

Community partner expectations

Summary

- Two way discussion
 - Respect
 - Give background info.
 - Listen to partner needs
 - Be clear about the limits.
 - Equality
 - Be valued
- Practical, professional support
 - A mutual benefit
- Integrated into the process

Two way discussion

In the very beginning I think you've got to expect from them discussion. It's certainly a two-way process.

Respect

I would expect that any gallery would treat their community partners with complete respect.

Give background info.

Acknowledge the fact that their community partners may not understand much about the world of galleries and museums

Listen to partner needs

and to listen to their partners about what they want and not focus on what the galleries needs are.

Be clear about the limits.

This is one of the difficult ones. We did get the poet who turned up who thought he could do readings in the art gallery and publish a book and sell it in the shop. And that was, you know, unrealistic. So this has got to be upfront on what the community partner should expect.

I think the community partner should expect that the museum is open and honest about what can be achieved, what's possible with the project, what the limitations are.

Equality

Just to sort of be equal within that partnership arrangement. I just think it's quite simple, they just need to listen to the community partners.

Be valued

I think a community partner can expect to be really valued. I think that's been really important even little things like an email to thank you for your input and the verbal thanks at meetings and that kind of thing. So feeling really appreciated and valued and the feeling that you are really making a difference.

And take on our expertise, which they did.

Practical, professional support

The community partner should expect support in the sense of project management, time management and all of those things, because those skills don't necessarily... aren't really automatic within the team. Providing the resources, the facilities, the time, the staff and to make clear what the partnership organisation is getting out of the process.

A mutual benefit

The end journey should be that both organisations' needs are met.

Community partners coming into this arrangement will expect to be valued for what they're bringing to the deal as it were and they'd also expect to get something back in exchange and I've often asked myself what is it I'm getting back in exchange and it's quite hard to think of anything tangible but what I'm getting is a sense of being valued, a sense that if I pay attention to the things I've got the opportunity to learn, I could be improving myself.

Integrated into the process

Community partners should expect from their host organisation to be valued, respected, integrated into the process. You are actually key to the process, you're not just an add-on. It's not lip service. You are there to make a difference. And unless both you and the host organisation have that commitment to proper integration then it's not gonna to be... it's not gonna achieve what it should achieve.