Organisation name

The Community Collective Qld

1.1 What would a partnership between CSOs and the government that achieves outcomes for Australians being supported by the community sector look like?

A successful partnership between CSO and the government that effectively achieves outcomes for Australians is a complex endeavor that requires careful planning, cooperation, and commitment from both parties. Such a partnership can have a profound impact on the well-being and prosperity of individuals and communities across the nation.

Shared Vision and Goals: A foundational element of the partnership is a shared vision and a set of clearly defined, measurable goals. Both CSOs and the government must work together to outline a collective vision for the community. This vision should encompass the well-being and prosperity of all Australians, with specific, achievable objectives that reflect the diverse needs of our population. Having a common understanding of the desired outcomes provides a clear direction for our collaborative efforts.

Clear Roles and Responsibilities: The success of the partnership hinges on well-defined roles and responsibilities for each party. The government's role typically includes providing funding, policy support, and regulatory frameworks, while CSOs play a critical role in delivering services, programs, and initiatives directly to the community. Clarity in roles prevents duplication of efforts, ensures efficiency, and minimizes confusion.

Consultation and Engagement: Effective partnerships require active consultation and engagement with all stakeholders, including community members, CSOs, and other relevant entities. The government should adopt a community-centric approach by seeking input and feedback from those directly impacted by policies and programs. This inclusive approach not only informs decision-making but also promotes a sense of ownership and participation among the community.
Should also include clarity with:
-Funding and Resource Allocation
-Flexibility and Innovation
-Capacity Building
-Accountability and transparency
-Long term Sustainability
-Conflict Resolution Mechanisms &
-Community Engagement

1.2 How can CSOs and government streamline the sharing of information, particularly through utilising technology to effectively engage, distribute, share, influence and inform in a timely and efficient manner?

Streamlining the sharing of information between CSO and the government, particularly through the effective use of technology, is essential for transparent, timely, and efficient communication.

Digital Platforms and Portals: Establishing tools that serve as central hubs for sharing information can be highly effective. These platforms can include websites, intranets, or collaboration tools that allow CSOs and government agencies to post updates, reports, policies, and resources in one accessible location.

Regular Updates: Utilize newsletters or automated updates to keep stakeholders informed about important developments, changes in policies, funding opportunities, and upcoming events. This ensures that stakeholders receive relevant information in a timely manner.

Social Media Engagement: Both CSOs and government can leverage social media platforms to disseminate information quickly and engage with the public. Regular posts, live streams, and interactive content can help convey messages effectively.

Webinars and Virtual Conferences: Organize webinars and virtual conferences to facilitate information sharing and discussion on critical topics. These online events allow for real-time interaction, questions, and feedback from participants.

Online Surveys and Feedback: Implement online surveys and feedback to gather input from the community and stakeholders. This data can inform decision-making and policy development.

Data Visualization Tools: Use data tools to present complex information in a clear and understandable format

-Collaboration Platforms

-Open data Initiatives
-API Intergration
- Mobile apps and or SMS alerts
-Cyber Security and Data Privacy
- Training and Capacity Building
- Effective Feedback loops

Interagency Collaboration: Promote collaboration between different government agencies and CSOs by sharing information across sectors. This can help create a more comprehensive and coordinated approach to addressing community needs.

1.3 How can government ensure the community sector, including service users, and those not able to access services, have an opportunity to contribute to program design without imposing significant burdens?

Streamlining the sharing of information between Community Sector Organizations (CSOs) and the government, particularly through the effective use of technology, is essential for transparent, timely, and efficient communication.

Digital Platforms and Portals: Establishing digital platforms or portals that serve as central hubs for sharing information can be highly effective. These platforms can include websites, intranets, or collaboration tools that allow CSOs and government agencies to post updates, reports, policies, and resources in one accessible location.

Social Media Engagement: Both CSOs and government agencies can leverage social media platforms to disseminate information quickly and engage with the public. Regular posts, live streams, and interactive content can help convey messages effectively.

API Integration: Implement Application Programming Interface (API) integration between government systems and CSO databases. This allows for seamless data sharing and automated updates.

Multilingual Support: Ensure that information is available in multiple languages to reach diverse communities effectively. Translation services and multilingual websites can be invaluable.

Cybersecurity and Data Privacy: Prioritize cybersecurity and data privacy measures to protect sensitive information. This can create re Assurance for those participating.

Feedback Loops: Establish feedback loops where stakeholders can provide input on the effectiveness of information-sharing methods. Regularly review and adjust communication strategies based on feedback.

By implementing some of these strategies and leveraging technology, CSOs and government agencies can enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of their information-sharing efforts. This, in turn, leads to more informed decision-making, greater community engagement, and improved outcomes for the public.

2.1 What would adequate and flexible funding look like?

Full Cost Coverage: Adequate funding should cover the full cost of delivering services, including both direct and indirect costs. This includes staff salaries, benefits, administrative overhead, facility maintenance, technology infrastructure, and any other expenses associated with program delivery.

Cost Transparency: The funding process should be transparent, with a clear breakdown of how grant amounts were determined. It should account for the specific needs and cost structures of different programs..

Flexibility in Use: Grants should allow flexibility in how funds are used to meet program goals effectively. Organizations should have the autonomy to allocate resources where they are most needed to achieve desired outcomes.

Multi-Year Funding: Multi-year funding commitments provide stability and predictability to organizations, allowing them to plan for the long term. This reduces administrative burdens associated with annual reapplication processes.

Performance-Based Funding: Consider incorporating performance-based elements into grant funding. Organizations can receive additional funding based on achieving predetermined outcomes and milestones, incentivizing effective service delivery.

Adjustment for Inflation: Funding amounts should be adjusted annually to account for inflation and rising operational costs. This ensures that organizations can maintain the same level of service quality over time.

Equity and Inclusivity: Ensure funding mechanisms consider equity and inclusivity, addressing disparities and ensure that underserved communities have access to quality services. This means that quality services can be delivered by 'For profit' businesses and not just NFPs.

Adequate and flexible funding that reflects the real cost of delivering quality services empowers CSOs to focus on their mission and better serve their communities. It enables them to adapt to changing circumstances, innovate, and sustainably deliver services that have a posit

2.2 What administrative and overhead costs are not being considered in current grant funding?

Administrative and overhead costs that are often not fully considered in current grant funding for community organizations may include:

Indirect Costs: Grants often focus on direct program costs, such as salaries for program staff and direct materials, but may not adequately cover indirect costs. These indirect costs can include rent or facility costs, utilities, office supplies, and other overhead expenses necessary for the day-to-day operation.

Staff Salaries and Benefits: While some grants may cover salaries for program-specific staff, they may not fully account for the salaries and benefits of administrative and support staff who play essential roles in managing the organization, finance, human resources, and compliance.

Technology and Infrastructure: Many grants may not consider the cost of maintaining and upgrading technology infrastructure, including hardware, software licenses, cyber security and IT support. These are crucial for data management, communication, and efficient operations.

Office Space and Utilities: The costs associated with office space, including rent, utilities, and maintenance, are often overlooked. These expenses are necessary for providing a physical location for staff to work and for meetings with clients etc

Insurance and Liability: Grants may not fully account for insurance premiums and liability coverage.

Audit and Compliance: Compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, as well as audit expenses, may not be adequately covered.

Development and Training: Grants may not include funding for ongoing professional development and training for staff.

Marketing and Outreach: Expenses related to marketing, outreach, and community engagement efforts may not be fully considered. These activities are crucial for promoting the organization's services and reaching the target audience
-Admin Support
-Community Engagement
-Overhead Allocation

3.1 What length grants are CSOs seeking to provide certainty and stability for ongoing service delivery?

Community Sector Organizations (CSOs) often seek longer-term grants to provide certainty and stability for ongoing service delivery. While the ideal grant length can vary depending on the nature of the organization and the services provided, here are some common considerations:

Multi-Year Grants: Many CSOs prefer multi-year grants that provide funding for a period of two to five years or even longer. Multi-year grants offer stability by reducing the administrative burden associated with annual grant applications and reporting. They allow organizations to focus more on service delivery and less on constantly seeking funding.

Three to Five Years: Grants that span three to five years are often considered ideal by many CSOs. This duration provides a reasonable balance between long-term stability and the ability to adapt to changing circumstances or emerging needs.

Funding Cycles Aligned with Programs: CSOs may seek grants that align with the duration of specific programs or projects. For example, if an organization is running a five-year education program, it may seek a five-year grant to ensure continuity throughout the program's lifecycle.

Strategic Planning Periods: Grants that align with an organization's strategic planning cycles, which typically range from three to five years, can be advantageous. This allows CSOs to implement their strategic goals with the confidence of stable funding.

Longer-Term Commitments: In some cases, CSOs may advocate for even longer-term commitments, especially for programs with long-term impacts, such as workforce development or community-building initiatives. These might span five to ten years or more.

Outcome-Based Renewals: Grants that are renewed based on demonstrated outcomes and performance can provide a strong incentive for CSOs to achieve measurable results. These can be structured as renewable multi-year grants tied to specific milestones.

3.2 What timeframes should the government aim for, at a minimum, to provide final outcomes on grant variations/extensions before the current grant ceases?

The government should aim to provide final outcomes on grant variations/extensions well in advance of the current grant ceases, allowing organizations sufficient time to plan and adapt. While specific timeframes can vary based on the complexity of the grant and the organization's needs.

Six Months Ahead: As a minimum, the government should strive to provide final outcomes on grant variations/extensions at least six months before the current grant ceases. This timeframe allows organizations ample time to make necessary adjustments, plan for the future, and ensure continuity of services.

Early Communication: Early communication of potential grant variations or extensions, even if not finalized, is valuable.

Flexibility for Complex Cases: In cases involving complex grant variations or extensions, such as those requiring significant negotiations or major changes in program scope. Flexibility should be exercised to accommodate these situations.

Performance-Based Decisions: Whenever possible, decisions on grant variations or extensions should be based on an organization's demonstrated performance and outcomes. This encourages accountability and provides a clear rationale for funding decisions.

Transition Planning: Grantors should work with organizations to develop transition plans in cases where grant variations/extensions are not approved. These plans can help organizations smoothly phase out programs or seek alternative funding sources.

Clear Communication of Expectations: Funding agencies should communicate clear expectations regarding reporting, compliance, and other requirements for grant variations/extensions. This clarity ensures that organizations can meet these expectations.

Risk Assessment: Grantors should conduct a risk assessment to identify potential issues or challenges that could affect the decision-making process.

Overall, the government should aim to strike a balance between providing adequate lead time for organizations.

3.3 What funding flexibility do CSOs require to enable service delivery and innovation?

Unrestricted Funds: CSOs benefit from having a portion of their funding unrestricted. Unrestricted funds can be used to cover essential operational and administrative costs, ensuring the organization's stability and sustainability. They provide flexibility in allocating resources where they are needed most.

Multi-Year Funding: Multi-year grants or funding commitments provide stability and enable CSOs to plan and implement programs with a longer-term perspective. This reduces the uncertainty associated with annual grant cycles.

Flexible Use of Funds: Grants that allow flexibility in how funds are used, within the scope of the organization's mission, enable CSOs to respond to emerging needs or take advantage of unforeseen opportunities. Flexibility may include reallocating funds among budget categories or programs as priorities evolve.

Performance-Based Funding: Performance-based funding models link funding to the achievement of specific outcomes and milestones. This approach encourages accountability and innovation as CSOs strive to meet or exceed established performance targets.

Innovation Funds: Dedicated innovation funds or grant categories can support experimentation with new approaches, technologies, or programs. These funds allow CSOs to take calculated risks and explore creative solutions to community challenges.

Flexibility in Reporting: Grantors can offer flexibility in reporting requirements, allowing CSOs to focus on outcomes and impact rather than extensive paperwork. Streamlined reporting processes save time and resources.

Sustainability Planning: Funding flexibility should support sustainability planning, allowing CSOs to consider long-term financial strategies beyond the grant period.

By providing these forms of funding flexibility, governments and organizations can empower CSOs to be more responsive, innovative, and effective in addressing the ever-evolving needs of their communities.

3.4 What flexibility is required by CSOs in acquittal processes to support and encourage sector innovation?

Outcome-Based Reporting: Shift the focus of reporting from detailed input and process metrics to outcomes and impact. CSOs should be encouraged to demonstrate how their programs have contributed to positive changes in the community, rather than providing extensive documentation of activities.

Narrative Reporting: Allow CSOs to use narrative reports that tell the story of their work and impact, rather than requiring extensive quantitative data. This can be especially beneficial for organizations engaged in complex or innovative initiatives.

Streamlined Reporting: Simplify reporting templates and requirements to reduce the administrative burden. This includes minimizing duplicative reporting to multiple funders and using standardized reporting formats when possible.

Flexibility in Reporting Frequency: Allow CSOs to choose reporting frequencies that match the nature of their work and grant periods. For some projects, reporting quarterly may be necessary, while others may benefit from semi-annual or annual reporting.

Mixed-Methods Evaluation: Encourage the use of mixed-methods evaluation approaches that combine qualitative and quantitative data to assess the impact of programs. This approach can provide a more comprehensive view of outcomes.

Use of Technology: Support CSOs in leveraging technology for reporting and data collection. Digital platforms and data management systems can streamline reporting processes and enhance data accuracy.

Consolidated Reporting: Explore opportunities for CSOs to consolidate reporting requirements across multiple grants or funding sources to reduce duplication and administrative burden.

By providing these forms of flexibility in acquittal processes, funders can create an environment that supports CSOs in their pursuit of innovative solutions to community challenges. This approach allows CSOs to focus on their mission and the meaningful impact of their work rather than being overly burdened by admin reporting requireme

3.5 How can government improve the variation process, with consideration that CSOs must demonstrate alignment with the grant agreement and provide evidence of value for money outcomes?

Improving the variation process for government grants to Community Sector Organizations (CSOs) while ensuring alignment with the grant agreement and evidence of value for money outcomes requires a balanced approach that promotes transparency, accountability, and flexibility. Starting with Clear Guidelines and Policies.

4.1 How can the government ensure opportunities are available for new and emerging organisations to access funding?

Understand the offering localized 'For Profit' organisations can make in creating quality services as well as contributing to the tax system.

Diverse Funding Streams: Establish and diversify funding streams specifically dedicated to new and emerging organizations. These can include grants, capacity-building programs, and incubator initiatives designed to support start-up CSOs.

Streamlined Application Processes: Simplify the grant application process, reducing administrative burdens that may disproportionately affect smaller or newer CSOs. Use online application portals and user-friendly forms to make it easier for organizations to apply.

Mentorship and Peer Support: Facilitate mentorship programs where experienced CSOs provide guidance and support to new and emerging organizations. Peer support networks can also help organizations

navigate the grant application process.

Educational Workshops and Webinars: Host workshops, webinars, and informational sessions to educate new and emerging organizations about available funding opportunities, grant application best practices, and compliance requirements.

Collaborative Grants: Encourage collaborations between established CSOs and new/emerging organizations by offering grants that require partnerships.

Progressive Funding Tiers: Implement progressive funding tiers that offer smaller grants to new organizations and increase funding as they demonstrate their capacity and effectiveness over time.

Transparent Evaluation: Clearly communicate the evaluation criteria for grant applications. Ensure that criteria emphasize factors beyond organizational size or longevity, such as the potential for impact and innovation.

Transparent Evaluation Criteria: Clearly communicate the evaluation criteria for grant applications. Ensure that criteria emphasize factors beyond organizational size or longevity, such as the potential for impact and innovatio

4.2 What programs, supports and information are already available for smaller CSOs to help build capacity of the organisation? Are these working?

Some are and some aren't

Programs, supports, and information to help build the capacity of smaller Community Sector Organizations (CSOs) are often available through various sources, including government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and others. The effectiveness of these resources can vary, but many are designed to address the specific needs of smaller CSOs.

For example:
-resources can be available from a Local, State and Federal level
-There are also many resources available via the Council.

4.3 How could larger CSOs support smaller CSOs? What are the barriers to providing this support?

Larger Community Sector Organizations (CSOs) can play a crucial role in supporting smaller CSOs by sharing their expertise, resources, and experiences. This support can foster collaboration, enhance the capacity of smaller CSOs, and contribute to a stronger and more effective nonprofit sector. However, there are potential barriers to providing this support.

Mentorship and Coaching: Larger CSOs can offer mentorship and coaching programs, where experienced staff or leaders provide guidance and advice to smaller CSOs. This can cover areas such as strategic planning, fundraising, program development, and governance.

Technical Assistance: Larger CSOs can provide technical assistance and expertise to help smaller organizations build their capacity in specific areas. This may involve sharing knowledge on compliance, financial management, grant writing, or program evaluation.

Resource Sharing: Larger CSOs can share resources, such as office space, equipment, or software licenses, with smaller organizations. This can help reduce operational costs for smaller CSOs.

Collaborative Projects: Larger CSOs can collaborate with smaller organizations on joint projects or initiatives. These partnerships can leverage the strengths of both parties and result in more impactful outcomes.

Training and Workshops: Larger CSOs can offer training sessions, workshops, and capacity-building events that are open to smaller organizations. These opportunities can help smaller CSOs enhance their skills and knowledge.

Networking Opportunities: Larger CSOs can facilitate networking opportunities for smaller organizations, allowing them to connect with potential donors, partners, and stakeholders.

Advocacy Support: Larger CSOs can advocate for policies and funding mechanisms that benefit the entire nonprofit sector, including smaller organizations. They can use their influence to address common challenges faced by CSOs of all sizes.

5.2 What innovative approaches could be implemented to ensure the grant funding reaches trusted community organisations with strong local links?

Community-Driven Grantmaking Panels: Establish community-driven grantmaking panels composed of local residents, community leaders, and representatives from trusted organizations. These panels play a role in reviewing grant applications, making funding decisions, and ensuring that the grants align with community priorities.

Community Scorecards: Develop community scorecards that measure the impact and effectiveness of funded programs and organizations. Community members can provide feedback and ratings, helping funders make informed decisions.

Open Data Platforms: Create open data platforms that publish real-time information on grant opportunities, applications, and disbursements. This transparency allows community organizations to track the progress of their applications and funding status.

Community Feedback Loops: Develop ongoing feedback mechanisms that solicit input from community members about the effectiveness of grant-funded programs. This feedback can inform future funding decisions.

Community Champions: Appoint community champions or liaisons who work closely with local organizations, helping them navigate the grant application process and connect with funders. These individuals could substantiate what is actually being done at a grassroots level.

5.4 Where there is a community-led change initiative, could shared accountability to community and funders (government) strengthen service delivery?

In some instances yes

6.2 What other solutions or changes could also be considered?

For profit business should not be overlooked and here's why:

Employment and Economic Impact: For-profit businesses create jobs and stimulate economic growth within communities. A strong local economy translates into increased income, improved living standards, and reduced poverty.

Revenue Generation: These businesses generate tax revenue for local governments, which can be reinvested in community development, infrastructure, and public services. This, in turn, benefits residents by improving their quality of life.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR): Many for-profit businesses engage in corporate social responsibility initiatives, which involve supporting local community projects, charities, and causes. These efforts can have a direct positive impact on communities.

Product and Service Innovation: Businesses often innovate to meet the needs of their target markets, which can include creating products or services that address community-specific challenges. These innovations can enhance the overall quality of life for residents.

Skill and Knowledge Transfer: Employees of for-profit businesses often possess valuable skills and expertise that can be shared with community organizations. They can volunteer their time to provide training, mentorship, or consulting services.

Social Entrepreneurship: Some businesses operate with a social entrepreneurship model, where they have a dual mission of generating profits while addressing social or environmental challenges. These contribute to social impact.

Local Sourcing: Supporting local suppliers and sourcing goods and services locally can boost the local economy and support small businesses.

While for-profit businesses can have profit motives, many recognize the importance of being good corporate citizens and actively contributing to the betterment of the communities in which they operate.

6.3 What does success look like?

Success can vary greatly depending on the context, goals, and individual perspectives of different people and organizations. It is a subjective concept and can be defined in various way.

Ultimately its about

Achieving Goals: Success can be achieving specific, measurable goals or objectives. This can include personal goals, career achievements, or targets set by a funder.

Overcoming Challenges: Success can also be overcoming adversity, obstacles, or challenges. It may involve resilience, determination, and the ability to bounce back from setbacks.

Making others great: Some people find success in making a positive impact on others or their communities. This can be through acts of kindness and or meaningful contributions to society.