Edmonton Chamber
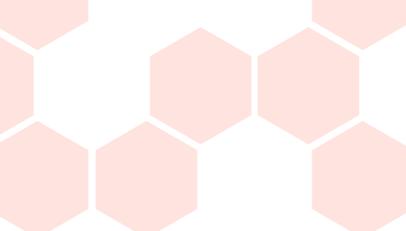**of Voluntary Organizations**

COURSE OVERVIEW

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER INITIATIVES:

THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF COLLABORATIVE ARCHITECTURE

SEPTEMBER 16-20, 2019
EDMONTON, AB

A WORKSHOP SERIES PRESENTED BY **SAM KANER** AND **NELLI NOAKES** OF SAN FRANCISCO-BASED **COMMUNITY AT WORK**

Multi-stakeholder collaboration is increasingly touted as a major driving force for progressive, intentional, system change.

The good news is that a growing number of case studies from around the world are demonstrating that this approach has merit. As a global civil society, we're learning how to tackle entrenched social problems collaboratively – that is, by bringing together individuals from deeply different backgrounds, whose perspectives and interests are widely divergent, to wrestle with their competing needs, find common ground over time, and co-develop fresh, new, practical solutions that do indeed produce positive results.

Yet, it's also true that multi-stakeholder change initiatives are expensive, time-consuming and difficult to manage. And even worse, they often fall apart long before they achieve their stated objectives. Far too many initiatives are poorly organized, with fuzzy goals, awkward communication dynamics, sloppy governance, and sparse accountability.

We (Sam and Nelli) have spent years discussing this predicament with sponsors and funders and conveners and participants of these initiatives. These are people in good faith, who have invested their time, their energy, and their resources. They believe in the potential of collaborative initiatives, but most of them have also been burned – and they're searching for guidance. They're looking for methods that work: they need to plan better, to forecast, to help their groups self-organize. "We need a roadmap. A blueprint. A game-plan. Not just a mission, values and vision – those are good to have, but then what?"

These quotes, taken together are the "call to action" that inspired us to produce this workshop.

Our goal is to send participants away with knowledge and competence to design collaborative strategy – the aspirational goals and the strategic goals, the stages and milestones, the structures and processes, the human dimensions and the logic dimensions.

This means learning about the many building blocks of collaborative architecture. It also means learning and practicing the design principles and tools that will enable you to develop your own collaborative strategies. And it means learning and practicing the partnership skills that will enable you to co-design and co-develop those strategies, as you work with sponsors, conveners, project managers and the other key players who share responsibility (and ownership) for putting their designs into effect.

To meet this goal, we're sharing our conceptual frameworks, and the many professional-grade skills and tools we've developed and vetted with our own clients, over many years.

As for the instructional design, it follows the same widely-praised approach used in all Community At Work courses and workshops: practice, practice, practice, in a supportive, respectful environment with colleagues who will offer direct, non-judgmental feedback in real time.

In this course, you'll have many opportunities to practice these new skills and tools while working on your own real-life cases.

Here's a partial list of the topics that will be covered in the curriculum:

THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF COLLABORATIVE ARCHITECTURE

Drawing from real-life case studies and from the insights of seasoned practitioners, you'll learn about:

- Critical success factors for multi-stakeholder *events*.
- Additional critical success factors for multi-stakeholder *initiatives*.
- Three common types of *architecture* for multi-stakeholder initiatives.
- *Logic models* – the "what-and-how" of multi-stakeholder initiatives.
- *Stakeholder engagement structures* – the "who-and-how-to-organize-them" of multi-stakeholder initiatives.
- *Executive functions, governance functions, and governance structures*.
- Typically-needed *operations functions*.
- *Backbone organizations* and other *operations management structures*.
- Options for sharing authority and decision-making at each and every level of governance, management, and subject-matter deliberations.
- A new, over-arching conceptual framework that consolidates your understanding of the architecture of multi-stakeholder collaboration.

DESIGN THINKING APPLIED TO COLLABORATIVE ARCHITECTURE

You'll have several opportunities to apply the following design principles and techniques to your own real-life cases:

- Defining *aspirational goals, strategic goals, and operational goals*.
- Building *logic models in multiple time frames*.
- Conducting a *stakeholder analysis* – you'll learn how to determine who to include in what capacity at which stage(s).
- Choosing *primary & secondary stakeholder engagement structures*.
- Drawing an integrated *collaborative strategy road-map* – many tools for this!
- Assessing the *essential and optional operations functions* for a given initiative.
- Designing *operations management* to fit other components of the design.
- Designing an effective *governance structure*.
- *Partnering* with key stakeholders to co-design the initiative.
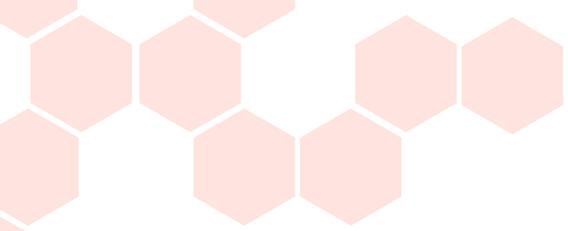
HUMAN DIMENSIONS

Although this workshop is not a class in facilitation, we won't shy away from examining group dynamics. We'll look at approaches taken by two real-life facilitators as they each handled a tough case successfully. From these we'll derive critical success factors for encouraging full participation and building mutual understanding across the interpersonal divide.

WORKSHOP LEADERS

Sam Kaner PhD is senior author of Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making, an international bestseller with more than 100,000 copies in print. In 2006 Sam was named as "one of the world's leading experts in collaboration" by Dr. Sandor Schuman, author of Creating a Culture of Collaboration and co-founder of the International Association of Facilitators. As a system-change consultant for the past 30 years, Sam's social sector clients have included the United Nations, March of Dimes, NATO, Greenpeace, Tides, Omidyar Network, SEIU 1021, many of the CGIAR Institutes, the Elders, California Supreme Court, The Russell Family Foundation, Special Olympics, U.S. Green Party, Singapore Civil Service College, Virgin Unite, Humanity United, Stanford University Center for Social Innovation, and more than 250 NGOs, foundations, and communitybased organizations around the world. His private sector clients have included VISA International, Google, Symantec, Charles Schwab & Company, Sandisk, Montage Hotels and Resorts, Hewlett Packard, and many more. Sam is the founder of Community At Work, and has been its executive director since 1987.

Nelli Noakes MBA, MPA is a professional organization development consultant specializing in the design and facilitation of multi-stakeholder collaboration. For the past 16 years she has worked at the intersection of organizational strategy, group dynamics, and strategic communication. As an internal consultant with the Australian Federal Government, she first managed and facilitated national stakeholder engagement campaigns for the Âustralian Taxation Office; then she directed the consulting unit in the Public Service Commission that provided policy and development consulting to all federal public service agencies. She has also served as the board chair of the International Association of Facilitators, Oceania region. Now, as a full-time senior consultant with Community At Work (based in San Francisco since 2013), Nelli has consulted with numerous clients focused on various aspects of multi-stakeholder collaboration, including Genentech; Tides; Kaiser Permanente; the Wikimedia Foundation; the City and County of San Francisco; the University of California at San Francisco; the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health; the Civil Service College of Singapore; the San Francisco County Department of Public Health; International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI); University of Oregon School of Law; and many more.