the building is inaccessible by foot or public transport and fails to provide sufficient perception and reality of its usefulness and value for its intended service users, it risks becoming a failed venture.

However, in the absence of action research to build concrete evidence of what is happening on the ground, theoretical frameworks alone, can only provide guidance into the complex ecosystems and relationships that emerge in the development and sustainability of NFP Centre's. This research can build on some of the recent advances that have been made through action research with landlords and tenants of NFP Centre's that have assisted our understanding of the what, when, where and how in this emerging field of research (see Tides, Diane, etc) in North America.

Methodology



In order to investigate the abovementioned elements effectively, this study required a mixed-method approach that had been developed and aligned to the research question, objectives, P-Model and literature review. It is said that there are a number of benefits to using the mixed-methods approach, as it embeds permission to consider multiple paradigms and employ multiple methods, as opposed to adhering to those typically associated with only quantitative or qualitative research. Writers refer to the practical side of a mixed-methods approach emphasised by Creswell (2006):

...because individuals tend to solve problems using both numbers and words, they combine inductive and deductive thinking, and they (e.g., therapists) employ skills in observing people as well as recording behavior. It is natural, then, for individuals to employ mixed methods research as the preferred mode of understanding the world (Creswell 2006:10)

The mixed-method approach used in this study included a review of the literature, qualitative primary data collected through discursive in-depth interviews (n10), case studies (n10), participant observation and a document analysis of key policies and agreements, that have been thematically analysed (n10).

The quantitative methods include secondary data retrieved through the NCN database (370) to obtain the relevant data sets (N150, n10) and 'State of the Sector' survey information previously carried out by NCN to look at patterns in the profiles of NFP Centres in North America. NCN had recorded a total of 370 NFP Centres across North America and Canada and of this group, the entire sample comprising 150 human service centres was drawn from the NCN database to be quantitatively analysed. A smaller sub-set of n10 youth (7%) specific centre's was reached through purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a form of non-probability sampling in which decisions concerning the subjects are taken by the researcher. Having approached all

10 NFP Centres, I received 10 responses back from CEO level leaders who were willing to participate in the study. This was an excellent response rate and I arranged to have individual face to face discursive interviews with all of them. Prior to meeting with these NFP Centre leaders, I developed a good understanding of the width and breadth of their work through the information they had posted on their website, as well as receiving a range of requested resources that they sent through by email. In the course of the research, much anecdotal evidence in conversation and through emails, highlighted issues of stakeholder relationships becoming untenable, capital funding campaigns not delivering the intended funding, bureaucratic barriers to securing the appropriate approvals and permits, prospective tenants suddenly withdrawing interest after having committed to participating in the project, failing to complete a purchase on the preferred building for the NFP Centre, attrition of project drivers and champions and even when centre's have been launched, ongoing challenges to appoint the right CEO with the necessary skills set to sustain the NFP Centre.

Surveys

Surveys issued by NCN and completed by the NFP Centre key stakeholders (service providers, service managers and service users) had been designed and issued to gather data on service provision experiences and perceived impact. This information was then used to inform the discursive interviews.

Discursive Interviews

The ten CEOs of human service centres participated in discursive interviews that covered off on a range of topics (see Appendix 1). Without exception, these leaders digressed from the schedule to provide unique insights into the nature of their personalities, personal motivations and professional expertise that inspires their leadership. This could not have been captured in a structured interview schedule and instead, provided much rich and exciting dialogue, indicating at times, as Barry (2006) states:

A qualitative interview of this nature can also be a cathartic experience (Barry 2006:176)

Their views and actions, captured through these interviews, was a vital perspective on the success of the NFP Centres that they manage, as it straddles both the execution of governance practices and how those are implemented on a day-to-day basis with the direct service providers and ultimately the end service user.

Document Analysis

Analysis of the documents provided by the leaders of the NFP Centres provided information on areas such as their position description, project context and history, logic and rationale, by-laws, marketing material and policy and procedural arrangements for the NFP Centre's.

Case Studies

Ten detailed case studies on co-located service provision were carried out with NFP Centre Managers / leaders. Similarities and differences between the NFP Centres, the external and internal impact, benefits, challenges and deficiencies of the NFP Centre model for the provision of services were explored. This component of the research provides the reader with insight into the heterogeneity of NFP Centres, even between those that appear to be driven by very similar missions.

Case Study 1

National Youth Transitions Initiative
(Washington DC)



Since its inception, it has been both a physical structure and the embodiment of a mission...

1 Clarity of purpose of the centre / unifying theme

The National Youth Transitions Center (NYTC) is a shared and co-located nonprofit building guided by a national collaborative of organisations. It is a programmatic theme centre where tenants are selected because they offer programs or services specifically to youth and young veterans with disabilities, unified under the theme of ‘Youth with disabilities transitioning to adulthood and employment’. Jessie MacKinnon, the center’s chief operating officer, outlined how the center is working towards their mission to assist young people with disabilities to live an independent life and how it helps to have a clear and cohesive purpose:

You need something that binds everything together – you need to spark tenants’ and partners’ self-interest; they will ask why should I do this? A unifying theme makes sense for them; it offers something of value, and we do a lot of convening around that...

Great effort is made to get the most appropriate mix of services into the co-located model to respond to the needs of young people with disabilities. This is exemplified by MacKinnon when she spoke about the National Council of Independent Living (NCIL) which focuses on getting people with disabilities out of institutions. NCIL wanted to be part of the model, but were tied to a lease in another building with four years remaining and a lower rent. In order to assist them to come on board, MacKinnon agreed to them paying their current lease rate and to subsidize the balance, which enabled them to terminate their lease and move into the center. MacKinnon stated in relation to this:

...we make so many deals here to accommodate our tenants. For example, we assumed the office space of the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) and put one of our subsidiaries in it so that AAPD could move in here. Some organizations just have a little suite or single offices and some have a whole floor. Some of them were housed quite close by, but they wanted to be based in a building where we share mission, so we made that happen...

Case Study 1

National Youth Transitions Initiative (Washington DC)

Having the right organisations providing the most relevant services within the model is crucial to the optimal functioning of the center, specifically as they relate to young people with disabilities. MacKinnon emphasizes that:

...when you have a disability, that gives you certain rights when you are in school, but when you graduate, all of that falls away – you don't have your Individualized Education Plan, your counselors, your mom and dad. If you need an accommodation, you will have to ask for it and advocate for yourself. You have to be savvy about self advocating and if not, you may end up depending on government subsidies for the rest of your life. It's really critical to have additional support at that time of transition, and everyone in the collaborative understands that...

MacKinnon exercises great care and caution to ensure optimal tenant compatibility along with the need to be sensitive to different tenant cultures and philosophies. She asserts a clear appreciation of tenants sharing a purpose, but also providing a range of services in relation to that and framing their work in different philosophies and language as follows:

Certainly working in the same building promotes learning about other organizations and can foster mutual respect. However, working too closely in a limited physical space may create tension. Since our goal is to become very familiar with tenants prior to their moving in, we have a sense of what organizations would make the best neighbors. This understanding allows the creation of compatible "neighborhoods" on shared floors and prevents unwanted tensions within the building.

It is apparent that the correlation between sharing a vision and unifying the theme across the NYTC sets the parameters for compatibility, cooperation and collaboration within the tenant mix and reduces competition and tension across the centre.

2 Governance and leadership structure

Jessie MacKinnon has two titles and carries out two roles simultaneously. She is responsible for upholding and driving the mission and delivering the programs and partnerships that benefit young people through the vehicle of the NYTC. She is Chief Operating Officer of the National Youth Transitions Center and Vice President of Programs and Partnerships at The HSC Foundation, which owns and operates the center. MacKinnon's passion for her dual roles and the centre is obvious and her career trajectory speaks clearly to her drive and commitment for her work today. She has diverse experience of more than thirty years, including starting out as a visual artist, and then moving into marketing and communications, survey research and analysis, and program development in both the nonprofit and for-profit sectors. She has been vice president of communications and Chief Operating Officer for Very Special Arts (VSA) that was established by Jean Kennedy Smith, whose sister, Eunice Kennedy Shriver, founded Special Olympics. MacKinnon states:

...I fell in love with the disability movement. The man who ran VSA is an attorney and happened to be born without arms and legs. Through this great man, I met his friends and colleagues, and that was when I knew this was the work I wanted to do...

Following on from the work at VSA, MacKinnon was offered a job in a health focused foundation, which she states was not a part of her background:

...the medical model of disability is outdated. We needed to base our foundation programs on the social model of disability where young people can create their own paths to independence. The foundation needed to embrace the disability rights movement. But it's all about the people around you -- I can name two really influential people in my career -- one is the man I spoke about earlier and other is my long-time mentor who introduced me to the CEO of The HSC Foundation...

Independent from the Board, there is also a Leadership Council for the NYTC which acts as an advisory group, rather than a management or governing body. The Leadership Council is made up of a small group of senior executives from the 48-member collaboration, and the purpose of this Council is to reinforce the importance of collaboration by utilizing the talents and skills of ‘champions of the philosophy’ where the:

...managerial style that champions employ is one that emphasizes the royal “we” to continually develop this collaborative community. NYTC champions work against the traditional tenant vs. landlord relationship by emphasizing “we’re in it together.”

The Leadership Council meets five times a year and some of them are also tenant service providers. She states:

The Leadership Council works with me, and I am accountable to the CEO, who is accountable to the Board. The Board doesn’t get into the weeds of day-to-day management. We have a series of Leadership Council hosted luncheons that are very informal and are just meant to bring collaborative members together. They are put together intentionally to introduce everyone to people they don’t already know, and food is a really great thing to bring people together. I have yet to leave one of those lunches where people don’t exchange information and make new contacts.

She is careful how she manages her relationship with the Leadership Council:

Although the transitions program is the foundation’s focus and where most of our resources are invested, we have the least amount of control over the collaborative and the Leadership Council. That is because we strive to have our tenants and partners take ownership of the programs and the center...

One of MacKinnon’s greatest leadership strengths is to build collaboration and it is one of her primary foci in her day-to-day-work, alongside understanding the need to build a stronger evidence base to demonstrate what they are doing as a collective has impact on the young people they serve. She asserts:

We have several federal partnerships and alliances through the Youth Transitions Collaborative partly to raise the profile of the collaborative. And the federal agencies appreciate that relationship with us because they know they are not partnering with one organization but with 48 organizations. Those alliances bring credibility to the collaborative and create value in terms of visibility...

3 Business model

The NYTC is over 90% occupied with twelve co-located not-for-profit organizations comprising approximately 150 staff across the complex. Tenants pay below market rent which includes a generous raft of added value components such as reception service, furniture, security, cleaning, utilities, mail service, internet services, telephone and printing, office equipment use, educational / informational presentations, networking / social events and special event space. MacKinnon states that by doing this they:

...lose money because of the subsidies we give to tenants...we are never going to make a profit because even at 90% we are operating at a loss. This is a Class A building and it is some of the most expensive real estate in Washington DC. We have a robust model because when we bring people in here they are not paying more rent than they would in less desirable buildings that are often not fully accessible.

Case Study 1

National Youth Transitions Initiative (Washington DC)

MacKinnon listed a number of other important attractions for prospective tenants including the shared vision and mission of the facility, the quality of the space, accessibility of the location, visibility of the building, below market rent, flexibility of the lease terms, flexibility of the space, shared facilities and services and opportunities for collaboration with other tenants. The tenants are hand-picked and MacKinnon credits the success of the model when tenants stay and are actively involved in the collaborative. The turnover of tenant organisations is understandably low. The tenants also have access to grant funding for projects and programs that fit well with the overall mission of The HSC Foundation and NYTC. MacKinnon states:

The foundation's grants are by invitation only and some are exclusively for members of the collaborative (although not exclusively tenants). Foundation staff will talk to an organization, going back and forth, until we ask for a concept paper, which we will discuss until we reach consensus. Only then will we ask for a proposal. We don't go down that path unless we are going to fund them. It is very much an engaged philanthropy so the fit is almost always right. We also haven't had any strangers move into the NYTC. We know them and their reputation precedes them.

To counter some of this income deficit to offset tenant subsidies, the space is used for commercial events during times it is not being utilized for mission-related activities. A brochure was developed on the building's capacity to host receptions, film screenings, dinners and retreats, and an open house was held for event planners. The building was branded as The Center @ 2013 H Street to distinguish it from the nonprofit mission-driven space, and it is now beginning to generate additional income for the center.

4 Infrastructure, facilities management and design of spaces

The National Youth Transitions Center is approximately 30,000 square feet and is located in the district of Washington DC known as Foggy Bottom. MacKinnon explains the origins of the center and notes that negotiations between management and governance can be complex:

The property was initially purchased as an investment property. However, as our transitions initiative began to take off, the foundation's CEO said why don't we make this a mission-driven building? And that was music to my ears. We decided not to brand the building as HSC headquarters...you'll see that no building signage says that – only National Youth Transitions Center. It's a tricky line you walk, but it's important to empower collaborative members and get their buy-in.

Designing and refurbishing the historic townhouse began in 2009 and operations commenced at the end of 2011. The National Youth Transitions Center is an initiative of The HSC Foundation and is owned by them through a subsidiary called 2013 Holdings which serves to protect both the interests of the center and the foundation. MacKinnon clarifies this position:

The center is not a legal entity; it is owned by a subsidiary of The HSC Foundation, which has multiple subsidiaries. The holding company structure helps protect the endowment. Similarly, there is no legal entity called the National Youth Transitions Center. It is rather a program of the foundation and funded by the foundation.

Whilst MacKinnon notes that investing in the infrastructure side of the non-profit business is very important, she also advises that her role involves close monitoring of day-to-day operations, the planning of shared services, obtaining funding for the center, reviewing prospective tenant applications, determining rents and lease terms and resolving conflict. To reduce the burden of having to engage too heavily in the day-to-day building issues, an independent property management company is engaged to manage the NYTC. There are also a number of services that are sub-contracted out such as leasing and brokerage, janitorial services, grounds maintenance, security, building maintenance and repair and catering. MacKinnon believes this separation is vital:

From the tenants' perspective, we try to keep a distance between the foundation and the property management company. The company holds the tenants meetings, collects the rent, and responds to tenant issues. I know our tenants and they know me. I don't want them picking up the phone to discuss property issues with me unless it is something they are unable to resolve with the company. I believe that division is very important. We also require that the property management and security staffs complete disability etiquette training to be able to interact appropriately with our clients, members and visitors...

The NYTC has a team of three full-time and one part-time staff. MacKinnon outlines:

...I work with two other people on the grants program; we are small, real small and we also staff the Leadership Council's working groups and manage the program advisory committee. We are fortunate to have the help of a communications person who works with all the foundation's subsidiaries.

However, simply having a building is not sufficient, and the spaces and features of the building need to be carefully planned to maximize the mission. MacKinnon articulates the necessity of this and notes how a beautiful building can promote pride and self esteem in young people through its function:

Everything needs to be accessible for our tenants and visitors. When we have an event, we need sign language interpreters for people who are deaf; we need space to accommodate visitors with service dogs and so on. There is a ramp right at the front so if you use a wheelchair you don't have to go around to the back and wait for someone to let you into the building. There are even roll-in showers. It was important to us to create a beautiful space for young people with disabilities, especially those who live in low-income underserved communities. A program that was doing resource mapping brought a group of students by to tour the building. Our staff told them 'some day you can work in a building like this' – they never thought that was possible. After the tour, one boy said 'this has been the best day of my life.' Our goal is to help those young students build a bridge to success, to envision a future. One mentoring program here at the center connected a student with the Architect of the Capitol. Now he can go home and tell his friends of his achievements and feel proud...

Case Study 1

National Youth Transitions Initiative (Washington DC)

When you enter the NYTC, the design and layout of the space is modern, well lit, with colourful and beautiful fixtures, fittings and finishes. You get a sense that you have entered a very special environment, and it is instantly recognisable as a building that supports people with all disabilities, with ease of access and specific design elements that are inclusive and comfortable. There are glass walls and mirrors that allow natural light to stream in and also to create an environment that promotes openness and transparency. It is carefully designed and executed and deliberate in its intention to present a space that reflects and conveys the ethos of the work of the NYTC itself. The spaces offered to tenants are private office spaces or workstations in a shared incubator style space, complete with office furniture and fully outfitted with integrated technology and a shared telephone system. There are also a number of unstructured common spaces such as kitchens and bathrooms, wide open corridors and walkways, ramps and lifts, all fit for purpose and carefully maintained. There is no expense spared in trying to create the most beautiful, accessible and welcoming space for young people with disabilities. However, having a state of the art building that is sophisticated and complex in its design and functioning can have its drawbacks as MacKinnon states:

...after attempting to use some of these systems, especially in ways for which they were not originally programmed, problems began to occur. First, tenants and partners did not usually own hardware (computers, laptops and cords) that was compatible with the systems. Secondly, the systems were sophisticated to the degree that either on-site IT support had to be provided or users had to be trained on the systems prior to use. Further, the touch panels that control audio and video in the rooms were not easily accessible to a person with limited hand/arm function and those with low vision. As a result, staff spent nearly two full years troubleshooting and making adjustments to ensure a fully stable system that meets the needs of the NYTC's tenants and partners.

MacKinnon also notes that within a short space of time tenants were requesting a configuration of the areas for events that had not been previously anticipated. The Youth Transitions Collaborative also outgrew all of the conference rooms for its annual meeting and had to hold it in the lobby, which needed to include a large screen for viewing videos and other presentations. In order to address these needs, a fifty seat theatre space was created in one conference room. MacKinnon notes that the NYTC will continue to expand what it can offer as tenants and partners present additional needs. This willingness and adaptability is typical of MacKinnon's approach to engendering effective collaboration, in tune with the broader purpose of the organisation. MacKinnon has also had to negotiate significant external impacts in relation to the location of the building as she declares:

...our biggest obstacle is \$450,000 in annual taxes that the District of Columbia is charging us even though we are a completely non-profit building. That is almost half our annual rent income and leaves insufficient funds for operating the building. We've met several times with the DC tax department and collected reams of documents for their review. This is still unresolved. It's sad that this has consumed so much of my time...

Also, in terms of branding and advertising the centre, the District will not allow signage to be put up on the facade of the building. MacKinnon again takes this in her stride:

...it is what it is and we have our banners when we have events, and we continually run slideshows on our flat screens that are visible from outside the building...you just have to live with it.

She acknowledges that whilst important, a building alone cannot produce the levels of collaboration required to provide an effective service to young people and notes that:

...it's a building and it's a great building, but it's the collaborative that makes the difference.

5 Collaborative policies and practices

The NYTC tenants are members of the Youth Transitions Collaborative which is a formalized collaborative with guidelines and governance provisions, measured as improved capacity building through surveys. Collaboration is a condition of the lease, and there is a rent subsidy to incentivize collaboration. There is a community charter with regularly scheduled meetings and community events and networking opportunities hosted at the center. The collaborative is by invitation only, as MacKinnon states:

...we know who is responsive, who gets their reports in on time, who is willing to share resources. We wanted a good cross pollination of services...we have two of the largest disability organizations housed in the center with knowledge and expertise that can inform all of us. We also have direct service organizations with boots on the ground that bring the frontline perspective. It's very deliberate the way we put the collaborative together...

The Youth Transitions Collaborative is guided by the Leadership Council which ensures the foundation's resources support capacity building in organizations that serve young people with disabilities. MacKinnon outlines the underlying philosophy and collective effort towards these gains for the 'collaborative community':

...how are all of these efforts coming together? How can we measure the impact of the collaborative? We have created a new system where the services, products and activities created as a result of the collaborative are being evaluated by an outside independent panel. We also hired a communications firm to work with collaborative members to create common language to describe ourselves. That work took us a year as it's difficult to do something like that with 48 organizations. Our slogan is THE FUTURE NEEDS EVERYONE – it's straightforward, easy to remember, and everyone understands it. Our internal slogan is STRONGER TOGETHER – which is at the heart of why the collaborative exists.

MacKinnon indicates that the Evaluation Committee will be asking a series of questions that focus on outcomes and that it is important that the outcomes are tied to the mission of the NYTC. She states:

Ultimately the meaning of the mission is that young people get everything they need to successfully transition to adulthood. If you have a disability, you are twice as likely to drop out of school and four times more likely to live in poverty as an adult. We want to go from outputs to outcomes, sustainable outcomes...

It is through the initiative, like the evaluation across all elements of the shared space model, that characterizes the leadership style of MacKinnon. Being familiar with the needs of not only the young people they serve, but also the needs of the people who serve them is necessary to achieve sustainability in both the sector and in the individual lives of their clients. She concludes:

...in the very beginning of developing the transitions initiative, we invited disability and transition experts from all over the country and young people with disabilities and their families to come to Washington to advise us on the program. Every year we hold an annual meeting but this year we are actually having two, because it was suggested that collaborative members bring along a young person to experience the work of a collaborative and have an opportunity to network. There's a saying in the disability community, 'nothing about us without us.' We need to always remember to include the young people we serve in our planning and program developing. When we achieve that, we'll have a stronger program, a stronger center, and a stronger collaborative.

Case Study 2

The Youth Opportunity Center Oasis (Nashville)



...where youth define their future...

1 Clarity of purpose of the centre / unifying theme

The Youth Opportunity Center (Oasis) was founded in 1969 to provide community-based care for young people aged between 14-24 years who are at risk of running away, experiencing alcohol and drug problems, as well as being placed in state custody. The goal was to provide help not criminalization. Over the past 46 years, the centre has evolved into one of the leading nonprofit co-located youth specific facilities in North America. The Oasis Center offers a range of programs and services that provide and promote safety and support to Nashville's most vulnerable and disconnected young people, whilst seeking to teach and assist them to positively transform the conditions that created those problems in the first place. Aside from the Oasis Center directly delivering twenty-one integrated programs to young people, there are nine complementary nonprofit youth service providers operating out of the centre. Their primary goal is to connect young people to a caring adult, provide a safe and secure environment and empower them to make healthy choices as they enter adulthood. In contemporary Nashville, the youth population is demographically diverse and presents with varied and complex social issues, many of which are able to be addressed within the Oasis Center. In 2014, the centre provided services and programs to 3,500 young people across Nashville. The vision and therefore the unifying theme for the Oasis Center is 'Helping Youth Grow, Thrive and Create Positive Change'.

2 Governance and leadership structure

At the helm of the Oasis Center is President and CEO Tom Ward who joined the organisation in 2012, bringing with him some thirty years of experience in working with Nashville's young people and their families through the Metro Nashville Public School system. Ward previously ran the Principal Leadership Academy at Vanderbilt University and prior to that, he had served as Executive Principal at Hume-Fogg Academic Magnet High School in Nashville. This wealth of experience not only affords Ward firsthand knowledge and awareness of the direct population served by the Oasis Center, but also of the families and local communities from which those young people originate. Ward is directly accountable to a Board which comprises nineteen directors, including young people and he has a clear sense of his own style of leadership, stating that:

I prefer to operate under a democratic leadership model, that's just who I am. I'm not interested in being iconic, although there is nothing wrong with that, they had a terrific guy for ten years who became very iconic, but nothing could be more different. I have had lots of stories and its validation that the way I wanted to go was the right way, but its sustaining it...

Ward also knows how he should go about achieving sustainability when he says:

...you have to be very adaptable, I view leadership through three lens. There are times when I might be the head of the parade, there are times when we walk side by side with our arms locked, there are times when I stand back and let you lead but there are also times when I am the shoulders you stand on. That is kinda the way I see my job. What I do do well is create the conditions for people to do well...

In addressing organisational change and development, Ward explained that after he initially familiarised himself with the organization, he became aware that the existence of a siloed approach was not going to be conducive to effective collaboration across programming. He set about identifying, highlighting and addressing it as follows:

...the silos, the conversations we have in here, they were heavier in here than they ever were – people are very proprietary and so I spent a lot of time breaking down what was a very siloed approach to the work we do. Changing the way things get done is interesting, I mean the people in here did not want to hear the others and I probably wasn't clear about the vision, what I wanted to do. But what is important is the synergy and sharing opinions with each other and being ok about that and saying from time to time, if the horse is dead maybe you need to get off – you know that kind of stuff, but trying not to be too sarcastic – well how is that working out for you? Is it working out for you? Are you getting what you need? Asking people to supply evidence and asking what they know about their work and trying to get them to own it all and manage it all and you get there in the end...

Case Study 2

The Youth Opportunity Center Oasis (Nashville)

Ward is clear what the needs of the organisation are today and how he should go about addressing those. In particular, he is emphatic about the need to have a strong and unified team that can assist him to do that. Ward is also mindful of the different expectations of that team and is motivated towards collaborative practice to achieve the strategic direction of the organisation. He states:

...I don't think I am blind and I supervise every one of them and you have to get a greater voice, I probably didn't have a clear vision at the start. Could I honestly have told you what I was looking for? The executive team is also getting a lot of voice. Our strategic plan has been a 9 month process with focus groups involving the executive directors of the different programs and I said 'you go and start this with your people and these are the questions I want them to answer' and then the five or six of us hired a consultant and spent two days, two of the best writers pulled it together, benchmarking it through, why do it if you are not going to use the information? It needs to be a living document and if it doesn't then I've been a liar for the past three years and I don't intend to be that...

Ward also demands high levels of performance from his senior staff in carrying out their roles and responsibilities:

...the other thing is that I do not care what your title is, but what I do care about is what you do well. I have people who say '...he is this and that, and she is the Director of...' and well yeah, what's your point? Well, he's also really good with data or the finances, that's what I'm interested in...I meet with the executive every two weeks, they talk about organisational policy and share ideas and expectations and I might have an opinion about that and its ok if I share it, in fact it's not only ok, it's expected...

Closely monitoring the progress and performance of his staff, is intrinsic in his approach to leading the centre in the direction it needs to go in to produce meaningful outcomes through its various programs and departments.

3 Business model

The budget for the Oasis Center is significantly large for a nonprofit organization and enormous effort goes into maintaining that year on year. Again, Ward relies on competent and talented staff to assist him with that task:

We have a financial office and an executive team, we have 50 to 60 staff all up and a \$5million budget that we raise through fundraising and we have an incredible grant writer, so good that I've had three different grant givers writing to me to say that it is the best grant application I have read, he's the best grant writer we've ever had and he started out as an intern with us...we have a full counseling team, 600 children and families per year and we do it free of charge – it's a challenge funded by United Way – and we have to make the rest of it up through fundraising...

Despite this however, the Oasis Center is not immune to funding cuts for vital programs for young people, but Ward also reassesses the currency of those programs and how it best fits with the overall needs and pressures experienced by the Oasis Center. He states that:

We did have a transitional facility, we had it for 20 years and we lost federal funding. It was for 18-24 year olds... we don't have kids assigned to us by the courts – it's not that I don't want those kids in the transitional living centre but what we do here is a crisis intervention model and if I start getting kids assigned here by the courts then it changes the whole piece – mental health, kids who just dropped out, high LGBT – the residential piece changes the whole conversation, we don't want to be landlords again – you have to be mum and dad every day – I want someone who can run the facility and we will do the case management...

However, Ward is also focused on the importance of collecting and building robust evidence to support their investment in certain programs:

When I looked at the governance, I knew we needed to manage by outcomes as an agency, I said we are going to expect people to do this, this is what's happening, where's your evidence, we started doing it 2 years ago – every month we collected data – you have to begin to understand to get the outcomes – they are at one level – genuine impact -and I refer to them as compliance outcomes – pre and post surveys can't be the only data we collect, we need to know which children responded best to which initiative and why do it if you are not going to use the information...

4 Infrastructure, facilities management and design of spaces

Whilst the centre has been operating since 1969, it has recently undergone significant refurbishment. The Oasis Center was re-launched in 2009 and today is an imposing 39,000 square foot facility which is:

...unlike anything else in the southeast, the YOC (Youth Opportunity Center) is a testament to the power and possibility of collaboration. By bringing nine youth agencies under the same roof, we have been able to provide a “one-stop shop” for young people while simultaneously increasing the operating efficiency of agency partners through shared back-office services.

The Oasis Center is part of a Condominium Association where they own their footprint and the space they inhabit. As with all condominium buildings, the Oasis Center has an association that governs its policies and collects periodic association fees for insurance and maintenance. The Oasis Center is also a member of that Association, which is a legal entity and there are a number of restrictions, approvals and permissions that are required to be able to make modifications to the external building. The Oasis Center was created out of a disused clothes factory in 1969 and so holds historic significance in Nashville. It is easily accessible by public transport and once you step into the building, the spaces and are well lit, welcoming and youth friendly, whilst retaining its original industrial feel. The center is filled with contemporary art and it's walls are peppered with positively reinforcing quotations and words of wisdom that spell out respect and inclusion for the young people that access the center. Aside from large open plan shared spaces, private office spaces and meeting rooms there are also a number of program zones. The Emergency Youth Shelter that annexes the centre if for young people aged between 13-17 years who are homeless. It provides a two week therapeutic program of respite and support. The space is cleverly integrated into the center and is both discreet and safe for

the young people who access it. Every inch of the building provides resources and programming to young people and the basement is no exception. It has been converted into a large bike workshop with storage, in part to promote health and wellbeing through exercise, but also to provide constructive occupation and build confidence for young people through bicycle mechanics. Youth participants take a pledge promising to pass on the knowledge they gain in these workshops to other young people in their neighbourhoods. Another basement program is the Underground Art Studio that offers young people:

...an opportunity to use creativity as a pathway for self-exploration, healing, community service and transformative justice.

These programs are underpinned by strong and sustainable partnerships with community stakeholders that serve to create linkages from, and back into, the local community. This promotes the work of the Oasis Center on a day to day level, where the most effective advocates are the young people who participate in those programs.

5 Collaborative policies and practices

Collaboration presents itself on a number of levels at the Oasis Center but perhaps most prominently in partnerships created within and between programs delivered to young people. Ward values the importance of good governance and creating collaborative practice between senior management but also promotes managing by outcomes. He realizes that this is best achieved by bringing different minds and talents together and is focused on the need to be data driven organisation. He states:

I wanted to know how many homeless kids, juvenile justice kids come to the shelter, how many 18 yr olds are coming out of foster care? We know that 40% become homeless within the first year they leave and that's the group that keeps falling through the cracks and gaps and aging out of services. There are superficial transition models and one person said, yeah we wrote one about 6 months prior to the young person leaving and there was no real safety net, the goals in it were really for me rather than it actually being implemented. Here we have a pretty strong philosophy of hearing the young person's voice. There are 19 databases that need to talk to each other...

Ward also knows the value of collaborating with corporate stakeholders and is able to engage their knowledge, talent and skills to bolster the work of the centre. Nissan have their North American headquarters in Nashville and he has met with the vice president of business transitions who oversees their analytics and data recovery department, so that they can provide pro bono assistance to help them do that as an agency. Ward says of this:

...we are going to expect people to provide evidence based on this training – where's your evidence? We are also working towards a new software design – let me give you an example – you know every month we collect Serious Incident Reports on outbursts and when we broke this down and looked at each one that had a change, the ones that we did the training in had a 40% reduction in incidents – the best thing about this is that it is illustrative. But what are the things that mediated that? Can we jump immediately to causation – ok what would it take to find out what is really happening, they are doing a year and a half study of that model best thing that could have happened to us – we were all excited – what are the things that mediated it – how do we evaluate that? We need to know the number, how the population changes, staff changes, we have to be able to understand what you are doing – I want to know what is happening down here – genuine impact – you have to begin to understand to get the outcomes – they are at one level – genuine impact and compliance outcomes. We need to know what activities really work – what children responded well to certain interventions and why...

Ward's understanding of the work that needs to be done at the Oasis Center is to create sustainability through depth and breadth of understanding their own work. It clearly motivates him to engender collective impact for the benefit of the young people they serve in Nashville.

Case Study 3

Harry and Jeanette Weinburg,
KuKui Center (Honolulu, Hawaii)



The Community Partners Program
is what is unique about us...

1 Clarity of purpose of the centre / unifying theme

The Kukui Children's Foundation was founded in 2004 to create a centre for abused children. The Foundation purchased a centrally located building near downtown Honolulu and spent the following two years raising funds and renovating a disused health facility to create The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Kukui Center. The building is designed and upgraded to provide an easily identified and specialized place where abused, vulnerable and disadvantaged children and their families can receive the help they need. This is the unifying theme across the nine nonprofit human services that operate out of the Kukui Center. One of the tenant services emphasises the depth of trust and collaboration across the centre and highlights the perceived value of being co-located and unified by a shared purpose. She stated:

...we create a film of trust, like we are all room-mates and you know there is a commonality of vision and spirit, even if I never make referrals to the other services, we have a fairly small staff and few opportunities, people are like-minded because you are all working towards a common goal. In some larger buildings they do have a broad service mix, but here we all can really help that person and not everybody can, we have a common spirit and an issue that binds us together towards the betterment of children and their families and Judy is the glue...

and another program leader shares this view:

...we feel a connection because we are in this shared space and we can further the consciousness that we are not just a vision, we have camaraderie...

Executive Director, Judy Lind states that there were different views and opinions on who should be in the centre and that some services were reluctant if not resistant to become part of the co-located model. However, it is evident that the model existing today is the correct one for the community they serve and includes a broad range of responses including immigration support services, outreach services and family harmony and relationships programs. Lind states:

It did not turn out how we originally planned and we could have forced it to happen, but in the long run this is much better. We went on and picked the people who we thought would provide the best programs. I am on the Board of Family Promise of Hawaii and I wanted them in here and one of the first criteria of the funding was that you had to provide a service on site. We have the literacy program, the Hawaii Immigrant Justice Centre, Hawaii Foster Youth Coalition, the Kids Hurt Too who work with kids who have lost their parents and Hale Kipa have also joined us. We have the services we need...

Lind has carefully selected the services that can amplify the benefits for children and families and states that:

I have been very conscious about the selection of tenants. New organisations will ask, have you got any space, but we are always full...people will come to us all the time, it's so inexpensive...

How the centre presents to the public is also very important to Lind and she was clear that there had to be agreement across the collective of how this might look. She said:

...in the video people wanted to have pictures of sad looking kids and I said that is not us, that is not the language we need to use, we had a discussion about it... we needed it to be upbeat and be seen to be doing something positive about the situation and they agreed...

Lind also knows that a unifying theme to carry people along is very important and that:

...if you are in a building where everyone is doing something different, the collaboration would look very different...

Case Study 3

Harry and Jeanette Weinburg, KuKui Center
(Honolulu, Hawaii)

2 Governance and leadership structure

Judy Lind has been the Executive Director of the centre since its inception in 2009 and continues to be not only the leader and ambassador for the organisation, but also one of the primary drivers of the co-located centre. Lind has a background in social work and was instrumental in establishing the early Children's Advocacy Centres from a collaboration of public private partnerships led by the National Children's Alliance across North America. She stated that the centre came about because a friend of hers who was also the Police Chief at the time, agreed to help establish it and when he retired, a new person came in with a different view and because it had not been agreed in writing, the idea fell apart. Lind believed so strongly in the project, she persuaded the necessary people to continue to maintain support for the development of the co-located model. Her steely determination to make the centre work was evidenced when the organisation she was working for at the time resisted participation and she states:

I was head of the program that was going to move here and who decided against it and I decided to leave that job and stick with the Foundation that agreed to lead it instead...

Lind describes her role today as landlord of the centre, but her explanation of what she contributes is certainly much richer than that. She is the only paid staff of the foundation and she has one part-time program worker who assists with the collaborative initiatives, namely the Community Partners Program, which is central to the robust levels of collaboration achieved throughout the model. The Kukui Center is governed by a board of ten directors who Lind describes as:

...a business board and what they have in common is that they are all my friends since as far back as 1986 and they are very well connected...everybody is connected or has some knowledge and awareness of what we do...I've never needed anything, they are incredibly diverse and well connected...

She is clear about the benefits provided through having stability at governance level, as well as a clear vision and understanding of the requirements for succession planning and sustainability of the centre. Lind stated that:

...there is an operations manual that I put together... The directors didn't ask me to do it – it was because I thought we should have one so that if I leave, a new person knows where to pick up...

3 Business model

When asked about the origins of the Kukui Center, Lind states:

...it started as something different...I was running the Children's Advocacy Center at that time and two weeks before the Mayor was due to leave, he asked if I could spend \$3million in 90 days as the funding needed to be spent. The building was owned by a health association who moved to the mainland and they wanted to keep this for nonprofits. We gave \$3.5 mil plus \$50k as we needed to make it more worthwhile. We had to pay relocation costs for our tenants so we paid around \$30,000 in relocation and spent a little bit on the design and engineering. We also had a funding request submitted earlier that came through for \$500k and had \$1 million donated goods and services and I raised another half to one million in grants. It cost maybe \$6million all together and we own it, so we can do whatever we need to do...

Lind does have plans to expand the centre's operations, to create a residential facility for young people exiting from foster care. Whilst starkly aware that it will not be an easy task, she believes that this initiative would wholly complement the existing service offering for children, young people and their families who use the centre. She states that:

...one of our Board members is the senator of human services and a third of all homeless people are ex-foster kids who do not fair very well, my idea was to build something on the back, have the case management run by one of the organisations here who is already doing it anyway...from a business plan point of view it makes no sense at all, from that point it would never zero out but it's so important...we don't want to get people upset, the kids would stay in the centre for up to 18 months, it would be a big undertaking and unless people really want to make it happen, it won't happen...

Initially there was some anxiety at governance level that they might not fill the original tenant spaces as Lind states:

There are 45 staff across all of the nonprofits...we have got a waiting list, but the board was very anxious initially and thought, it's going to be a big white elephant, I suppose if people see it as a successful project they are more likely to come on board...any kind of change is difficult for people...

Today Lind is confident that the constructed business model is financially sustainable and she continues to progress and strengthen the capacity of the model. She states that:

...we continue to be in the black and continue to get money when we need it...we had a program audit because we wanted to formally expand it to any population and to make sure it was in compliance and now we have an annual financial audit...

Lind also knows that the tenants are aware of the benefits of co-location and on that basis, she is able to be selective in choosing who she wants to participate in the model. She states:

...people will come to us all the time, it's so inexpensive and we had some people who were originally going to move in and I wouldn't let them. They said that if they rented space then they wanted 10 car spaces and I said maybe you wouldn't fit here, as we couldn't meet those demands...

Case Study 3

Harry and Jeanette Weinburg, KuKui Center (Honolulu, Hawaii)

Some of the benefits for the nonprofit tenants are outlined in the following statement:

...a PR firm did all of our marketing, we bring people in that way, printing the newsletters, we get free storage, the credit union gives us free conference space plus money, this other guy gave a \$40k van for disability... everybody is connected to everybody and some of it is nepotism and some of it is good only fashioned altruism, the nonprofit world is very interconnected and it takes you a while to build up relationships but the Board members know how to be board members and everybody knows who these people are, they know to pick up the phone...

Lind also ensures that any potential competition and conflict across organisations in relation to fund seeking is avoided:

...I helped a tenant get funding and now she has got a boiler plate that she can use for her programs...I try very hard in my job to go along with what they want...I have a friend who lives in San Francisco who gives us \$20k a year and we do not compete against our tenants. I will lead a grant, I will write the grant and the benefit cascades...

4 Infrastructure, facilities management and design of spaces

The Kukui Center opened its doors in January 2009 and is owned by the Foundation. When you enter the building, it feels very welcoming and it is instantly clear by its decor and spatial layout that it is a centre for families and their children. The design and colour schemes have been done in consultation with the tenants and therefore reflect the types of services they deliver to the community. It was important from Lind's perspective to ensure that the spaces reflected the tenant's contribution to the co-located model. She explains how the decor of the entrance was carefully planned in consultation with the services to welcome and create easy access for small children:

...the artwork was taken from a story book and we did all the basics and if they wanted anything special, you could request it. All of the doors around the perimeter are colour coded and so services are easy to find and when you start putting it from their perspective, it's more welcoming...

Lind also places herself at front and centre of the work that needs to be done to improve the spaces and liveability of the Kukui Center. Her resourcefulness and motivation to get the job done is evidenced in the following statement:

...when they were refurbishing this centre, the construction site next door had a crane and I said would you turn your crane around and take the old air conditioning units off, would you come by here and they did, they wanted some of our parking and they also had carried out a soils report which would be useful for us and that would have cost \$30k-\$40k. That's the kind of thing I do...

5 Collaborative policies and practices

At the heart of collaboration, Lind attributes it more broadly to a cultural attitude:

...the culture of Hawaii lends itself to collaboration, not so much when it involves money but through their churches, and people are used to making things happen rather than getting people to do it for them – they have become very self-sufficient and we look out for each other and on an island everyone knows each other so you don't burn your bridges, you find ways to work things out...there is such a nice feeling with this group – that's in part because they all feel of value to each other -cultural value...and so somehow my challenge is to make every organisation, taking the role as a lead professional to add value to our purpose and vision...

Lind says that she does not do programming however, the Community Partners Program has been initiated by her as a way to enhance collaboration across the services and to create a sense of community at the centre. Lind speaks of the program as being the unique element to the model and she has now engaged a part-time worker to concentrate on building the program, which also includes doing the newsletter and including the other tenants on their website. The Kukui Centre is clearly an important community resource, with collaboration as one of its core values which exists on a number of levels. In terms of direct service provision, the agencies co-located in the building work together to collaboratively provide services to clients, greatly enhancing what is available for children and families in the community. Joint workshops and training is open to clients and all tenant staff, which eliminates duplication and increases available resources. Shared staff, equipment and facilities enables everyone to maximize what is available and respond in a constructive way, particularly in tough economic times. Joint strategic planning sessions help them as a collective to look to the future and identify further ways to collaborate and collaboration is an expectation that is agreed at the very initial entry point to model participation. As Lind explains:

...we have a collaborative for sure, the Community Partners Program. It came out of the group not me, I ask the programs what they need and they give us a wish list and if a program wants to participate in the Community Partnerships Program, they have to provide resources and their Board has to make the first call to donors. We have a budget and as part of the program, I will write grants that will be used by everyone. We have a collaboration agreement which is an attachment to the lease and it contains all of the expectations and we insisted that the Board presidents would sign it to ensure buy-in. You have to do the fun things as well, pot lucks, staff training collaboratively and their Boards have to contribute resources, everyone contributes...

Case Study 3

Harry and Jeanette Weinburg, KuKui Center (Honolulu, Hawaii)

Staff wellbeing across all of the organisations is important to Lind and collaboration is fostered through joint healthful activities. One service provider emphasised the reciprocity between staff:

We set up yoga twice a week for everyone, Judy got us funding and we even invite the youth – they are so disconnected from their bodies, even the little things matter...the little things matter. We ask, do you have an extra desk that you don't need, I borrow stuff, people are very giving, we send youth to your services and vice versa and I think it really says something...

Another collaborative initiative led by Lind involves a range of joint marketing opportunities. She provides a common advertisement board in the foyer and the foundation also provides promotional packs that include the latest newsletter that is coordinated by Lind's staff and all the tenants have to do is insert their own business card. Each of the services provide an overview on individual sheets within the pack that can be updated or replaced if a tenant moves out. More recently Lind was successful in securing a grant of \$30,000 to create a promotional video for the Kukui Center that features elements of all tenant programs and activities and has been uploaded onto their website. This is an important contribution as many of the smaller nonprofit organisations and programs lack the resources to have a website themselves. In addition, the centre was also able to carry out technology upgrades including a projector and video for common use. Lind highlights that:

...there is a lot of stuff around collaboration and we report on the collaborations that we have done in the last quarter. It's one of the things that we do, and we do it at many levels. We do retreats and we have tenants plan ways that they can collaborate and we mapped our collaboration and then had a follow up retreat...this group gets a tremendous amount of help and support, they get a lot done for them that they otherwise wouldn't be able to do for themselves...

Lind states that she actively screens the tenants to ensure the correct tenant mix for the co-located model and highlights the direct benefits for them when they have been chosen to participate. She states that:

...there are enormous benefits for the tenants, its more amplified for the clients, being able to walk a client from one program to the next, one of the things I say, the likelihood is that they won't get there if we worked separately, that is the beauty of it and they are very comfortable here...when they commit, they commit and we really don't accept substitutes to our meeting because we set it around every-bodies schedules and we have a collaboration agreement so that everyone understands what they are signing up to. I try very hard in my job to go along with what they want...

One of the tenants of the centre can vouch wholeheartedly about the benefits of co-location in the following statement:

...the benefit of sharing space here has been great, we immediately doubled, we had 60 children per month and we are up to double that per month. When we moved into this place we could increase our service because of accessibility and donations. The Kukui Center has just been amazingly supportive, Judy has and when we went through some challenges Judy provided advice and guidance. I feel we get most of the rewards of the Community Partners Programs – we're the neediest I think, previously we had three staff, we were all volunteers. It also helps in grant writing as we don't have a budget or funds for our advertising and the Kukui Center does that for us, which is huge. Previously we met in McDonalds or Pizza Hut and it was really hard to get be visible, to have a place for youth. It has really helped with the client referral process. It has enhanced our organisational identity, helps in grant writing and we don't have a budget or funds for our advertising and the Kukui Center does that for us which is huge, it also really helped with the client referral process. I was working with a client who was not following through and finally I realised her daughter was being kicked out of school at the time and Judy said let me walk you through this process and that was a huge benefit to us. She said let me walk you next door to see what they can do, which is so much less daunting for a client as they perceive the other worker as your friend...

Case Study 4

Broadway Youth Resource Centre (Vancouver)



...our centre is not just co-location,
it is integration...

1 Clarity of purpose of the centre / unifying theme

The Broadway Youth Resource Centre (BYRC) is a multi-agency, integrated one-stop facility that has been operating since 1999. It is owned and managed by the Pacific Community Resource Society (PCRS) who are a major provider of youth services in the region and an award winning, accredited, not-for-profit society serving Lower Mainland communities in Vancouver since 1984. The agency provides alternate education, employment, addiction counseling and prevention services, housing support, and cultural enrichment for children, youth, adults and families.

BYRC has 12 tenants who provide a wide range of social, health, education, employment and life skills services to homeless and at-risk young people, between the ages of 12 and 24 years. There is also a residential annex to the complex, comprising 30 youth beds with specific units for young people who are most vulnerable to homelessness: aboriginal youth, LGBTQ youth, and youth leaving foster care. The annex named 'Kwayatsut' comes from the Coast Salish language and holds the meaning of seeking one's power or spirit quest.

This united and unifying spirit operates throughout the centre and enables all of the organisations to provide a joined up and what appears to be a seamless service provision for young people most in need of their targeted support. As Jocelyn Helland states:

...our center is not just co-location it is integration, there are 12 tenant organisations that operate on site.

2 Infrastructure, facilities management and design of spaces

Helland explained that the centre came about as a result of a number of nonprofit organisations and agencies, who through meeting frequently in their outreach work with young people, thought that operating in isolation to address youth needs was not having the required impact. They collectively concluded that the best way of resolving the issues in this neighbourhood was to construct a centre for 12-24 year olds to have their needs addressed under one roof by a range of service providers. There however was some difficulty in deciding which nonprofit organisation should take on the task of leading the project. Helland stated:

...there is a history, this community was really struggling with poverty, crime, sexual exploitation of children back in the 90s in particular and the organisations and agencies met frequently and were doing outreach, but it still wasn't having an impact. They thought the best way of resolving it was that 12-24yr olds could come to access all services under one roof. We rented a commercial space that used to be an old Pizza Hut with big windows big doors. So this group of agencies collectively picked a lead agency but that took a while. One agency was nudged forward but they came back and said that they didn't think they could do it. Then the Pacific Community Resources Society (PCRS), Family Services of Vancouver, Boys and Girls Club of Vancouver and Urban Native Youth came together and PCRS agreed to take the role of lead agency.

Today the centre is a vibrant facility in an easily accessible location where young people feel safe and welcomed by the staff working there. Helland states that significant work has been done to engage the local community, as many of the surrounding buildings are residential dwellings in a leafy suburb. These are ongoing negotiations that Helland and her team manage and nurture, to ensure that they young people are able to access and use the centre with ease and enjoyment. Helland also highlights that sometime harmonious relationships with the local community is not enough and that sometimes their challenge is more political. She states that:

Our political climate here is one of austerity. Here at BYRC, we have a brand-new LEED building custom designed to serve young people...it is an amazing community asset but we are unable to fully celebrate it. It is almost like some people are worried that public taxpayers will see this as an "extra" like if we were really practicing austerity, we would not have the kind of money available. They don't see this as an investment in our children and youth, so that they stay healthy, housed and employed.

3 Governance and leadership structure

Jocelyn Helland is the Manager of the co-located youth centre and her background is in political science and philosophy. She has brought many years of experience in youth work and advocacy in the areas of child protection, homelessness and young people in foster care and so is extremely well credentialed to lead in her role. She has a strong interest in the prevailing notion that no one agency has all the answers to complex social problems. She states that one of her strong personality traits is to blend disciplines, bring diverse groups of people together and act like a bridge to create a more effective way of addressing issues affecting young people. Helland states:

...one of my personality traits is that I love a puzzle and I'm pretty good at them and I love learning how that can apply to things in this sector. I have been exposed to a variety of projects that I loved....this is what I want to do, my strength is about bringing diverse groups of people together, my skill is being a bridge...bouncing off everybody and I knew I was good at it....

Helland also admits to having a strong interest in how people organise themselves in society. She stated that she fell into an organisation that was a provincial youth advocacy group and as a result is interested in upholding and advocating for young people's rights. She states that:

I came to work here because the manager of BYRC is one of the key "glue" positions: the glue that holds a multi-agency collaborative hub together. We wanted people to put their organizational missions aside and focus on shared practices and collaboration for the benefit of young people. As a result, we have a good reputation. It's all about the vision of taking it to the next level. I guess what I am hoping to do here is to push the envelope, to get real outcomes, create mutual capacity building. The way community service agencies are funded by government here, is through a competitive process that pits one agency against another. As a result, agencies are conditioned to remain competitive for limited government resources. Agencies bravely overcome that conditioning and try and collaborate on service delivery, but it is difficult. The spirit of BYRC and my role here is to really foster that collaboration. I have a vision of taking it to the next level, which is easy to do when the fantastic energy of youth is behind you!

Helland acknowledges the importance of stability in the not for profit sector, in being able to respond to the ongoing needs of vulnerable young people and she believes that we have sufficient evidence to deliver services that respond adequately to the issues presented by young people. She states:

I used to think it was about data and evidence: that if we just presented government with evidence about what we needed to do and why, we would get the support we need to address the issues young people face. Now, I am not sure that that is as important now, and I am unapologetic about it. We know exactly why there is youth homelessness and yet, government keeps putting them to the bottom of the barrel, even though we have all the evidence we need about what to do. Our child poverty in BC is one of the highest in the country. We are one of the places in the world where our child care system is the least affordable and accessible by families that need it the most. All of the cuts our child welfare/ foster care system have received year after year since the early 2000's. Entire group residential homes have been closed down carte blanche and some of those young people had not got anywhere else to go. They were forced to move into our poorest neighbourhood and live in hotels. No wonder we find these young people struggling so much! In the nonprofit, community serving sector, we have more power than we realise to speak out. We are the consistent present in the lives of the most marginalized young people. And yet we don't recognise our own power...

When Helland took up her role, she understood the need to engender collaborative practice across the organisations in order to get the best out of the co-located model. She states:

...part of the reason I was so excited to come to BYRC, was the opportunity to work on a collaboration such as this. I had worked hard in my previous job to have a strong reputation as a leader in the sector who can be trusted, who is fair and who takes great efforts to work in partnership with other agencies. I knew that being co-located meant an even greater potential for organizations to work together more effectively – and I wanted to be a part of that. From the minute I hit the ground, I kept asking the partners, “what can we do to be working better together?”

It is this pioneering spirit that enables Helland to venture into areas of leadership and innovation to refine the model in a direction that best meets the needs of the population of young people it serves.

4 Business model

Helland recounts the challenges of developing and launching the Broadway Youth Resource Centre and recalls how little guidance there was at that time regarding the model, as it was both innovative and untested. She states that:

PCRS hadn't secured full funding to keep the lights on and the doors open when we first opened. We ran a deficit and continued to work with our children's ministry to see what we could do. Everyone was so committed to the vision of BYRC, that there had been a little bit of 'do it' and then ask for forgiveness later. The first year was rough as there was no clear plan on how to make it work but the advantage was a clear commitment from all of the agencies involved. We were charging minimal rent with everything included. When I got here four years ago there was one licence agreement in place and that one was really a lease agreement on their own letter head. But we are going to do one for everyone now.

Making improvements across the centre is high on Helland's agenda, alongside getting the right organisational mix to maximize the service offering and impact for young people. Helland outlined that:

...there is a large aboriginal population in this community, but when we first opened BYRC, the aboriginal young people were not coming in through the front door. There were no aboriginal workers here at the time. We needed an aboriginal cultural worker which we now have a drug and alcohol worker and so we managed to beef that up fairly quickly. The issue was all about providing a one stop shop for youth and having anything they need by way of support under one roof.

However, Helland acknowledges the ongoing resourcing issues for individual services and whilst she is aware that the model is reliant on each of the organisations being able to retain funding and staff, it does not always work out that way. She stated that:

...it's nice when it works, but it's also clear that the technique has some vulnerabilities. For example, one organisation was housed in the centre for many years and then because of things going on in their own organisation, plus a bit of crisis in the community they pulled the worker from here. We have struggled to get that worker back and so it's all about resourcing, adapting and being prepared to react to sudden changes within organizations that then impact the centre.

5 Collaborative policies and practices

The Children's Ministry is the main government department that supports the centre and Helland states that they have a great relationship with them. The City of Vancouver is also incredibly supportive, to the point where they matched a compatible not for profit organization who were looking for space to the centre. Helland states:

An Aunt Leah's worker is also here now. I got a phone call from their funder who is also our funder and they said they are branching out and doing a bit of work in this area and our values are aligned and the work they have been doing fits so closely with ours. We were already providing services to youth leaving foster care, and with their worker joining our team we can now also provide service to youth who have left care. They are all sitting in the same office and referrals are as easy as swiveling their chair.

Helland is also very clear about the complexities of collaborative practice across diverse services, emphasizing that:

But you cannot force collaboration, you can support each other and then slowly build trust and then you build the routine from there. I would even say that in an ongoing way it is interpersonal because this is so organic and before I got here nothing was written down. There are no two agencies that pay the same proportion of rent contributions but there are other ways they contribute. This is a youth driven organisation where we go elbow to elbow with staff and there are various opportunities that young people need and we are building capacity and will co-lead with other staff projects. This process was a learning experience...

Helland speaks of some of the ongoing barriers regarding funding for the centre and the individual organisations within that:

Funders are seeing the immense importance in the kind of collaboration we have been doing here since 1999. In BC, however, funding is distributed through a competitive bid/tender processes that tends to create the opposite effect. Nonprofit organisations are tired of this competitive model and are collaborating despite this pressure. It is still difficult and you can see some nonprofits are reasonably very suspicious due to their experiences of being pushed out of competitive processes. They are not going to be interested in revealing anything at any table about outcomes.

Helland concluded however, that both Departments of Children and Health have been so supportive of the collaborative hub model and that they have asked other agencies to do "in-reach" and are now contractually obligated to provide services in the youth centre. This means that the benefits of co-location between not for profit organizations makes sense for both the services and the young people. On this note, she states:

There is one more salient point: our Children's Ministry thought this was a really good model and seen the benefits of creating youth hubs. We need to bring the services to where youth gather and outside of the schools and youth centres are where young people are. We have created a strong culture of support for youth here, which is why they show up in the numbers they do. More isn't always better, but if you are constantly getting feedback from the youth who come to the centre, and the ones that don't, you can keep the fine balance to create the best environment to provide high quality services while creating community.

Case Study 5

James W. Ray Orion Centre (Seattle)



...it has always been about partnerships...

4 Clarity of purpose of the centre / unifying theme

The James W. Ray Orion Center is one of seven sites owned and managed by major nonprofit organisation YouthCare, who serve the local population of homeless children and young people aged 12 to 24 years in Seattle. When asked whether it is beneficial for the co-located centre to be part of a larger organisation, Ruth Blaw states:

...certainly that helps with the funding and the branding of the centre...

The Orion Center co-located model is not only landlord to other nonprofit agencies, instead it invites organisations into the model to partner and complement the overall service offering to young people. Partnerships are a key element of the centre and as Blaw states:

It is called the Orion Center because it was a constellation of providers who originally founded the idea in 1974. It was a faith based organization with a neighborhood group and in order to address the needs of kids sleeping on the stairs of the church. It has developed over the years, but it started originally as 'let's make some macaroni and have a chat' and over the years we have built partnerships with schools and Fair-start and many others...

The framework of care at the Orion Center is guided by the highly effective continuum of care model constructed by its parent organization and so the purpose of the centre and its unifying theme therefore inextricably links back to that model. Their mission is to build:

...confidence and self-sufficiency for homeless youth by providing a continuum of care that includes outreach, basic services, emergency shelter, housing, counseling, education, and employment training.

Partner services are selected in accordance with where they fit onto a continuum and this provides a unified and integrated approach to service delivery. As Blaw outlines:

...it is a really broader continuum of outreach, shelter, case management and then within that you have a continuum for education, workshops, paid opportunities, college accreditation and within that we have a continuum all the way up to college readiness. When we think about someone who wants to come and teach welding, yes that's a cool idea but we need to ask where does it fit into our broader continuum? When we want to engage youth when they come in, there is also a continuum of engagement and everything should be on a continuum, we drive youth to clinics 4 days a week, there are health services, we have legal services who work in the exact same way and we meet them where they are at...we also operate from positive youth development and trauma informed care...

2 Infrastructure, facilities management and design of spaces

The Orion Center is a converted disused car showroom on a street corner that is easily accessible and automatically noticeable because of its oversized signage and colour. This appears to be very intentional, so that young people know exactly where to come to access youth services. It is immediately apparent that it is a youth specific space with artwork, furniture and activity that is instantly inviting, colorful and upbeat. However, Blaw states that whilst the centre is great and young people are aware of its location, the need for additional services in the co-located model has outgrown the facility. Added to this is a growing issue with commercial outlets that have recently established themselves in the local area and are concerned how the centre and its purpose may affect their business, particularly with tourist perceptions of young homeless people sharing that part of town with them. However as Blaw states:

In this part of Seattle, no one came here, there was nothing over here and this was an empty building. The Board has a real estate plan and this building is paid for outright and it is worth four times what we paid for it. But it is no longer adequate for our needs and we are also having a lot of trouble with our neighbours and tourists are very hard to manage. They like the concept and have some sympathy for the issues, but it's a case of 'not in my back yard' so we are working on that.

3 Governance and leadership structure

Ruth Blaw has been managing the Orion Center for seven years and her background is teaching in alternative education projects outside of the mainstream system, including within prison settings. Whilst Blaw manages the Orion Center, she credits CEO Melinda Giovengo's leadership style, as being instrumental in the success of the collaborative and partnership initiatives across the wider YouthCare organisation, which also benefits the culture of its projects, including the James Orion Center. Giovengo has been the CEO of YouthCare since 2006 and had worked for the organization in a variety of roles for twenty years prior to that. She holds an M.A. in Clinical Psychology, a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology, and is published on issues surrounding homeless youth and the impact of learning disabilities among hard-to-serve populations. Blaw articulates Giovengo's style of leadership in the following statement:

Melinda's leadership is very effective, she makes a huge footprint and people are happy to be included, she casts a wide net and people are happy to be part of that. She is the leader and the face of the organisation and at the base of what she does, is the effective relationships that she creates with other organisations. She has changed everything for the better mostly, completely for the better...she is inventive but also very aware of the risks...

Giovengo is directly accountable to a large and diverse Board of Directors for YouthCare, comprising 28 Directors.

4 Business model

The annual budget for the Orion Centre is \$3.7million and there are a number of program targets that have to be met to satisfy the various funders. It is evident that YouthCare ensure careful control over the centre as it is a valuable asset and there are a number of partner organisations who do not pay rent but whose services are purchased into the model. As Blaw states:

We are 70% city, state, county and federal government funding and the rest is private foundations or family and corporate foundations...the creative director is trying to move Orion towards having a decision made to not to take government funding. I have to ensure that the building is occupied...if we want a therapist we have an hourly rate that we pay them, like a sub-contract. If I need Michelle to go to a case management meeting as they have something going on, we pay for that...

Giovengo has constructed a business model that reduces risk of loss of program funding. Blaw states that:

She never wants a program or a person to have only one source of funding, it's a good methodology, she splits projects and splits staff funding so that it isn't as big an investment to lose out if funding does not come through...

Blaw's role within this model is to keep the Orion Center fully tenanted. The tenant service providers are not charged rent and therefore gain enormously through participating in the model. The centre today is comprehensive in its delivery of services and Blaw states that:

...we have almost everything that a young person might need because we have 7 other houses, some are transitional living programs and we have three LGBTI youth programs and a house for 15-27 year olds...we have this community of services provided by YouthCare and I have a few sub-contracts as well as other services partnering with us, the centre is a constellation of providers...I manage a community...

5 Collaborative policies and practices

Partnership working and collaborative practice are integral to the work of the Orion Center. This organizational culture is equally reinforced throughout YouthCare's projects and Blaw states that:

...for some agencies that may be a faith based organisation and if you are going to be based here, you have to tone that down as this is a YouthCare building and you are in YouthCare world. And so that works the way it works and at the end of the day it is all about relationships.

In summing up, Blaw is in no doubt that this clarity and strength of culture is carefully and effectively constructed through relationships and states that:

...it's all about collaboration and that's how Melinda intends to do business. Funding really requires collaboration now and she is really good at it, which I think is why she has not suffered as much with the way – because they are not going to just give you the money, they are going to give all of us the money and she's really good at it. She is very very good at partnering – helping to find a space, find out what do they need and sharing agreements, Melinda is very good at partnering, it's just second nature to us, we do it all the time...we have managed to buffer against the recession better than most because of Melinda's relationships and her ability to partner.

... at the base of what she does, is the effective relationships that she creates with other organisations...

Case Study 6

James W. Ray Orion Centre (Seattle)



...access to human services so people can find help when they need it...

1 Clarity of purpose of the centre / unifying theme

The unifying theme of the Together Center is to ‘...create access to human services so people can find help when they need it.’ The centre was conceptualised in the late 1980’s when a number of nonprofit organisations started discussing a paper that had been written about co-located centers and their benefits and one particular leader J. Howard Finck from the Friends of Youth really wanted to see something happen. He gathered a dozen or so agencies over a number of years to talk about whether a joint project could be made. Four agencies stepped forward and said they would like to participate and Pamela Mauk recalls:

...they knew in our area that transportation is particularly lousy for everybody, but of course particularly for low income people and they knew they were sharing clients already, but that the area is spread out, suburban and not helpful for clients. It was a visionary step among those four agencies...

Mauk stated that the vision of the centre is based on the premise that all communities require human services at all faces of life and whilst Together Center does not have a particular clientele with a single overarching issue, the centre is unified in its diversity, breadth and width of services that it provides to the community in a holistic capacity. Mauk recalls that:

...those that started it dealt with youth and poverty and so for a while that was the makeup more of the campus. They initially wanted to make sure they have either boy scouts, girl scouts, or campfire boys and girls so that residents of the suburban area would understand that human services are something everybody would use. We currently have medical and dental, housing and homelessness, mental health, childcare, a number of programs for developmentally disabled as well as other disabilities, almost cradle to the grave.

However, Mauk realistically acknowledges that it is impossible to be all things to all people and states:

That was the early vision but over time, I realised that the universe is always way bigger than we are. I noticed at one point when the founders were still involved and I was taking the lead on getting new agencies for space, that the whole disability communities, it wasn't on the road map at all, which is fine, but I realised that those communities benefit so much from having multiple services here. They use the mental health facility, financial support and housing and are very much a good client group to tap into a multi-service centre...We are now a multi- service centre and the other services benefit from having an umbrella organisation. There is a mixture, some who provide a service and then other nonprofits that do not deal directly with human services, they do training and advocacy...

Today there are twenty nonprofit agencies located on a three side by side building campus, where visitors find food, shelter, child care, youth and family supports, assistance for disabilities, medical and dental care and much more all at one location. About five years ago, a focus on ensuring people could find the service they needed came to a head with the development of what we call Front Door Services. These were developed by discussions with our many partners as we considered was important "beyond colocation." At our monthly Together Center Association meetings, the agencies on our campus shared the difficulties in meeting the needs of a changing and growing community, particularly the needs of immigrants, domestic violence survivors, and those without housing, needs that are exacerbated in times of emergency. As a result of these concerns, we worked to develop help at our "Front Door." With a recent and unusual opening of space on campus,

Together Center held large meetings and conducted interviews with dozens of agencies, human services staff at Eastside cities, and other human service leaders. We learned that the assistance to clients in the lobby is considered extremely important and a touch screen tool very beneficial. Today, visitors are assisted with full-time information and referral staff, advocates for special needs serve part-time from an Advocate Office (they include staff for veterans' services, public health, bi-lingual support for domestic violence survivors, seniors services and the Muslim community resource center) and help for language barriers (Spanish navigation is provided, among other support). Free public phones are available, and a touch screen, among other tools, helps people navigate to services.

2 Infrastructure, Facilities Management and Design of Spaces

The co-located centre was innovative and ground breaking for its time and on its website it states:

Together Center is one of the first nonprofit multi-tenant centers created in the nation. During the late 1980's, a number of nonprofit leaders discussed the need for a low-cost, centralized home for services. The goals were to meet the multiple needs of clients, overcome transportation barriers and provide the community with a large service mix. In addition, the new Center would keep costs low and create unpredictable but expected synergy and partnerships...Since that time, a high level of community support has gone into developing the founding vision. Several million dollars have been donated from private foundations, corporations, and local and federal government to renovate the campus buildings and launch the Center's innovative project.

The development phase of the Together Centre was not without its challenges however and Mauk recalls:

...there were upsets like this strip mall was purchased and it was built out over time for nonprofits, but you know the big hardware store moved out in the middle of the night and so with an organisation that has really little dollars on hand that was a big calamity...

Throughout Mauk's twenty year executive role at Together Center she has developed major campus build-outs, raised more than \$2 million in contributions, and developed new partnerships and programs to lower barriers to services and build the Eastside human services infrastructure. She has also managed major building repairs and design projects, including carpeting replacement, upgrades to increase accessibility in utilities, parking lot redesign, aggregate replacement and other enhancements to the physical building. She has been instrumental in selecting tenants and negotiating lease agreements to ensure that the most relevant and appropriate human services participate the model. Mauk has a small but effective team to assist in the oversight of the Together Center. She is assisted by a full time Operations Manager and there is also a Property Manager on contract for the centre since 1997 who oversees lease income and vendor payments and handles day-to-day tenant concerns.

3 Governance and leadership structure

Pamela Mauk has been Chief Executive Officer of the Together Center since April of 1995 during which time she has served on the Board of Directors of Greater Redmond Chamber of Commerce and the Leadership Institute. She currently serves as President of the Redmond Rotary Foundation, Immediate Past President of Rotary Club of Redmond, the Alliance of Eastside Agencies (for which she is Treasurer), the Working Group of the Eastside Human Services Forum, and other strategic planning groups. Mauk has thirty years of experience as a director of resource development, director of marketing and senior executive in nonprofit organizations and for five years had her own marketing communications company serving many business sectors. Mauk recalls the early years developing the Together Center:

I've been here for 20 years and the organisation has been around for 25, so I missed that initial start -up and I guess followed on the heels of the person I thought was the first Executive Director who had been here for 2 years. Initially they had a lawyer who was really helping playing the role of staff part time and he was drawing up leases. I think one of the experiences of that early board were that you know, we talk about collaboration and the novel notion of the center, but a whole lot of time was spent just on leasing and structure, people just didn't realise how long it would take...but the marketing and fundraising has been particularly important at least for the first 8 years since I started.

Mauk explains that her role understandably has changed over the last twenty years:

I didn't see the job description before I was interviewed and I was just told about it and I read over it and I said that I am not sure that this is really me and then I made a case for this is what you really need, is fundraising and marketing. The original job description was for a property manager and I convinced them somehow that they needed a fundraising and a marketing person rather than a property manager. Managing property although had a bit about building alliances in there, but now my job description and probably because I helped to fashion it by mainly looking at it on line by looking at what a CEO is supposed to look like, it has now more functions of reporting to board, financial oversight, being ambassador and all those other things so it is much more typical today.

Case Study 6

Together Center (Seattle)

Mauk has been acknowledged for her leadership across the years and received on behalf of the Together Center the statewide Evergreen Award for nonprofit excellence, the 2002 Nonprofit Breakthrough Award at the Greater Redmond Chamber of Commerce's Business Excellence Awards, and the 1995 King County Partner Award, among other honors. Mauk states:

I am directly accountable to the Board and I have been in my role for 20 years which has changed my Director from executive Director to CEO to keep up with the times and because I certainly play that role. One of the things I feel I need to remind them of is I report directly to the Board. I feel I need to remind them that although a Board can make a different choice about this, I report to the Board as a whole although the President at is my lead communication point. We have 13 Directors but our by-laws allow us to have 16 but we are always around 13 / 14. I like that number in terms of being able to staff committees but still have an intimate number and also be able to get a quorum at meetings. It works well for me.

When Mauk was asked about whether her Board held a strictly governance role or helping in the day to day management she stated very clearly:

...they are a strategic, planning and policy making board, they hire and fire me and they do do personnel in terms of my personnel evaluation, but they are meant to be a policy making board and their power is when they meet together once a month. We tell them when they are on committees that they are volunteers serving me or / and they are serving the Board to bring policy making strategic planning recommendations back to the board. But they are certainly not to manage programs, that's what they hire me for and we have had training to make it clear that I manage the staff...

4 Business model

The initial development group established a 501c3 nonprofit (RIS tax code) for the purposes of constructing a nonprofit co-located centre and identified a failing shopping strip mall and put up collectively \$325,000 to put the down payment on it. According to Mauk, it took no equity which she believes has become somewhat a motto for the success of the centre. She states:

...it would not have worked if they took a piece of the pie at all and they guaranteed the loans and didn't know whether they would ever be paid back, but they were really visionary people. Feels to me that it must have been a very different time to be able to have cash on hand to do that kind of thing. Over the first 10 years through grants they did get paid back with interest and at the 10 year point, because they had been paid back and I guess we were solid enough the banks let go of them guaranteeing the loan so that was kind of the start-up...

Mauk is clear about the role she needs to take to adequately manage the centre operations and very importantly who she needs to involve to attend to the priority business areas to enable her to carry out her role effectively and efficiently. She states:

We have a Property Manager who has her own business and she also coincidentally also does financing (we have an accounting firm provide a yearly audit and prepare the IRS 990 tax return). Those are big pieces of work that I don't do that some other NFP's might do internally or CEOs might do internally. I think it saves so much time, and allows me to focus on my mission. So finance, governance, operations / facilities management are all covered off. They are three critical areas that need to be running smoothly you don't need to be distracted to doing those components every day. It's important being the ambassador and I wouldn't have much time to do the things that I need to do like fundraising, board strategy and I have a marketing background, so we have gone through this rebranding. I helped with the re-design of a newsletter and how we use our logo and brochure designs and our social media...

The four founding agencies had their headquarters here, but we had the recession and 3 moved their offices.

Mauk also explains that there have been a number of unforeseen circumstances and challenges over the years that has impacted on the business of the centre and states that:

The four founding agencies had their headquarters here, but we had the recession and 3 moved their offices. One had about 30% of our space, so we have spent about 5 years with significant redevelopment. If they fit with our mission and can pay their rent, then we take them on. We went through an awful lot of reserves because of our twin sympathies; one to be solvent and charge the rent and also keeping the rent affordable so that people can pay. But the economic downturn was a big challenge for us. Some agencies have outgrown spaces and they were the largest nonprofit in our area. They also had their food bank here which we didn't want to leave. But we are looking more relaxed now, our funders moved to basic needs during the recession which you couldn't argue with. We are fully tenanted apart from one space now. People wanted to move and they expect you to be charitable, but we still have to pay the rent. Everyone wanted to have a cut rate but I had to have parity among the organizations. I said I can't give you a deal and people are so into their own mission, so homeless youth is more important than the medical model and so on, but I have to be fair to everybody...

In terms of the obvious benefits of co-location, the Together Center website states:

By fostering partnerships and helping agencies reduce costs and improve efficiency, we help agencies amplify their results for both individuals and families. Yearly, the agencies on campus save from \$150,000 to over a quarter million dollars in lease payments alone, thanks to our sustainable model, our grant seeking efforts and contributions from the community. In addition, Together Center shares campus services, builds nonprofit capacities and undertakes major capital fund drives that keep agency overhead costs low.

5 Collaborative policies and practices

Mauk expresses the need for a unifying theme or context for a co-located centre in the following statement:

I think when I am always asked what the learning experience is, I think for our organisation if we really want to collaborate truly or have expectations, maybe have a shared type of client base would work well...but our expectation of the tenant agencies is pretty minimal in terms of showing up at meetings and helping where they can and certainly depending on the personalities, we have a lot of give and take, a lot of community focus, but we could also not if we had different types of leaders in place. I always feel that is the learning – it needs to be written deeply into the lease or a contract to say give specific things to the organizations. At the get go that would not have been hard to say, but at this point it's hard...

This is of course an ongoing challenge in terms of competitive tendering arrangements that often create barriers to this effort. Mauk stresses:

We do occasionally feel that they are all competing for the same money but we don't share interests or have competing interests. While most of know it's up to us to match our missions with donors that have the same passion, it is a competitive area. "Oh no, I can't tell you who is giving me money!" Other than this area, most agencies really appreciate meeting to share similar journeys in this arena.

However, despite these challenges, Mauk remains collaborative in her approach and continues to promote joined up working between services. She states:

We work collaboratively to improve efficiencies and increase access to essential human services...We build partnerships to meet gaps in services and provide information, referral and other assistance.

Case Study 7

Richmond Caring Place Society
(Vancouver)



Caring for our community together...

1 Clarity of purpose of the centre / unifying theme

In 1985 the Richmond Community Services Centre Society was formed and set about the task of raising the capital funds to build Richmond Caring Place in Canada. With the support of business, government and the people of Richmond, that task was completed in 1994. The purpose of the centre is to provide high quality commercial office space and meeting space for non-profit agencies to operate hostels and shelters, provide support to those in crisis, raise awareness, and advocate for those in need. The Richmond Caring Place Society manages the facility in accordance with its mission which provides the unifying theme for the centre. That is:

...to ensure optimum co-ordination and synergistic benefits for the occupants and users of the Richmond Caring Place

2 Infrastructure, facilities management and design of spaces

The Richmond Caring Place facility is an imposing structure that is well maintained and easily accessible for the community it serves. It has a welcoming approach and entrance that is filled with natural light and calming décor and all visitors are greeted by the friendly reception staff as soon as you enter the building. Currently, the centre houses 14 non-profit agencies and programs through which approximately 1200 volunteers are employed. The Richmond Caring Place asserts that having so many agencies under one roof enables a much more coordinated and accessible approach to client need and that collaborative programming, access to a collective pool of volunteers, and sharing of information and other resources between the nonprofit agencies results in collective impact. The purpose of the centre is most clearly expressed in the shared services, such as having a common janitorial, reception and shared meeting spaces that can and often do host collaborative events and forums. There is also a shared phone system which means that you can communicate with anyone in the building and this cost is covered by the Richmond Caring Place as a way to integrate services and people across the complex. As articulated on the website:

The Caring Place Society is, itself, a non-profit society, dedicated to the maintenance and efficient operation of the Richmond Caring Place, for the benefit of its tenants and its tenants' clients. Because of this, the Caring Place is able to provide secure, long-term, reasonably priced and first-class office space – benefits which many agencies lack. The Caring Place also offers meeting rooms and space for the agencies to deliver services. Further, the co-location of non-profit service agencies within the Caring Place allows the agencies to benefit from shared resources, cross referrals and mutual assistance.

3 Governance and leadership structure

The Richmond Caring Place is aptly steered by Chief Operating Officer, Sandy McIntosh who is supported by a small but effective staff team of one Administration Assistant, and two-part time Facility attendants. McIntosh implements the policies and guidelines of the Board, provides Board support and supervision to the staff. She acts as liaison with tenant agencies, provides facility tours and oversees all technical, maintenance and service providers. She is also responsible for all facilities management, including all health and safety requirements along with bookkeeping and finance responsibilities. McIntosh highlights the distinction between her role as manager and the role of the Board as the governance entity:

...its whatever people use, I've been referred to as facility manager, General Manager and CEO and I don't mind, but people see me as the face of Caring Place. The Board has their governance role and I manage the Caring Place. The tenants recognize the board but deal with the manager and staff on a daily basis. I cover operations, finance, communications, nominations and human resources and report to the Board and receive direction from the Board. We currently have seven Directors, even though we have the capacity for up to 16; there is currently not enough work for 16 members. We are always seeking additional expertise on the board...

...I've been referred to as facility manager, General Manager and CEO and I don't mind, but people see me as the face of Caring Place.

4 Business model

Because the Richmond Caring Place Society (which owns and operates the Caring Place) is itself a non-profit, charitable organization, it focuses on providing stable, affordable and predictable office space at rates which are not driven by market forces or profit. McIntosh stated that the cost for tenants to participate in the co-located model is \$17.30 per square foot and that they have a pro-ration schedule where bills are itemised. The Caring Place wears much of the cost for certain elements such as maintenance, cost of shared installations such as the evaporative cooling system and the telephone and the cabling to connect tenant users to their network making it very cost effective for the tenants. McIntosh cites an example of a tenant who branched off by themselves having enjoyed the value-add of co-location and who may have underestimated the inherent benefits of space sharing. She stated:

...one of the tenants was trying to source lease space off site to add to their space requirements and I think it drove home the benefits that tenants receive at the Caring Place. She didn't have to think about it before and she realised how difficult it was to get reliable suppliers, trades people and how much things cost when you have to set up by yourself. I do remember conversations where they said they thought the building would never be full and we are in the process of creating another one...

McIntosh is always looking at ways to better integrate the model and when the centre was established, there wasn't any conduit for IT and each person had their own IT that linked to a central communications system. McIntosh wants to encourage better collaboration in this area by connecting up between the tenants and realizes that it's a lot of work to establish this, but that it will make significant cost savings across the model. She stresses that this is primarily her job insofar as:

We don't employ staff to deliver any human services, that's our mandate, we are a landlord, but you still need to promote the organisation. We are here to support other nonprofits and we can do that based on economies of scale.

The Richmond Caring Place claims to be unique and it is. Whilst the co-located model concept has gained momentum across North America and Canada in recent years, each one is conditioned and shaped in accordance with its specific purpose and the unique community in which it embeds.

5 Collaborative policies and practices

When asked whether McIntosh had evidence that the model produced efficiencies and benefits across the tenant services, she stated that it is best exemplified through anecdotal evidence that rent is much higher and the available spaces are not as well located where needs in the community needed to be met which hinders not for profit services trying to establish themselves independently outside of the co-located model. This appears to be the essence of collaborative practice at the Richmond Caring Place where spaces are beautifully created, carefully maintained and easily accessible. It is very well summed up on the centre's website that:

Because the Richmond Caring Place is home to so many agencies, services are more accessible for users and it allows collaborative programming, access to a collective pool of volunteers and sharing of information and other resources.

Case Study 8

Nonprofit Village Center Inc. (Maryland)



The Village is so beautiful, spacious, and clean...It is a great place for collaborations...

1 Clarity of purpose of the centre / unifying theme

The Nonprofit Village Center Inc. was conceptualised in 2002 by a small group of nonprofit leaders and philanthropists to strengthen the reach, effectiveness and sustainability of nonprofit organizations in Montgomery County. Operating as an incubator for small and emerging nonprofit organisations, their vision was to build an effective cooperative of community-based nonprofit organizations which they would achieve by providing affordable physical and virtual office space, common work space, a multiple shared learning centre and conference areas. In addition to this, there would be opportunities for collaboration and capacity-building and it was anticipated that the benefits and services provided to tenants would help them to reduce their operational and administrative burden, allowing them to focus on their mission of providing vital services to the community.

The Nonprofit Village was incorporated in 2006 and today, is a multi-sector centre where the tenants provide a wide range of nonprofit services. Whilst the services are not necessarily related, the binding or unifying element of the co-located model is expressed through its mission that 'The Nonprofit Village increases the strength and sustainability of nonprofits by providing professional space, essential services, and collaborative solutions.'

2 Governance and leadership structure

The organisation is spearheaded by Kim Jones who is the centre's Executive Director and previously a Board Director of the organisation. She has the unique experience of both the governance and management roles and explains that her transition into the role was out of necessity rather than intention:

I wrote this job description when I took up the interim role of Executive Director, as the previous person left quite suddenly. At the time I was a Board Director of the organisation. The position just went full time 60 days ago as we were in a little bit of a crisis and had to move beyond that crisis in order to get more and full time staff. The Board thought I would be the obvious choice as an interim ED and that I could step up to the task. I didn't think I knew as much about the organisation as I did – it was a surprise. I have done this job going from twenty, thirty, and forty and sometimes sixty hours a week, you have to be very flexible.

Having agreed to take on the challenge, Jones outlines below some of the early difficulties of trying to develop and launch the centre immediately prior to the recession in 2009 and how resourceful the organisation had to be to address the risks presented to them at the time, including the very real risk of closure. Jones experience in the governance area has also highlighted the need to strategically plan and be prepared for unforeseen external impacts. This has been informed by her experience in managing the previous centre manager through the Board committee, but also through being on the governance team of a nonprofit organisation that was being developed during an economic downturn. In a relatively short space of time, Jones has rebuilt the team, remodeled the Board, devised a strategic way forward and clarified the organisational identity of the Nonprofit Village. The staff team of the organisation comprises one full time Executive Director, an Office/Community Engagement Manager, and a Programs Manager who manage the day to day operations and Jones is mindful of the importance of each role, and is also aware of what else is required to continue to build the capacity of the Nonprofit Village. She states that:

Facilities Management is a critical role, it's that whole ops stuff, facilities and office management which will change slightly now that we also serve external tenants... we have also focused heavily on the marketing strategy which has been hit and miss in the past. One of my goals is to have at least a part time or shared marketing expert onsite and I could embed that cost into future rent...

Jones is also able to take on a greater leadership role now that she has a stable staff team in place and states that:

...when I first came in I thought it was important to have a face of the organisation for the tenants and that is less important for me now. The focus is less on programs for me and more on high level fundraising and being the ambassador and the face of the organisation. It's more what I do best and we have recently employed a staff member to carry out the programming and partnerships role.

The Board of the Nonprofit Village Inc. has fifteen board directors. Jones states that there has been a review of the Board and the overall governance role of the organisation and that a number of changes and enhancements have been made to create efficiencies and reduce risk across the organisation. She states that:

...our purpose for being has been reviewed by the board of directors and the terms for the board members has been revised. There is a shorter length of term for the board members as we have moved towards a new model which gives us the flexibility to move people on, but not to burn people out at the same time. It allows for more terms so instead of doing three year terms, we are doing three by two year terms and we are trying to look at more succession planning on the board and out of that came the change in our officers – Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary and we decided to have a second Vice Chair who will ascend and enable us to start our succession planning.

Case Study 8

Nonprofit Village Center Inc. (Maryland)

When the centre was initially opened, Jones admits that there was no real clarity around what else they should be doing as an organisation and that this has become much clearer in recent years. She states:

...when we first opened our doors, we had not looked forward to what we do as an organisation outside of being a landlord, we didn't think past filling the space at the time as we were in crisis due to the economic downturn. But then we had to think about what we do with the tenants to create a collaborative environment and to build their capacity and so now we hold regular brown bag lunches to create a collaborative network as we are not always in a position to write curriculum, because of our skeleton staff of just three. We also have set up a learning circle where we pick a topic that is relevant for the tenants here and we discuss it. We see ourselves as the hub and the tenants are the spokes...

Jones also understands how planning at governance level and the strategies required to translate those on a day to day level, requires an implementation plan that staff can understand and comply with. She states that:

Our Strategic Business Plan is something we've been working on, but it is a cumbersome, overwhelming document and has too many action item areas, so we have been working on it over to prioritise the main areas the Board and Staff see as opportunities for implementation based on our mission and business model.

3 Business model

The Nonprofit Village Center Inc. has been established as an incubator hybrid for other small and emerging nonprofit organisations. Rental income through lease of spaces, virtual membership and hot desks is their primary business model. The recession however, clearly impacted the business of the Nonprofit Village and their ability to charge the rent they needed to create financial survival, let alone sustainability. During this time, the organisation wanted to get tenants into the model, but also wanted to retain them and so they had little choice but to reduce their rent as the tenant nonprofit organisations were also being adversely impacted by the recession and as a result '...they had to cut any deals they could'. Jones states that:

...we opened our doors in 2009 and it was immediately before the economic crisis and collapse of the economy. The potential tenants had completed applications to move in and most of them pulled their application and we were almost empty for two years. We thought we might have to shut our doors, resulting in a financial crisis, and as a result we offered as many creative plans as possible with tenants to get them on board. This had an impact on our reserves as well as our ability to secure corporate and philanthropic donations. Additionally, when tenants are accustomed to paying a low square footage price, it is difficult to change, even as the economy improved and new leases were being negotiated upon expiration. The business model has been expanded to identify the programs and services necessary to help sustain tenants as well as generate additional revenue through sponsorships and fee-for-service...

There are twenty tenants across The Nonprofit Village, comprising a total of 123 staff and volunteers. The annual rent that The Nonprofit Village pays to the building owners, the Jewish Council for the Aging is nearly \$200,000. The gross revenue for the centre is \$400,000 and their annual expenses are \$415,000. There is an ongoing annual deficit that Jones has been addressing steadily since she took up the leadership position and the recovery from the recession is slow, but she has a clear idea on what it will take to achieve the optimum business model:

If the location and costs was right, we would want to retain rents at 15- 20% below market rate and at the moment we are 18% below market rate – but when the real estate market comes back all leases that expire from here on, I will look to align rents with the prevailing rates while staying below market rate...

The tenants are provided with a generous assistance package within the rent, which includes reception services, mail, integrated and supported internet and telephone services, all office equipment, purchasing services, human resource services, financial services, technology, management and administration assistance, professional development, networking, training, social events and opportunities, library and reference materials, and special events.

Jones highlighted some of the challenges around tenant space, specifically in response to an anchor tenant occupying 30% of the overall rental space, noting that if that tenant provided only a few months' notice to vacate could cost the Nonprofit Village a third of their revenue. Subsequently, she and the Board agreed to only take smaller sized tenants as the future risk of another 30% drop in income would pose major problems to operations. This is one of many strategies that Jones has employed to reduce risk.

4 Infrastructure, facilities management and design of spaces

The Nonprofit Village is located on the second floor of the Jewish Council for the Aging building, which is a large Jewish social services agency that owns the building. A local senior bureaucrat who was aware that the Nonprofit Village Inc. was looking for an appropriate location (having missed out on two other properties) introduced both parties, as they thought it would be a good fit. However, the arrangement was not without its challenges, as described by Jones:

...the Nonprofit Village had been languishing as an organization without its own home and inability to implement its mission, and the building that we had previously considered was looked at by local officials to become a court house. We had raised nearly half a million dollars and as part of the master lease we had little control of the types and size of subtenants we could lease to. The master lease, which was signed for 10 years also required subtenant leases that can be from one to ten years. The template for the subtenant lease didn't allow us full control over the tenant's options, such as annual escalation. Because the master lease required all organizations to be similar mission 501c3 organisations (non-trades and nonprofit) and there was no termination to the sub-lease it did not provide enough ability to negotiate changes based on rising costs and additional amenities offered to the tenants. Our purpose is not for nonprofits to stay forever. Some do incubate and then expand so new leases or extensions must be negotiated. Ultimately, we want to see organizations have enough capacity to pay full market rents rather than having a partly subsidized rent.

Case Study 8

Nonprofit Village Center Inc. (Maryland)

The Nonprofit Village has now reached full capacity and houses a diverse group of seventeen nonprofit organisations, many of whom are human service providers. Jones outlines the importance of location for their centre and how this affects visibility and reputation. She states:

What we wanted was about this size of space around 11,000 square feet, but we thought it would be laid out differently. We wanted to be nearer to a commercial centre and public transportation and to have amenities around us rather than just a metro link. But when we were married by the Council we settled with this site as the place to launch our operation due to the convenient location and affordable rent. It's a very industrial area, but when we looked at the projections that showed a growth in terms restaurants, local businesses, hotels, apartment complexes and amenities, we thought it was a good start.

Jones explains that the area has changed extensively in the last three years and that there is significant community growth and development which attracts a population of service users. However, Jones does not see the viability and sustainability of the Nonprofit Village to be contingent on the current location and is prepared to consider other options to optimize the business model. Jones is aware that it can be unclear exactly what the specific needs of a co-located centre are until you start running one in a certain location. For example, Jones highlights that the signage on the building is confusing due to the ownership hierarchy. The Jewish Council for Aging name is on the free standing sign as you approach the building and the Nonprofit Village sign is below that. However, the building itself is named the Ann Bronfman Center. Despite the challenges, Jones states that:

I am prepared to negotiate in the future based on our current operation and needs. It has become apparent that there might be enough demand for a second site as well, and I know that the operating model could be very different in a second location to allow for flexibility with tenants in selecting the location in which they want to be housed. The challenge will be to define where we can best serve the sector geographically and what the different services and different amenities look like. Some would believe that if we have hybrid models and multiple locations we might dilute our brand, but the brand is about what you put into the organisation to create its reputation.

5 Collaborative policies and practices

Through shared office space, they promote and facilitate collaboration among tenants. Through shared office services, they help build the capacity of tenants to sustain and grow their operation. In 2013, they launched the “Room to Grow” program which provides a new virtual office to other nonprofits county-wide. A tenant of the Nonprofit Village outlined the benefits of co-location:

We really love being at the Nonprofit Village, taking advantage of great office space, operations support, and educational opportunities you offer to all tenants – Coral Cantigas

Jones has a clear understanding of the need to manage the collaborative process in order to ensure that the mission of the centre is adhered to and that this requires being very familiar with what tenants are offering within the co-located model. She states also that collaboration requires a specific skills set and personality to master it effectively and states that:

...our purpose is to service the tenants and support them to become robust and to build their capacity. We are not a themed centre and so we need to make sure that anything we are programming is cross cutting. It's up to the staff to facilitate the tenant engagement and make sure we know, as well as all tenants, what each organization is doing. This allows us to link people and their work through best practices and sharing of resources. We look for staff at the Nonprofit Village that understand the services offered by our tenants and can create synergy and cohesion, when none may exist. Our last employee helped tenants by becoming the glue that held them together and often said to them 'well let me see how we can work that out for you'...

Jones is also clear about the need to manage tenant expectations, as her role can sometimes be misunderstood. She outlines one such assumption:

...when a tenant wanted more kitchen utensils, because the 48 we bought had all been lost, it was clear the person didn't understand the immediate impact on budget and the fact that unexpected expenses or rising costs will ultimately be reflected in the rent and amenities fees paid by tenants. Everyone has a responsibility to care for the space and materials to help contain costs for the greater good. Another example is an organization that was upset about reminders to pay rent by the due date and the subsequent penalties. Again, the group did not understand the impact on our own budget as well as when late payments show in the accounting software under the scrutiny of an audit. Material deficiencies can be documented in public records when our space doesn't have a signed lease attached to it, payments run 30, 60, or 90+ days late and it affects my ability to secure outside funding from a variety of sources...

Expectations of this nature have to be managed diplomatically and there has to be clarity between engendering collaboration and the tenants expecting the building managers to do everything for them. Jones is starkly aware that complex negotiations are based on effective relationships, which requires a style of leadership that is persuasive, but not apologetic:

I would much rather beg forgiveness than ask permission, so I do a lot of coaxing and cajoling and I keep it light and really it is all about relationships and that's how we came to be in the location here and running this center...

Case Study 9

Casa Azafran (Nashville)



...the best way to leverage the impact that we have in the programs we offer to Hispanic families, is by working together with other organizations...

1 Clarity of purpose of the centre / unifying theme

Casa Azafrán opened in 2012 and is described as ‘...a central place of gathering, learning and engaging’ and the idea germinated several years ago as a vision of Conexión Américas. The founders of Conexión Américas merged with an existing small nonprofit group, the Hispanic Family Resource Center (HFRC) that was exclusively dedicated to providing information-and-referral services on health-related matters. The merger allowed for the implementation of a broader approach to helping Latino families. Conexión Américas is the lead nonprofit organization at Casa Azafrán and alongside nine other nonprofit partners they collectively provide a broad range of opportunities ranging from health, financial, and legal services to cultural, culinary and educational enrichment in Nashville’s most international and ethnically diverse district. The unifying theme of Casa Azafrán is articulated in the following statement:

Our mission is reflected in the multi-dimensional, multi-colored mosaic mural titled “Migration” that shines 30 feet above our front door. Our vision is also evident in our name. “Azafrán” (pronounced “ah-zah-frahn”) is saffron in English, a golden yellow-orange spice indigenous to Asia. The cultivation, and use, of saffron spans many cultures, continents and civilizations. The Spanish word “azafrán” for example, is derived from Arabic. We use the name to pay homage to our multi-ethnic heritage and to reflect our intention to be an inclusive, welcoming place for all immigrants in Nashville, many of whom speak several languages including English, Spanish and Arabic.

Ranata Soto, the Chief Executive Officer acknowledges that collaborative practice between a broad array of services achieves the best outcomes for the families they work with. She states that:

...Conexión Américas never launches a program by itself. Every program is the result of collaboration, a partnership or a strategic alliance with at least one other organization. We recognize that the best way to leverage the impact that we have in the programs we offer to Hispanic families, is by working together with other organizations. We are proud of the impact that this organization is having in our community; we couldn't have done it without the support and association of all our partners, collaborators and funders.

Since 2002 the unified group of nonprofits at Casa Azafrán have collaborated to promote the social, economic and civic integration of Latino families in Middle Tennessee through:

...a beautiful event space and home to a collective of nonprofits who offer services in education, legal, health care and the arts to immigrants, refugees and the community as a whole.

2 Infrastructure, facilities management and design of spaces

Casa Azafrán is an imposing structure, filled with vibrant design and decor that reflects the Hispanic community it serves. It is easily accessible and immediately uplifting and welcoming as you enter the building. It has been described as follows:

Casa Azafrán is 28,800-square-feet of community empowerment, nonprofit collaboration and global grandeur.

Historically the building was an uninhabited shopping strip, which through careful consultation and design has been remodeled to create spaces that are aesthetically beautiful and easily navigable, promoting inclusion, safety and comfort. The building is owned by Conexión Américas and cost approximately \$6 million. It includes 2,200-square feet of affordable meeting and event spaces, plus Conexión Américas' commercial kitchen Mesa Komal, making Casa Azafrán an ideal location for events, parties, cooking classes, film screenings, corporate trainings and business meetings. The Casa Azafrán Art Gallery also features rotating exhibitions by local artists. As Lentz states:

The building was a shell when we took over it and we did the build out and these big windows were like loading docks and we created this space to let more organisations in. We also needed classroom space and multipurpose spaces for 2 or 3 people in each office. We are pretty close to being full and we still have one more store front right of the kitchen that we can fill...

3 Governance and leadership structure

Ranata Soto is the Executive Director of Casa Azafran since 2007 and is also one of the co-founders of Conexión Américas. Soto has 21 years experience in the nonprofit sector and holds a Bachelors degree in Communications. She has a strong focus on project and program development and evaluation, resource development and volunteer management. Tara Lentz is the Program Director of Conexión Américas and says of Soto:

Our Executive Director, Renata, spends a lot of time building relationships She is very visionary and she is a big dreamer and very energetic. She is one of the co-founders and is one of those sorts of leaders who are able to realise their concept. We all had this idea that we were going to be together and she said, whats our vision and what are we all going to bring to this thing. Then there was the logistics of moving people in, which was a challenge, but she made it happen.

There are twenty full-time and one part-time staff at Casa Azafran and the staff are also supported by 75 volunteers. Soto is accountable to a Board comprising nineteen members.

4 Business model

Conexión Américas own the building, which is worth approximately \$6 million and there are currently 10 nonprofit organisations operating out of the building who pay rent to subsidise the model. Lentz confirms that:

We rent out spaces and we have leases where some tenants signed one year leases and some signed three years. We are close to collecting enough rent to cover our core costs...

In addition, there is potential for more rentable space in another part of the complex and the grounds of the centre are currently undergoing redevelopment works. There is great potential to further enhance and develop the model and as Lentz states:

The other thing that we are thinking about is place-making and thinking about what it means to be a good neighbour and developer. We share the driveway and there is a public park and we want to use this in the development and enhancing the community. It's an attractive proposal and we have a pretty strong source of local corporates and hold several different events for different donors along the way.

5 Collaborative policies and practices

There are obvious benefits to operating out of a co-located centre as articulated by Lentz:

We have shared cases and the close proximity is great. That's the magic of co-located centres, having conversations that used to require another email, it's nice to have that type of closeness and convenience. We have been really good friends with the other organisations and it's been an interesting transition all moving in together. We have 10 nonprofit organisations here in total, health clinic, Conexions, our organisation, the American Centre for outreach and Refugee rights, we have a partnership with Family Children's services, mental health with co-located therapists here.

Collaborative practice clearly underpins the logic model at Casa Azafrán and as Lentz highlights:

We collaborate with other organisations and we have a collaborative agreement. We have a collaborative and we've carried out some research on what it means to be co-located and we've done a lot of work with consultants on this....we set up a collaboration college that ended up winning a prize and we have helped some of the organisations hire their co-located staff into their space. In that way we could say who is a good fit with our staff and our programs.

This collaboration is highlighted in a number of examples on a daily basis:

We did interviews for other organisations when they appointed staff, we have drumming, yoga, there are unexpected collaborations...it's great for us as one organisation paid for their build out and we get to work with their families and get to work with the parents of the kids they work with. The school system pays for a position which is great and it's a great synergy. We have several projects that come in and offer programs on a regular basis and others that do a monthly clinic here. Conexions employ the receptionist and that is their contribution to the collaborative...we are totally open to ideas, being able to share with other partners and the more communication the better because it's all about relationship building...

Case Study 10

The Children's Campus of Kansas City (Kansas)



I just saw co-location as the next step in the evolution of services and what needed to be done to improve things...

1 Clarity of purpose of the centre / unifying theme

The Children's Campus of Kansas City was incorporated in 2004 and the purpose of the centre is clearly expressed in their mission statement:

To assure that children zero to five years of age and their families have the resources they need to succeed. The Children's Campus of Kansas City is a place where families, regardless of income, race, or educational level, come to enhance their parenting skills, understand their child's development, access primary health care and mental health services, engage in creative and artistic endeavors, and learn basic skills to support themselves. The CCKC is a place that promotes early education, family literacy, and the importance of community.

There is a clear body of evidence expressed by CCKC to explain the development of, necessity for and purpose of the centre and the services therein. The overriding aim is to change the trajectories and outcomes for the most disadvantaged children through:

...high quality early childhood education programming that additionally offers support services for the whole family....People who participate in enriched early childhood programs are more likely to complete school and much less likely to require welfare benefits, become teen parents or participate in criminal activities. Rather, they become productive adults. (James J. Heckman, PhD)

This is achieved through the careful selection of relevant and sustainable agencies working together and collaborating to produce health and wellbeing benefits for this population of young children and their families. As stated:

All the CCKC tenants are committed to working together to improve the outcomes of young children. The Educare School will specifically fully implement the evidenced-based practices that improve the educational trajectories for the most disadvantaged children in our community.

It is under this unifying theme that the centre functions to its optimum level for the community it serves.

2 Infrastructure, facilities management and design of spaces

The Children's Center of Kansas City owns and operates a three storey, 72,000 square foot facility. It is an imposing and accessible structure that is immediately inviting and welcoming as you approach the main entrance. Martha Staker assisted in the design process and as founder of the Children's Campus of Kansas City, she understands the importance of having a facility that can create efficiencies and be effective in the delivery of services for the primary user. She states:

I am interested in blending people with the right property.....the building was \$16.2 million. I was bringing in \$4-\$5 million a year but I was having to buy in services...anyway the trouble is when you buy in services you have no control over them – my major reason for forging ahead was to be in control. The second reason I wanted to move ahead was that we spent so much time getting from A to B and you would get family referrals, but there would be no follow up... services need to be close together...

This statement speaks to Staker's ability to conceptualize spaces that are fit for their intended purpose, and in respect of the CCKC, to deliver quality childcare and family services to the local community. There are a number of tenants and the lead tenant is Project Eagle who are on the ground floor of the building. Project Eagle manages The Educare of Kansas City center-based program (12 model early education classrooms) and directs the community's Early Head Start program, Connections Centralized Intake and Referral System, and Early Steps to School Success. More than 1,000 children and their families receive services annually from Project Eagle. The Family Conservancy occupies the second floor of the building and provides mental health services, parenting education, crisis intervention, assistance to overcome poverty, and professional development services. They serve 1,200 parents and 1,500 early education professionals annually. Juniper Gardens Children's Project (JGCP) is located on the third floor of the building and they work to improve children's developmental experiences and their academic and social achievements through research. All services work in close collaboration with each other.

3 Governance and leadership structure

The CCKC Board of Directors is diverse and comprises 13 Directors. It is responsible for the governance of the centre and through the CEO (Heather Schrotberger) of Project Eagle who is the lead organisation, the Board manages the building, leases space to likeminded nonprofit organisations, establishes business efficiencies, coordinates trainings across agencies, supports research efforts to identify the most promising practices, and markets the community's centralized intake and referral system. In demonstrable leadership form, Staker recalls that:

...in the years from 2000 I pulled 30 people together and asked them what they thought about building a multi-service stakeholder group. I had worked in the community for 10 years so I knew people. We did not just come into the community, collect data and then bail out taking the research and doing something with it for our own benefit. A member of the local community took me by the hand and said I will help you and we held a lunch. Everyone walked out of the lunch and one organisation said that this is one of the worst ideas ever, having services located together. They said we are moving into the era of technology and we won't need people to work together because they will communicate through technology.

However, Staker was not convinced that this was the case and proceeded to champion the idea, as she believed that co-locating services and sharing spaces for not for profit organisations was a natural progression to the work that had taken place in previous years. She stated:

I pulled my closest friends together along with Dean who runs the program. Just the six of us who were really close friends and had serviced on each other boards came together to start it off. The six of us sat at a table and I said that I would go after funding from the Koffman Foundation and they said they would give me money if I could match it and they gave me \$60k and I matched it the next day. They said what do you think we should do, should we get a consultant? I said, I have \$150k and I think there is 3 things we need to do. The first is having a group who would be interested in bringing the right services to the site, the second was finding an appropriate location and the third was to look at models across the country for ideas. I said why just one consultant, why not three and I found three experts...

Staker, along with others, put considerable time and effort into exploring and researching models in order to construct one that was relevant and appropriate for the work they needed to do. She states:

The three consultants were so great because we didn't know much about this, we went to San Francisco to find out about other centres and I got to be part of each of the three committees. I went to New York, California too, Lower Manhattan to visit an artists themed centre. The artists had full time jobs but they wanted to rent some space part time. It was the arts groups who had put this co-location together initially. We went all over and there are a lot of ideas going on, Pittsburgh and Arkansas and all over. Dean travelled with me and so what we did was engage the people that we hoped would become part of this project.

In terms of some of what inspired Stakers leadership style, she recalls having had a few memorable mentors who made a significant impact on her. She states that:

From 1983 to 1990 I worked and travelled all over the U.S and during that time Younnes Kennedy was my mentor which was a great early experience. She set up the Community of Caring. When I came here, I had worked for 20 years with Younnes and her brother Teddy who had sponsored the special olympics which were the programs that developed Early Head Start. He sent them over to help me write the grant but K.U Med got the grant not us. I went to them and I said I should have worked with you and he said, let's go to lunch I have a place for you in the project and that was how it started...

When Staker was asked where she got her vision from she replied:

...people said I had a great vision, but we each, every day, we put one step in front of the other to do what we need to do to help the population we work with. It took ten years to develop the project and an average of 40-60 people came to the office, pretty much the same group, minus the man who represented the Hispanic community because he said that he would not be involved unless he could take over the project and if she did not want that he was unable to participate.

Staker's response was:

...well let me tell you why I am best suited to do this...I called this woman in 2003 and she said how strong are you, because if you are not a strong and committed leader this will never happen. From 2004 I set up the whole NFP campus and I was never paid for my work for running Project Eagle and they melded together and you find a way...and then we had to win the Hispanic community back and now 52%, because we are right on the line between the bus line that bridges both communities and is easily accessible.

Staker no longer manages the centre, but she is clear that the process of establishing a NFP Centre requires resilience and perseverance. She is still closely connected with the ongoing development and leadership at Board level and she takes a supportive and mentoring role with the current CEO of the centre. Staker admits:

I still live and breathe it every day, I fundraise and I'm on the Board...I think this program meant so much for me but you want to leave everything in good shape. I started in the fall of 1989 and left in 2012 to become a board member. We have 15 members which is quite lean and we are set up a bit like the stock market. The tenants actually own the building and there has to be 100% agreement on what happens. We got an attorney involved and had a lot of advice on how it was all going to work...

The incumbent CEO Heather Schrotberger of Project Eagle was encouraged by Staker to take the role and Staker has been mentoring her to write grants and manage the centre. It is evident that Staker continues to hold a great passion for and is a strong ambassador for the centre.

4 Business model

In reference to the power of relationships and influential contacts necessary to make projects like this work, Staker states:

I had a couple of acquaintances in Chicago and they made their money off the old tony perms and I had become friends and I was successful in a few early grants in management information systems where you track services and outcomes. I told her the dilemma I was in and she said you call this person and I called this person named Dan and he said come and see me. I had been working for a couple of years and I had this diagram, it looked like a child's drawing and I went up the night before. When I got to the house, it was Susie Buffets home (Warren Buffets sisters home). They did not think this idea was crazy because they were involved with the Educare Centres, but they never realised that people round the country may also be interested and that this should become a national endeavour. They said we are interested in working with you and they have given Project Eagle \$100k to carry out a longitudinal evaluation on their services.

The Children's Campus of Kansas City, Inc. owns and operates the \$16 million facility built on land donated by the Dickinson Financial Corporation. The building was financed through a public-private partnership. \$11 million was raised through a capital campaign and an additional \$5 million was financed through a 1st mortgage loan. While the Children's Campus has no employees, it has contracted with the University of Kansas Medical Center- Research Institute to provide support in the areas of property management and finance. All other operational services are outsourced and managed by the property management company. Staker recalls conceptualizing and building the model:

I did bring in all the money and I hired three different companies to raise money. But first of all if people are giving you money they want to meet you and this was truly a community collaborative. In getting the Buffet dollars in particular, we had to pledge a platform for change. You can only do so much within the community. We have participated with the University of North California to do research and dissemination is a huge piece of this. There are twelve medical students a year that come to the centre at Bachelors degree level. Project Eagle has post doctoral students.

It is evident that Staker took care when selecting the tenants to ensure a sustainable business model for the centre and that a comprehensive screening process was vital to this process. She stated that her colleague Don Wise also assisted in this process as he:

...developed a tool that he used to interview organisations to come on board into the co- located model and to determine who wanted to be here, where their funding came from as we did not want to bring partners in here that were not going to be viable. This is a Public Private Partnership and we said that we will not come back to you to beg for money. They would have to produce their budget as we could not just take their word for it.

When asked about how Staker selected the services, she informed:

The number one choice was Juniper Gardens as I thought we had to integrate research into whatever we did. I went to Judy and I asked her to be on my board of Directors and she said, of course I will come and service on your board. When we looked at the array of services, mental health, access to SRS social rehabilitation, they were right across the street, we were 50 steps from each other and really, it had more to do with the people and their willingness to participate and it turned out that they were the services we needed. They fell in and it is amazing that those who really wanted to be part of us stayed with us.

Upon asking whether the co-located centre is financially sustainable, Staker stated that there is a range of funding streams from both Federal and State government but that there were gaps in continuity of service that needed to be addressed. In order to bridge the gap from 0- 3 years to kinder, they secured funding to appoint teachers into those services. They also modified the original spaces to accommodate this provision by relocating staff from an open plan office on the ground floor to create two large classrooms, a conference space and screening room where parents can watch their children. In addition to the main services, the centre has also opened a health clinic on the first floor to build a more comprehensive response to men's health and broader community need. Staker says that the clinic has become so popular and that they are focusing on rural health care and putting research into practice. Research is high on Stakers agenda and she views it as a critical element for advancing services for children, families and communities. She also believes that stability within communities is important, stating that:

In order to get people equipped, we must meet people face to face. If we hop around too fast, we fail to do the right things for people. They do not get the things they need and relationships, the ways we affect change within families, relationships, trust and especially in this community. If you break that trust or openly jeopardise that trust you lose the ability to change things effectively.

5 Collaborative policies and practices

As outlined on the CCKC website, the centre was founded to facilitate collaboration and service efficiencies between and among agencies, to build a community of best practices through community trainings, to support a 'Centralized Screening and Referral System' for young children and their families, so they access the most appropriate services at the time of need, and children receive early education / intervention so they are ready for school success. It is evident that quality practice sits front and centre of the work carried out at the centre which:

...hires highly qualified, credentialed teachers, provides intensive and continuous staff development, utilizes a curriculum with emphasis on early language, literacy and social- emotional development, maintains high staff/child ratios, designs small class size, involves parents, infuses the arts, and creates an interdisciplinary team of professionals that provide services to meet the individualized needs of each family.

Staker stated that the role they look for to provide certain services is specific and does not neatly fit with broad training. She states that:

...we actually found that within our home-based model we have to retrain people as you can never tell by credentials alone. With the family support service's we have identified that at the latter part of the life span we still need to be thinking developmentally and holistically. Heather who is the Executive Director started with a degree in Education.

This tailored approach to getting the right staff and creatively designing programs for the CCKC is a common thread running through the project instigated by Staker. She ends the interview stating that the centre has become a platform for change, particularly through their highly successful intake and referral system and that much of the success is due to the leadership of Project Eagle and the collaborative effort between the services at CCKC.

Success factors

Seven Shared Themes Uncovered

Whilst there is no isolated and conclusive method to achieving critical success in the development and sustainability of NFP Centres, there are some fundamental and salient lessons learned often by trial and error. The leaders of NFP Centres are a rich source of expertise on how to mitigate risk, create spaces that engender collaboration, approaches to broker between the governance entity and the community, ability to balance the needs of the tenants with the need to be financially sustainable and having the wherewithal and confidence to be the ambassador of not only their own organization, but also, often requiring extensive knowledge of the not-for-profit organizations operating out of the facility. Whilst the P-Model provides a framework to explain the linkages affecting the co-located model, it is the individual trajectories expressed by those directly involved in the creation and sustainability that reveals the complexity of NFP Centres. There was enormous diversity across all NFP Centres in term of demographics, missions, finance modeling and the actual facilities. Despite this diversity however, seven strong themes emerged in the data. Whilst the following themes are not exhaustive, they are all shared experiences within the development and adaptability of the NFP Centres and are clearly at the forefront of the leader's minds in terms of needing to master those for the centres to succeed.

1 Having a clear mission, purpose and identity

If we cannot articulate what we want to achieve, then we probably do not know what it is. And if we do not know what we are pursuing, success is likely to prove elusive (Corbett and Noyes 2008:3)

All 10 respondents (100%) expressed the need for a unifying framework to maximise the delivery of services for their users and to have a well-developed understanding of their value to each other within the co-located model. The importance of clarifying the overarching mission and vision by the lead nonprofit organization appeared to create a binding agent across the co-located model for each of the respondents and in its absence, it was stated would lead to confusion in planning, future strategic direction and social purpose. All respondents had spent time honing their mission at governance level and the leaders actively implemented it in the day to day management of their centres. Having a shared or common purpose to underpin the collaborative effort also appeared to be vital to optimizing the models collective impact and the respondents gave clear examples within their case studies on how this manifested. It was apparent that having a shared mission and purpose created a strong identity for the NFP Centre and engendered a collective pride in the co-located delivery. This was driven in different ways by the NFP Centres and in some cases, it was facilitated through the overall collaborative framework and in others, individual organisations where expected, as prospective tenants to articulate how their organisation aligned with the overall mission, as a reference point for future collaborations and partnerships.

If we cannot articulate what we want to achieve, then we probably do not know what it is...

2 Maintaining commitment during a long, complex development and planning phase

The gestation period for developing NFP Centres is often protracted and challenging and requires commitment and optimism. Seven respondents had been in their roles from the development phase of their centres and they stressed that enormous patience, sustained commitment and resilience was required by the development teams and project leaders. All seven respondents indicated an unexpectedly protracted development phase, often characterised by delays in funding, loss of key stakeholders, and not being able to secure prospective buildings, due to thwarted capital funding sources, which meant that alternative funds had to be located. Also highlighted was the need to construct a robust risk plan and mitigation response strategy, incorporating the primary elements of the co-located model, and in particular, those relating to governance, finance, HR, infrastructure and tenants. For example, one NFP Centre, in order to reduce risk of losing staff and entire programs through precarious funding arrangements, had created a finance model where they blended and braided diverse funding streams, so that they could have flexibility in how staff talents were used to maximise benefit to the organization. The respondent stated that this strategy minimised the risk of losing part of, rather than entire funding for a vital staff position or program, on the basis that only having to rebuild part of a staff salary is much more achievable. All respondents highlighted the complex stakeholder negotiations relating to funding models and infrastructure that were difficult to control and manage

and having the opportunity to reflect on their historical journey, the respondents emphasized the need to plan carefully and to execute the plan cautiously. However, this hindsight meant that in the absence of well evaluated co-located models and a lack of experts or knowledge to draw upon ten or twenty years ago, meant that many of the development teams for the NFP Centre's did it through a process of 'trial and error'. Problems associated with this approach included agreeing to certain conditions, particularly in relation to negotiations with tenants and other stakeholders that proved difficult to reverse or retrofit further down the line. Many respondents stated that policies, legal agreements, roles, responsibilities, budgets and a shared vision needed to be agreed and clearly outlined at the outset in order to reduce risk.

3 Avoid compromising the financial model just to get tenants on board

Three of the respondents cited financial problems due to ‘cutting deals’ with the tenants just to get the spaces filled in order to ensure an immediate rental income stream. They urged the need to be clear on the rental formula at the outset and to commit to it, as it is very difficult to renegotiate with tenants at a later date. Some respondents highlighted that whilst arguments to provide a reduced rent might be persuasive at the time, a clear focus on the financial model needs to be maintained. Other respondents stated that nonprofit organisations may expect you to be charitable to them, however, reminding yourself (and them) that you are also a ‘not-for-loss’ business model, is critical to your financial sustainability. Two of the respondents who were not part of a larger parent organisation stated that they had ongoing funding concerns and many had used the bulk of their cash reserves during tough financial times, particularly during the economic downturn, to cover the costs of vacant tenant spaces. Some had lost large tenants, which proved a direct threat to their viability, particularly as they did not own their buildings outright and had to pay high rents themselves to their landlords. Others who also ran programs directly, spoke about the need to diversify their income streams and not to overly rely on government funded programs for core staff. One of the key lessons learned by these respondents was the need to attract unrestricted revenue in order to build reserves that would cover all operational costs, in the event of another financial crisis, rather than having to rely on chance grant funding where you had to try to ‘fit into’ the funding criteria, as that was competitive, stressful, time consuming and risky.

Very little research has been carried out into how much a NFP organization saves through being independently based in an isolated facility, compared to cost savings made through co-location. It is difficult therefore to determine how much cost efficiencies are created between the two scenarios. However, one respondent cited an example of a NFP organisation that had moved out of their co-located facility to set themselves up in their own building and they were shocked by the ‘hidden’ operational costs of rent, rates, maintenance and utilities, indicating the benefits they had taken for granted, or didn’t have to consider when they were co-located.

4 Collaboration takes time, effort and resources

Co-located NFP Centre's are, by their nature, collaborative undertakings. It is increasingly known that collaborative initiatives require a specific set of skills and resources and that it is difficult, if not impossible, to find a model where 'one size fits all'. The literature indicates that collaboration occurs on a number of levels and this research highlights that within NFP Centre's comprising a range of separate entities, it is often best evidenced in relationships and friendships created by individuals across the separate organizations. These key relationships can be instrumental in reducing tensions, distrust, suspicion and secrecy between services, whilst promoting opportunities for shared training, social events and best practice in the delivery of human services. In eight of the NFP Centre's the participating organisations were encouraged and incentivized to participate in various initiatives designed specifically for the purpose of collaboration. The NFP Centres most likely to demonstrate the greatest breadth and depth of collaboration were most evident, if the purpose of the co-located centre had a narrow and specific focus. It was noted by the respondents that simply bringing groups together does not guarantee collaborative practice and they expressed the need to have forums where you can communicate with each other to create opportunities to build trust and rapport throughout the co-located model. This provides the opportunity for organizational staff to get to know each other and to attend social collaborative initiatives in particular such as pot lucks, joint staff training, excursions which can promote 'boundary spanning', where staff cut across boundaries for the benefit for their service users, but also to create efficiencies in how they deliver their services. Highlighted in a few of the interviews were a number of competing priorities and pressures on individual managers of the participating organizations and the difficulties this could present to developing useful links between services, as the focus on collaboration was not a priority for them. This would obviously hamper the efforts by the leader of the NFP Centre to engage them fully in the collaborative process. However, one method used by seven of the NFP Centres

was to screen the prospective services before they were accepted to participate in the co-located model. This reduced the likelihood for them to resist the expectation of collaboration. Respondents stated that it is difficult however to determine exactly who should be in the mix of organizations, which often depends on the person or group selecting the prospective tenants, as well as the initiatives and incentives used to attract services into the NFP Centre. In the interviews, respondents highlighted that despite being co-located under one roof, the co-located organisations can often be unaware of the services provided by their neighbours. Moreover, that a large number of services, with a variety of entry points and individual boundary and funding restrictions can create incoherence within a co-located model. One respondent highlighted how focusing on the business model too heavily just to get spaces tenanted, should be weighed against the contribution they are going to make once they have come on board in the following statement:

I think it is critical to understand the synergies you seek to build within your mission and vision. During the infant years, we almost took on a community partner (tenant) that was not a fit for our mission, but was a 501c3. In the end, we were blessed that both boards could see that this was not a good fit. We were seeking the tenant to move our pro forma into the black. We had to wait just a little bit longer, but we have the right partner in that space now and the collaboration that comes from the wait is a huge benefit to the center.

3 Strong and clear leadership – Governance Structure and Strategy

Consistent across all ten respondents was the stability of the leader and their relationship with their governance body. Some, but not all, of the leaders had position descriptions. Seven of the respondents retrospectively constructed their own position descriptions, based on the learned experience of the demands of their role, whilst other descriptions were outdated and had to be revised, in some cases more than once, thus indicating the organic nature of how NFP Centres can often develop. What was clear and shared amongst the respondents was their willingness to be enterprising, resourceful, innovative and often fearless in finding solutions to the barriers they were presented with. The personal backgrounds and influences that contributed to the effective leaders in the field of NFP Centres was also diverse and ranged from teaching, nursing, social policy, business, and the creative industries. This meant that the ten respondents were strong leaders with very different leadership styles. Two of the ten respondents, who whilst responsible for managing their NFP Centres, showed clear leadership within the centre, but took instruction from their respective CEOs of the parent organisation and operated from a broader mission. In all other cases, the leaders knew clearly the expectations within their roles, which for the most part, aligned with the governance expectations. In most cases the governance board was a strategic board and left the day to day management of the NFP Centre to the CEO. Five respondents expressed the need to have the right levels of expertise on the governance board and highlighted as

important their ability to think strategically, be willing to take assessed risks to create new ventures and to be able to influence funding bodies. All ten respondents expressed the need for adaptability and flexibility in leading small, lean, agile and effective teams. Seven of the respondents stated the need to view yourself as a social purpose business, rather than a charity looking after other charities, although the experience proved more difficult to implement in reality. Other leaders expressed the need to embrace change and not to hold onto redundant and defunct methods just because that is what you know and it is the way it has always been done. One CEO talked about recognizing that some of the old methods used within his team had become outmoded and needed to change. He states that:

...it probably wasn't a clear vision – could I honestly have told you what I was looking for –but through sharing opinions with each other – and saying things like – if the horse is dead, maybe you need to get off – whilst trying not to be too sarcastic...

...respondents expressed the need to have the right levels of expertise on the governance board and highlighted as important their ability to think strategically.

6 Having a building that is fit for the purpose it serves

All respondents had a clear idea on the extent to which their facility fitted its intended purpose and had a strong grasp on facilities management. The broad issues of importance for them were location and proximity to transport, building ownership versus leasing and the upkeep of the building, the layout of the facility and configuration of spaces, particularly multipurpose and common spaces and parking. The following section expands on these five points:

a. Location and proximity to transport

Eight of the respondents were confident that the location of their facility catered for the needs of the service users in terms of easy access and proximity to broader public services and amenities. One of the respondents expressed a need for a larger facility, as the demand for their service had expanded so rapidly they were unable to meet it in their current premises. Alternative premises were being scoped in the area. Another respondent was dissatisfied with their premises on the basis that it was difficult to locate and was located in an industrial area that was not close to public transport links. They felt that this was off-putting to both the service users and the tenants they wanted to attract into the model. Five of the facilities were located in predominantly residential areas and maintaining amicable relations with the local community was high on their agenda. Each of them had strategies to consult with and include them in various events.

b. Building ownership versus leasing and the upkeep of the building

There was no clear theme running through why the specific facilities were chosen to create a NFP Centre and some of the reasons included not having any real choice and making do; convenience for the service users; or the building was going to be used for another purpose initially and the decision to convert it into a NFP Centre came later on. Much of the start-up was therefore driven by visioning and intuition and whether the development team perceived there to be a need. Nine of the respondents owned their building outright which enabled them to have full control over the management of the facility and was also an asset that afforded their organisation greater security and insulated them against external factors that might threaten their tenancy and pose a potential risk to their viability. One respondent who was dissatisfied with their location, and who also did not own the building was bound by clauses in the lease that hampered some of their initiatives. One of the respondents, whilst owning their building in a prime location for the services it provided, was dealing with the treatment of their occupancy as a commercial landowner, which posed a number of financial challenges in relations to higher taxes and rates. It was evident however that the NFP Centres owned by their organisations, provided the leaders with a greater level of comfort in how they managed their model.

c. Optimum layout of the facility and the configuration of spaces and parking

The ten respondents were generally satisfied with the layout of the spaces, having had undergone extensive refurbishments to create a facility that was fit for purpose. Many respondents had sophisticated room booking systems to deal with demand and often it was the collaborative focus and flexibility of the landlord that dictated whether these spaces worked well or not. There was more emphasis on space control if the landlord owned the building as an asset. One ongoing challenge was the management and recharging of shared installations such as photocopiers, security and access and ICT amenities, that some had built into the rent and others provided free of charge to the participating organisations. Recharging the NFP tenants for the use of the space therefore varied significantly between the NFP Centres but those that provided the greatest amount of free services expected greater levels of collaboration in those spaces. Only three of the ten facilities were purpose built constructions for the delivery of their project and the other facilities had been repurposed from shopping strip malls, a disused factory, a health centre, an office block, a pizza outlet and a residential property.

Building and space design varied enormously from city to city and centre to centre in terms of quality, size and layout. Eight of the ten facilities had shared reception areas where the building manager provided the receptionist to take calls and greet visitors for the NFP Centre. The two facilities that did not have a physical reception space compensated for this quite well by having security in the lobby and an intercom system that alerted the relevant person to their visitor. Access to car parking, particularly in inner city NFP Centres was challenging and some respondents mentioned that tenants expected car parking to be made available for them, which was not always possible and therefore led to some tension. The importance of design elements, structures and use of space to engender collaboration however varied between the NFP Centres but one respondent who felt it essential to enhance spaces for that purpose stated that:

When most expectations can be defined, there is less room for uncertainty and disagreement.

Glass walls provide openness and transparency and convey a sense of dynamic energy. Unstructured spaces such as open kitchens and modular furniture are more accessible. It is also essential that the infrastructure expressly addresses the expectations, rights and responsibilities for each member of the community. When most expectations can be defined, there is less room for uncertainty and disagreement. Moreover, these rights and responsibilities help to elucidate what is valued by the community as a whole. Essentially, these rights and responsibilities are what leadership pay attention to and measure and control, in It was also clear from the respondents, that whilst the layout of building matters in terms of how it provides the opportunities for collaborative practice (ie: shared conference spaces, meeting rooms, cafes) it is the people within those buildings who mobilise and maintain the collaborative effort.

7 Building evidence through research and evaluation

Only five respondents were moving towards improving their evidence of the benefits of their NFP Centre. One respondent discussed the importance of measuring impact and the need for a self-evaluation and realistic business strategy. He had engaged a local corporate entity to assist in helping them become a better outcomes driven service. All respondents discussed evaluation and some of the challenges around setting meaningful metrics. A final issue that was raised by one of the respondents related to how to measure the achievement of the overall mission by the collection of participating organisations and the challenge of collecting data from the services, particularly if it is not as much a priority for them as it is for the NFP Centre manager.

Conclusions and policy implications

Co-location often means resource sharing (costs, risks, operational functionality, knowledge, policy and publicity) which can generate a range of benefits, including increased organisational effectiveness and efficiencies. It does not mean that individual NFP organisations have to forfeit their own governance models, legal and financial independence or distinctive identity, mission and purpose. It simply means that they will be expected to compromise, negotiate and collaborate. This requires a shift from autonomous, competitive service provision and poses a challenge for the NFP sector, but one that promises a supportive and robust network and social scaffolding that may be able to sustain the sector into the future. The challenges for NFP Centres are becoming well documented and we are developing a more sophisticated understanding of many of the issues that can complicate the construction and sustainability of these centres. In the course of the research, much anecdotal evidence in conversation with the peer educators and leaders highlighted issues of stakeholder relationships becoming untenable, capital funding campaigns not delivering the intended funding, bureaucratic barriers to securing the appropriate approvals and permits, prospective tenants suddenly withdrawing interest after having committed to participating in the project, failing to complete a purchase on the preferred building for the NFP Centre, attrition of project drivers and champions and even when centre's have been launched, ongoing challenges to appoint the right CEO with the necessary skills set to sustain the NFP Centre.

It has, in recent years, become extremely difficult for nonprofit organizations to receive ongoing / recurrent funding for programming, despite demonstrable and inarguable need across all disadvantaged populations. As many funding sources want to fund direct service provision, the challenge to meet administrative and operational costs becomes more difficult and sub-standard facilities with high rents create stressors for isolated nonprofits survival and long term viability. The evidence indicating the benefits of co-location, for a range of service groups, is almost irrefutable and provides a viable alternative to isolated nonprofits struggling to meet increasing operational and administrative costs that could and should be going towards strengthening the capacity of their client populations.

It is timely to conceptualise alternative and innovative models for the not-for-profit sector in Australia, in order to address poorly coordinated and difficult to access services with contradictory objectives and funding models that produce short and uncertain life-spans. There are significant stresses on the not-for-profit sector and in its fragmented form, it is vulnerable to external threats such as a reduction in philanthropic giving, highly competitive corporate support, the emergence of 'engaged philanthropy' with selective not-for-profits, highly competitive grant application processes, restrictive pilot project funding and ongoing pressure to produce 'innovative' projects. This combination of factors results in a lack of recurrent and sustained funding for much needed administrative and operational costs and NFP Centres can provide a solution to alleviate much of this pressure on the sector.

Recommendations

The following three recommendations are based on evidence collected from a diverse range of NFP Centres in North America and Canada and serve to provide a case to the three tiers of government, philanthropy and the business sectors to collaborate to create cost and time efficiencies and service effectiveness in how the not-for-profit sector can innovatively do business within their communities and for a range of target populations.

1. As the concept of co-located centres, shared spaces and co-working environments emerge and increase within Australian communities, government or philanthropic funds should be made available to carry out an investigative study to determine the number, types and locations of co-located centres in Australia with a view to replicating NFP Centres in other communities.

2. NFP Centres are established to create affordable space to bring necessary not-for-profit organizations together to drive social change. These centres are much more than the sum of their parts, as they promote a comprehensive response to customer and client needs. An electronic centralized resource of NFP Centres should be constructed with government or philanthropic funding to garner interest and promote the benefits to expand these centres throughout Australia.

3. NFP Centres can strengthen the sector, by creating cohesion between not-for-profit organizations and local government can play a role in brokering between not for profit organizations in their municipalities to gift, lease or sell disused buildings to repurpose into NFP Centres for their communities requiring much needed nonprofit human, creative and environmental programs, projects and services.

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