

Collaboration and Governance

Transforming our justice systems requires whole communities to come together for change, led by First Nations people. Justice reinvestment uses Collective Impact approaches to form partnerships around a shared vision and bring everyone together to work towards a common agenda.

Why Collaboration is essential for Justice Reinvestment

When dealing with big system challenges – like in our justice system - it often feels impossible for any particular organisation or individual to make a difference. This is when it's important for everyone in a community to come together and collectively create the change that is needed. While it's essential that Aboriginal communities are leading this change, it's important they're not left to drive it alone. Everyone has a part to play in addressing the complex issues that are behind the ongoing involvement of community members in the justice system.

Having a dedicated focus on collaboration ensures that you can get everyone in the community involved: from local elders, different family groups, service providers, local government, schools, police, other government agencies, local businesses and anyone else. Together, you can unpack your vision for your community and what is stopping that from being a reality. Think about local strengths and assets, and unpack local challenges and potential solutions.

About Collective Impact

Collective Impact is a framework for collaboration, which helps communities address complex social issues that is beyond any organisation's capacity to address acting alone. Key to collective impact is the formation of a cohesive partnership, which is united by a shared vision of transformation for the local community.

Collective impact talks about five key conditions:



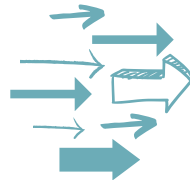
Common Agenda & Community Aspiration

Finding common ground between different stakeholders' own priorities and values is the basis for strong, purpose driven collaboration. Together, we can think big, beyond change we could achieve alone, and use this aspiration to bring together the stakeholders needed to make change.



Shared Measurement & Strategic Learning

Collect data and measure results consistently, so that we can ensure our efforts are aligned, and continue to learn about what works, and how we can better create change in our communities.



Coordinated & High-Leverage Activities

Harnessing opportunities for better collaboration and coordination of activities, while harnessing high impact opportunities.



Authentic Community Engagement

Mobilise stakeholders and build trust. Ensure those most affected are involved in decision making, alongside those who already have power and influence in the space.



Backbone Organisation & Atmosphere for Change

Collaboration takes time and effort to maintain, so this needs to be specifically delegated and resourced. It's also important to build the right environment to foster transformational change.

Establishing Leadership & Governance for a JR Site

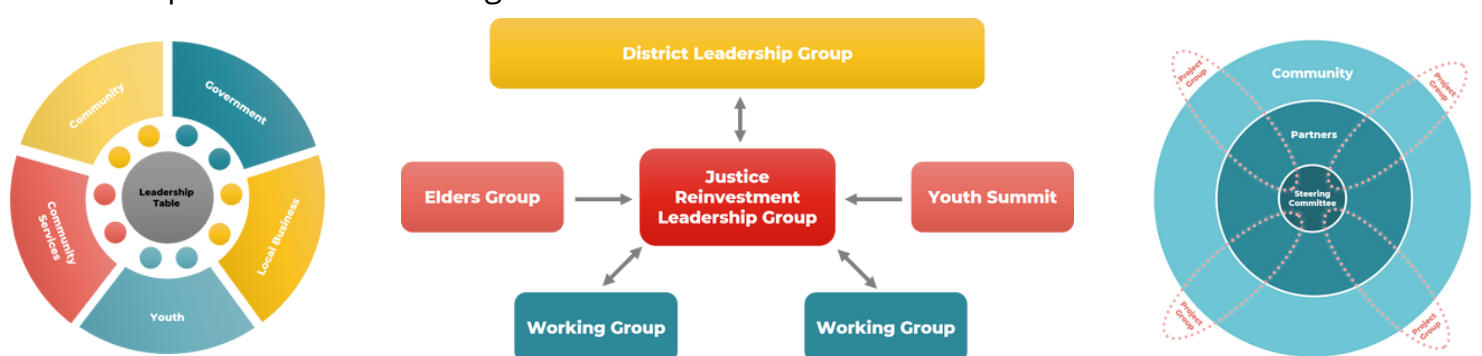
Establishing how your Justice Reinvestment site will be governed and led by the local community is an important milestone in your JR journey. It's a moment that signals your collective commitment to embracing a justice reinvestment approach and sets you up to collaborate towards your shared goals over the long term, with First Nations community taking the lead.

It's important that community are central to the design the leadership and governance of a justice reinvestment site. You don't need to be restricted to traditional, western and/or corporate-orientated structures – you can be creative and design something that will work best in your community. There are several examples of different leadership structures available in our resources section to get you started thinking about what will work best for you. Here are some things you might want to consider as part of this process:

- How will you ensure the JR site, and its work, centres on local First Nations voices?
- Are there any existing community leadership or coordination structures which you should be aiming to involve or embed into the Justice Reinvestment site?
- How will you ensure partners (like service providers, government, & other supporters) are invited to the table, without oversetting leadership of Aboriginal community members?
- How will decision-making work? Who makes day-to-day decision, which need to happen quickly? What about bigger, or more strategic, decisions?
- Who is responsible? Where does ultimate leadership lie?
- Do you want separate sub-groups for different priority areas (i.e. working groups or project teams?)
- Who will make things happen day-to-day?
- Are there any other important voices which need to be intentionally included in the leadership structures? (i.e. Elders, youth voices etc.)
- How will everyone stay connected and involved with the work that is happening?

Once you've decided how the leadership of your justice reinvestment site will work, it's a good idea to draw up a governance structure or similar to help show how decisions are made. It can also be a good time to set up the foundations of how these groups might work in documents such as a Terms of Reference, Governance Document, Partnership Agreement or similar.

Some examples of what these might look like can be found in our resources.



The Importance of the Backbone Organisation

A backbone organisation is a dedicated team (or person) whose role is to ensure that the collaborative work of the Justice Reinvestment site ticks along. They play an important role in facilitating community conversations and collaboration, following up on projects between meetings, maintaining relationships, managing administration, and building momentum.



While having a justice reinvestment site without one is possible, SRWA always recommends a backbone organisation.

The backbone organisation can be set up independently or hosted within an existing organisation. However, it's important that it has dedicated resources and its own identity to help emphasise the whole-of-community ownership of Justice Reinvestment.

The backbone organisation might hold funding, coordinate partners and follow up on projects, but it's important to remember that the backbone organisation is just the facilitator and supporter. The Justice Reinvestment site still belongs to and is implemented by the whole community and all the partners.

Helpful Tools and Resources

On our website, you'll find links to helpful resources such as:

- Example governance frameworks for JR sites, and similar initiatives
- Example governance documents and terms of reference which you can use as a starting point
- Links to further Collective Impact information
- More information on Backbone Organisations
- Tools for partnerships, governance, coalitions and more

A sample document titled "[JR Initiative] [Steering Committee/Working Group] Memorandum of Understanding". The document is structured as follows:

- Parties to the Memorandum of Understanding**: This Memorandum of Understanding is made on the [DATE], [LIST OF ORGANISATIONS/AGENCIES].
- Purpose**: The [JR INITIATIVE] is a strategic project, bringing state government agencies, local government and the not-for-profit community sector to work better together to improve outcomes for young people with complex needs. The [JR INITIATIVE] Steering Committee provides local oversight of the implementation of the [JR INITIATIVES JR STRATEGY OR PROJECT]. The group will work together to provide effective and transparent decision making and advice to ensure the successful implementation of the [JR STRATEGY OR PROJECT].
- Membership**: The YPP Steering Committee will be made up of representatives from the following agencies:
 - [ORGANISATION/AGENCY 1]
 - [ORGANISATION/AGENCY 2]
 - [ORGANISATION/AGENCY 3]
 - [ORGANISATION/AGENCY 4]Other relevant agencies or individuals that can assist with the implementation, as decided by the core steering committee members listed above. Representatives should be consistent, and each agency is to nominate the most senior local area manager with appropriate decision-making authority.
- Shared Principles**: Partners acknowledge the shared principles of the [JR INITIATIVE], as outlined in the [JR STRATEGY OR SIMILAR, as relevant].
- Principles of Working in Partnership**:
 - Collaborative
 - Relationship Focused
- Principles of working with young people & families**:
 - Trauma Informed
 - Strength Based

We're here to support along the way!

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