GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF TRANSITION

The principles in the ACCO Leadership Transition Framework are drawn from existing bodies of SNAICC work in conjunction with consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and Connected Beginnings sites.

> ## Why Are Principles Important for Leadership Transition?
> Principles offer a shared language, they provide scaffolding for ways of working together and when adopted, can ensure accountability, support relationships and guide behaviour.

1. Kids Come First

The rights and needs of children are the core focus of Connected Beginnings. This principle needs to be upheld always, including in the transition of the leadership process. Kids Come First acknowledges that even with transition and change, the commitments and activities must continue as smoothly as possible to realise outcomes for children.

2. Centre Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ways of Knowing, Doing & Being

This principle focuses on the need to place Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, doing and being at the centre of the way Connected Beginnings is designed, implemented and measured. This principle places the knowledge, cultural authority and self determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities at the core of Connected Beginnings operations. This Acknowledges that the transfer of power from non-Indigenous organisations to Aboriginal communities is a key driver of self determination.

3. Accountability to Community & Governance Groups

This principle acknowledges that whoever holds the Connected Beginning backbone function ultimately has accountability to the Connected Beginnings leadership and governance groups. This principle acknowledges the accountability and cultural authority ACCOs hold in their communities regardless of what they are funded to deliver and implies the need for transparency in the operation of all aspects of Connected Beginnings projects, including the transition of backbone functions.

4. Cultural Safety

This principle recognises mainstream approaches can counter culturally safe ways of working in partnership. This principle acknowledges that cultural safety requires a genuine commitment and responsibility from non ACCOs transferring the back bone function throughout all levels of the organisation. This commitment ensures an environment is safe enough for two way learning, Cultural responsiveness and responsivity to occur which is reflected also in structures and systems of the non ACCO in all its dealings with the community, and the incoming backbone. This commitment includes the understanding that cultural safety is not a place to arrive at but an ongoing journey in learning and unlearning.

5. Commitment to respectful, reciprocal partnerships

Organisational partners commit to an ongoing relationship, one that benefits and supports outcomes for children, families, and communities. This includes transparency through the handover of all relevant information and collaboration to obtain or transfer necessary resources and willingness of both parties to participate in two way learning.

6. Restorative Partnerships

This principle acknowledges the history of 60 000 years of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people caring for children, each other and Country. This principle acknowledges the sophisticated systems and the impact colonisation and ongoing forms of structural racism have had on self determination and leadership in communities and the strength and power in community control and leadership. Non indigenous organisations have an opportunity to transfer power and control back to community as a commitment to closing the gap and providing opportunities for self determination by stepping back from programs that should be held by communities, for communities.

7. Resourcing ACCOs to get the job done

This principle focuses on setting up backbones for success. ACCOs already have ample cultural capital and resources. This principle acknowledges that ACCOs may require resourcing to effectively address barriers to sustainability such as adequate long term funding, access to a skilled workforce, ongoing structural barriers caused by racism, power and control. From the outset, transition planning requires, sustainability measures to be built in to ensure financial,, physical and human resources are in place for ACCO leadership handover.

A clear and transparent understanding of the resources and capital is integral in the partnership process. This may include:
- Agreements that clarify commitments, roles and accountability ensuring there is a level playing field between the two partners
- An understanding of the time and resources allocated to joint planning, review, and partnership development for each organisation
- Reallocating resources in fair, equitable and culturally safe ways
- Advocating with Department of Health and Department of Education for additional resourcing of the ACCO and streamlined funding processes, acknowledging the fact that funding application processes can drain staff resources and time.

Bringing the Principles to Life

- Could the principles support conversation with the incoming/outgoing backbone to build on shared language and understanding?
- Could the principles be used when discussing what needs to be done to move forward with the transition?
- Are there any other principles that may need to be added that are unique to your transition process?

Suggestions for Transition – Recommendations
- Remove bureaucratic barriers – for example, compliance demands, funding arrangements, and government regulations   - Capacity building at the community level through infrastructure, training, mentoring, technical support and workforce development where requested by the ACCO   - Negotiate long-term, adaptable funding so initiatives can be developed properly and have time to work   - Examine power relations and address systemic racism- Projects were enhanced when the power dynamics influencing the relationships between stakeholders were acknowledged and addressed throughout the course of the project.   - Create a supportive policy context   - Have realistic timeframes regarding how long a transition takes and be clear about expectations and requirements early on   - Be flexible in timelines, funding, and operations   - Ensure transparency through timely sharing of information

These excerpts are from the current draft of the Leadership Transition Framework, a full copy of which will be circulated for further comment over the next 8 weeks. All feedback on these principles and checklist will be happily and gratefully received -please email tamasin.tunny@snaicc.org.au with any suggestions or questions.