

## Progressive Stages of Organizational Structure

(adapted from the Katahdin Trust)

**An effective Leadership Team sets the pace and tone of the program, provides credibility, and guides the direction and development of the program.** Collaborating groups often progress through several different leadership arrangements over the course of program implementation. Whatever you choose to call the leadership team and however it is structured, the group provides the foundation for the implementation and sustainability of the program.

**Roles and Responsibilities of the Leadership Team members.** The team should understand that they are a working group, not a “letterhead” group. Every team member should:

- Understand and support the vision, goals, and objectives of the program;
- Participate in meetings and events related to the program, or designate someone else who will have the flexibility, time, and willingness to serve;
- Have authorization to speak for the organization;
- Speak knowledgeably and advocate for the program;
- Understand the fiscal and legal accountability for the program;
- Work collaboratively and follow the plan set by the group;
- Encourage team members and motivate others;
- Serve as a connector to enlist support and resources;
- Assume a specific role in achieving success.

**Types of leadership teams on a continuum of Informal to Formal.** All can be effective at different stages of program development. In some cases, several of these teams can be functioning at the same time, with different levels of responsibility. **Every leadership team, even the most unstructured group, needs a convener and some basic policies and procedures.** (Examples at the end of this document)

- Task Force
  - Key staff or volunteers charged with researching an issue and making recommendations or developing a concept for a group of decision-makers
  - Little or no structure
  - Usually short-term
  - Agree among themselves on how to make decisions, usually by consensus
- Steering Committee
  - Representatives of collaborating organizations charged with planning/implementing a concept or program
  - Guided by Memorandum of Understanding
  - Members may move to more structure as project progresses
- Implementation Team/Program Team
  - Responsible for day-to-day activities
  - Reports go to immediate Management Team

- Need clear expectations for implementing the Work Plan
- Managing Committee/Board
  - Responsible for overall supervision of program activities, budget, and outreach
  - Reports go to collaborating/partnering organizations
  - Need clearly defined roles, policies, and procedures
- Advisory Board/Committee
  - Provides advice and support as needed
  - Reports keep members up-to-date on progress, challenges, and questions from program staff and partners
  - Generally, no enforcement/governing authority
- Board of Directors
  - High level of formality
  - Generally, applies to elected members of the governing group for a formal for-profit or not-for-profit organization
  - Elected officers with terms of office
  - Standing or Ad Hoc Committees
  - By-laws guide operations
  - Articles of Incorporation, if incorporation is desirable, provide the legal status of the organization

**When determining the structure of the Leadership Team, consider these structural questions:**

- ? Who makes the decisions as we move forward? How is that process handled?
- ? How do we vote in the absence of consensus?
- ? Do we need officers?
- ? Are we advisors to a salaried staff director?
- ? Can we operate effectively with a Memorandum of Understanding or do we need formal policies and procedures?
- ? Are we advisors or governors?

**Examples of basic policies and procedures:**

Policies

- At least 50% of members must be present for voting and for decisions to be official.
- For consistence of message, only the Chairman or Program Director may make public statements to the media regarding the program.
- Two signatures are required for expenditures in excess of \$500.

Procedures

- The Leadership Team will meet every Monday at 1:00 PM.

- The Chairman (or Program Director) sets the agenda for meetings and sends to members prior to the meeting.
- Financial reports will be distributed by the Treasurer before each meeting.