



Scaling Social
Innovation Through
**Cross-Sector
Social
Partnerships:**

Driving Optimal Performance

Thomas G. Pittz
and Melissa L. Intindola

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Contents

List of Figures	vii
List of Tables	ix
About the Authors	xi
Foreword	xiii
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
Wicked Problems	1
<i>Vignette #1: Covid-19 in Nigeria</i>	3
Layout of the Book	4
Chapter 2 Scaling Social Innovation	7
Social Innovation	7
Scaling Social Innovation	8
<i>Vignette #2: Gram Vikas</i>	10
Scale Capabilities	11
<i>Vignette #3: AARP</i>	12
Chapter 3 Cross-sector Collaboration	17
Cross-sector Social Partnerships (CSSPs)	19
<i>Vignette #4: Multi-disciplinary Team's in Indiana</i>	21
Alignment of Partnership Goals	24
Chapter 4 Assessing CSSP Performance	29
Meta-review of CSSP Literature	30
Common Metrics of CSSP Performance	33
Impact, Outcomes, and Output	34

Chapter 5 Motivation	39
<i>Vignette #5: Working Cities</i>	40
ACAP in CSSPs	42
Potential ACAP	43
Realized ACAP	44
Chapter 6 Cooperative Capabilities	49
Fostering Capabilities for Collaboration	49
<i>Vignette #6: Recyclebank</i>	52
<i>Vignette #7: Purpose Built Communities</i>	54
Chapter 7 Leadership	59
<i>Vignette #8: Brownsville Community Advisory Board</i>	61
Open Strategy in CSSPs	62
Goal Interdependence	64
Transparency	65
Inclusiveness	66
Stakeholder Legitimacy	67
Participatory Decision-making	67
Chapter 8 Networks	71
Political Influence	73
<i>Vignette #9: Corridors of Opportunity</i>	74
<i>Vignette #10: Unilever's Toilet Board Coalition</i>	76
<i>Vignette #11: Fort Wayne Downtown Development Plan</i>	78
Chapter 9 Culture	81
Culture Conversations	81
<i>Vignette #12: HandMade Collaborative</i>	83
Storytelling	85
Chapter 10 Conclusion	89
Appendix: Chapter Vignettes	93
References	97
Index	109

List of Figures

Chapter 4

Fig. 1. Top Three Drivers for Each Performance Level. 34

Chapter 5

Fig. 1. ACAP in Cross-sector Partnerships. 46

Chapter 7

Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework of Open Strategy in CSSPs. 65

Fig. 2. Reconceptualization of the Descriptive Framework of Whittington et al. (2011): Dimensions of Open Strategy in the Context of Multi-sector Social Partnerships. 66

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List of Tables

Chapter 4

Table 1.	Academic Journals Sampled.	31
Table 2.	Academic Journals with CSSP Publications.	32
Table 3.	Classification of Performance Drivers by Frequency.	33

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About the Authors

Thomas G. Pittz received his Ph.D. from New Mexico State University after two decades of industry experience, including the launch of two entrepreneurial ventures, and has taught undergraduate, graduate, and executive level students in entrepreneurship, strategy, and innovation in the Lowth Entrepreneurship Center of the Sykes College of Business at the University of Tampa. He conducts research that is broadly focused on external knowledge exploration and exploitation, strategic openness, entrepreneurial ecosystems, and collaboration across market sectors where diverse knowledge structures can



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Foreword

When we began writing this book, we had no idea what was about to happen to the world. The onset of Covid-19 and the resulting health and economic concerns have created a time of uncertainty the likes of which have not been known during our lifetimes. However, this global pandemic has also shined a light on the importance of the kinds of partnerships we are writing about to sustain our communities during the toughest of times. National Institute of Health Director Francis S. Collins, M.D., Ph.D., and Johnson & Johnson Vice Chairman of the Executive Committee and Chief Scientific Officer Paul Stoffels, M.D., declared that response to the Covid-19 pandemic will require “a swift, coordinated effort across many sectors of society.” We have seen competing city hospitals coordinate to ensure patient care, state and local governments partnering with non-profit organizations and private business to provide Covid-19 testing and ensure the continuance of K-12 and higher education, and pharmaceutical companies working together with universities to develop a vaccine as quickly as possible. Among the most unique partnerships is between St. Christopher’s Hospital for Children in Philadelphia and Gate Gourmet, an airline food service provider. When the Covid-19 pandemic began, St. Christopher’s worried about how its families, already vulnerable from the illnesses suffered by their youngest members, would obtain meals during stay-at-home orders. Gate Gourmet was suffering from the massive downturn in air travel. Together, the two began working to distribute boxed meals to the hospital’s patient families. This initial partnership has grown as St. Christopher’s has introduced Gate Gourmet to additional distribution sites around the city. But the story doesn’t end there. Deemed “Project Isaiah,” the partnership garnered the attention of the Pro Football Hall of Fame. With players lending their support financially and acting as on-site volunteers, Project Isaiah was able to exist under the Hall of Fame’s existing 501(c)(3) status. Since launching in April 2020, Project Isaiah has provided more than 350,000 boxed meals in 11 US cities. In Philadelphia alone, Gate Gourmet has provided more than 25,000 meals each week. In addition, Gate Gourmet has been able to preserve more than 500 jobs that may otherwise have been lost to the pandemic.

Ron Dreskin, Principal-in-Charge of Eisner Amper’s Health Care consulting Group, says that “Covid-19 has made it abundantly clear that none of us lives in a vacuum, and it will take unique partnerships to help us get through this.” In Florida, a pilot program involving a team of South Florida farmers will distribute more than 380,000 pounds of fresh produce directly to 87,000 inmates across 35 correctional facilities in the state. This partnership helps buffer the blow to Florida agriculture

caused by a decrease in produce demand as restaurants close to reduce Covid-19 cases. It also ensures that inmates will have access to produce despite disruptions in local and national supply chains. The New York State Department of Labor and State Office of Information Technology Services partnered with Google Cloud, Deloitte, and Verizon to upgrade the reliability of the state's unemployment application systems. The goal of this partnership is to make it easier for New Yorkers to apply for unemployment benefits by increasing capacity of the system to accept and process applications, a partnership created by a 16,000% increase in phone applications and a 1,600% increase in online traffic during peak weeks as stay-at-home orders led to unprecedented layoffs.

Across the United States (and indeed, the globe), we continue to witness innovative partnerships designed to ease some burden caused by Covid-19. While the context may be unique to our present day, the suggestions offered in this book still apply. During this time of heightened unrest and concern, we hope the drivers of optimal collaboration performance discussed here will provide a sense of pragmatism and security for those facing new partnerships, unprecedented challenges to a current partnership, and even current higher education students with a desire to change the world through cross-sector social partnerships (CSSPs). The need for these insights is heightened against the backdrop of Covid-19, as new work from Pereira Temouri, Patnaik, and Mellahi (2020) suggest that there is "new urgency on understanding the complexities of public-private partnerships" (https://aom.org/about-aom/aom-news/blog-detail_news/insights-videos/2020/06/20/partnering-to-speed-covid-19-medications) given our current health crisis. However, the importance of understanding CSSPs is no less important after this pandemic ends. Lest we forget, there are a myriad of complex social problems remaining that would benefit from a CSSP framework – let's begin!

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