



Partnership Policy

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1. Policy statement

- a) Cambridge House is an independent social action charity:
 - Website: www.ch1889.org
 - Address: Cambridge House, 1 Addington Square, London SE5 0HF
 - Tel: 0207 358 7000
 - A company limited by guarantee no.105006 and a registered charity no.265103.
- b) We pursue a vision of a society without poverty where all people are valued, treated equally and lead fulfilling and productive lives.
- c) We believe in collective action and therefore work with others to tackle poverty and social injustice, based on complementarity and respect for the contribution that each partner brings.
- d) Five principles underpin our decisions to work in partnership with other organisations.
- e) We hold ourselves accountable to these principles and seek to be held accountable by service users, partners, communities, and other stakeholders with whom we and our partners work:
 - i) Complementary purpose and added value
 - ii) Mutual respect for values and beliefs
 - iii) Clarity about roles, responsibilities, and decision making
 - iv) Transparency and accountability
 - v) Commitment and flexibility
- f) The principles and values contained within this Policy serve as the framework for ensuring clear and transparent working relationships with others, based on openness, trust, respect, and mutual accountability and enabling all of us to be more effective in achieving our aims and objectives.

2. Why do we work with partners?

- a) We believe that local communities and other civil society partners can better understand, represent, and address the rights, needs, and aspirations of the people and communities we serve.
- b) All partners, including government and the private sector, are central to creating the conditions and structural changes necessary for effective people-centred, sustainable change and development.
- c) The activities we implement together can encourage and enable the real participation of our service users, be more sustainable, and have greater impact than if we worked separately.
- d) The knowledge, skills, reach, and experience that we offer each other mean that, together, we can make more of a difference than if we worked separately.

3. Who do we work with as partners?

- a) Cambridge House's work with others builds on an ever-increasing diversity of relationships. As the range of participants in social change widens – from local communities to the private sector – Cambridge House aims to establish effective and diverse partnerships to bring about social change.
- b) Within this context of increasing diversity, Cambridge House partner relations fall into three broad groupings. These are not always clear-cut categories, and relationships may fit into more than one category at the same or different times:
 - i) Project partnerships for a specific project with mutually agreed aims and objectives
 - ii) Strategic partnerships, working together over time with sufficient alignment of goals and objectives towards achieving a lasting impact
 - iii) Alliances with single organisations or groups of organisations working together towards a specific goal, even though organisational and or institutional mandates and long-term purpose may be quite different.
- c) This policy governs all our work with local communities, other civil society organisations, and the public sector and government agencies in both funding and non-funding relationships.
- a) As we develop work with the private sector a wider range of partner-type relationships will arise. In these cases, the emphasis will be on identifying the common goal towards which we are working, looking to build on the distinctive contribution of all partners, and ensuring that our combined efforts bring change.
- b) We will only enter into partnership with others if we decide it is in the best overall interests of Cambridge House and our service users.
- c) The responsibility for the judgement on whether Cambridge House should enter into partnership with others lies first with the Chief Executive and ultimately the Council of Management.

4. Complementary purpose and added value

- a) Any partnership between Cambridge House and other organisations is based on:
 - i) Shared objectives to empower and or benefit people living in poverty and/or affected by social injustice and exclusion.
 - ii) The added value of working together.
 - iii) The bringing together of different capacities and resources to an interdependent relationship.
 - iv) The diversity and value of all contributions being acknowledged.
 - v) Each partner being clear about what each brings to the partnership, as well as being open about limitations.
- b) We respect the right of partners to determine their own direction and priorities.

5. Mutual respect for values and beliefs

Whilst recognising and respecting differences and each other's independence, sufficient common ground in terms of shared values and beliefs must be found for our partnerships with others to be viable.

6. Clarity about roles, responsibilities and decision-making

- a) Credibility and trust in partner relationships comes from good communication, competence, reliability, and delivery.
- b) Partnership agreements and/or memorandums of understanding must be agreed so that:
 - i) The rights and obligations of each partner are negotiated and the expected contribution of each party, including Cambridge House, is clearly stated.
 - ii) All partners are able to do what they say they will do and the process and time frame needed to develop the activity is clearly stated.
 - iii) The processes for making decisions, monitoring and evaluation, marketing and publicity and managing external communications are established.
 - iv) We take an equal share in celebrating success and learning together from failure.
 - v) Every effort is made to build mutual respect within the partnership, as characterised by open dialogue and a willingness to give and receive constructive criticism.
 - vi) Problems and disagreements are dealt with openly and transparently through agreed procedures.

7. Transparency and accountability

- a) All parties involved in the partnership must recognise the need to be accountable to service users and to other stakeholders including donors and governments. As part of the process of developing partnerships, we explicitly discuss how Cambridge House is accountable to partners and how we and our partners are accountable to the people and communities with and for whom we work.
- b) Cambridge House and partners are serious about the importance of good financial management and accountability.
 - i) Genuine mutual accountability is rooted in an understanding and recognition of the diversity of resources brought to the relationship.
 - ii) The power imbalance created by different levels of resources made available by partners, and the implications of this, are openly discussed and handled with sensitivity.
- c) The diverse knowledge, experience, and skills that other organisations and local communities bring to the relationship are valued and acknowledged as essential to ensuring the success and sustainability of our joint activities. Working together is as much about attitude and choice, as it is about a balance of material resources.
- d) We agree together how we learn from our joint work, with the aim of incorporating learning, communications, and the sharing of knowledge into the design and delivery of projects and partnerships. Cambridge House has a specific responsibility to encourage the active sharing of knowledge with and among partners.

8. Commitment and flexibility

- a) Whilst short-term interventions can be appropriate, we believe our work is more sustainable and effective when based on long-term partnerships.
- b) We recognise Cambridge House's and our partners' need to balance project funding with core funding and, within the limits of funding constraints, aim to increase the proportion of multi-year funding agreements with strategic partners.

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