

Advice for community partners

If you want to be involved, get yourself involved.

Stalking is illegal, but get your point across, basically.

It's up to the community partners

to get into agencies and organisations

and it's great when it's reciprocated,

but don't expect that to happen.

Don't be frightened of challenging.

Don't be frightened of suggesting new ideas

even if they're completely off-the-wall

or, as they say, out-of-the-box.

I think to... I think community partners

often need more confidence

in the expertise they've got

'cause we're not used to being involved this...

this closely with big projects.

Especially tiny charities like, (laughs) like mine.

Yeah, sort of recognising

the expertise that we have got

and that that is valuable

and that other people really want it.

The advice that I give other community partners

is to be quite clear about

what you want to get out of it.

Most people have limited time

and capacity to contribute to projects,

so it's good to be clear,

at the outset, what you want from it
and what the museum wants from it
and to make sure that you both agree with what that is.

We've got to work in partnership.

There isn't an overall boss.

You know, nobody needs to take prominence.

Everyone has strengths

and we need to exploit that.

And we don't know each other's talents

unless we listen to what everyone has to say

and I mean listen and hear.

Often, we all have our own agendas,

but all that creates is conflict

so, to avoid conflict we need to listen to each other

and move forward and be realistic.

And to remember as well

I think that, you know, you are a partner

so you have an obligation.

So I think it's... it's a two-way process.

You need to be... if meetings are called,

you need to be there. So it is a commitment.

I think you have to have

that commitment if you're going to be taking on

something as important as this partnership.

Getting a team together who you can work with

because the projects are long.

Who keep the numbers down, manageable,

people who share the same goals

and who also represent

the breadth of the community.

Just, again, be honest about what you think.

Don't be kind of... don't be scared

because they're academic

and they're from a different sector to us.

The advice I'd give to other community partners

would be to take it easy and make friends with people

other than the learning and outreach people

particularly front of house staff,

because in my experience

that's made a real difference.

There will be difficulties,

there will be problems along the way,

but it's highly unlikely

that they're going to be... unsolvable.

And I think it's going in with an open mind,

it is much about the mind-set and attitude.

Just go for it, give it a try.

You may be very surprised, as I was.

It's opened my eyes and I'm definitely on board.