Activity 1: Understand Financial Tools

When we think about nonprofit funding, the two tools that usually come to mind are grants and individual donors. There is a reason for that: they are often the most plentiful funding sources and are easy to understand. We like to think of them as the peanut butter and jelly of philanthropic finance, nothing wrong with a classic, but let’s expand our horizons a bit.

Review the list of financial tools that is on your table. Using this and your own background knowledge, fill out the chart on the next page for your organization.

Finance Tool	Is it a fit?	Do you currently use it?	Program or intervention it could be used to fund
Grants: Local			
Grants: Regional			
Grants: National			
Grants: Sub-applicant			
Grants: Lead Applicant			
Donor-Advised Fund (DAF)			
Giving Circle			
In-Kind Support			
Program Related Investment (PRI)			
Mission Related Investment (MRI)			
Endowment			
Corporate Sponsorship			
Individual Giving			
Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS)			
Earned Revenue			
Venture Philanthropy			
Impact Investing			

Each of your programs or interventions may need to be funded differently depending on local context, funding options, proposed activities, etc.

Choose a few of your programs or interventions and then identify the top three funding tools that would be appropriate for each.

Program or Intervention Name	3 Finance Tools	Notes
	1. 2. 3.	
	1. 2. 3.	
	1. 2. 3.	
	1. 2. 3.	
	1. 2. 3.	

Activity 2: Developing a Partnership Index

The word “partner” has been (we think) overused in funding requests. A true partnership is a deep relationship between organizations that is mutually beneficial to both parties.

At Ivanhoe Development, we created a partnership rubric to help organizations evaluate their current and future partners. We know that partnerships look very different depending on the project, context, etc., but this activity will get you started with creating or formalizing partnership expectations.

Your rubric can use whatever scale you prefer; you may use 1-5, letter grades, color coding, etc. The most important outcome is that your organization has a clear scoring system that allows you to rank partners to inform better decision-making.

Partnerships are about more than money. They are about finding folks you can work with, and, gasp, maybe, even have fun with?

Here are examples of some of the categories we use frequently:

Category	Definition
Trust	Firm belief in the reliability, truth, ability, or strength of the partner
Mission Alignment	Ensuring all activities, strategies, and resources are focused on achieving the organization's stated purpose and goals, fostering a strong, impactful culture
Reciprocity	Partners exchange things with others for mutual benefit, especially privileges granted by one organization to another
Communication Quality	Clear, realistic, and transparent interactions
Diversity of Interaction	Partner engages with the organization at multiple levels (grants, events, working groups)
Power Dynamic	Equal power is shared, or if currently unequal, concrete steps are being made to ensure future equity
Flexibility/Adaptivity	Partner can change and pivot on projects and/or budgets as needed
Frequency of Communication	Partners communicate consistently, and there are no issues with contact, deadlines, project planning, etc.
Knowledge Sharing	An ability and willingness to share, leverage, and create collective knowledge during the partnership

Ours may work for your organization, or they may not. Fill out the chart below while thinking about the following questions:

Which categories would you add? Which ones would you change or delete?

Category	**Definition**

Now that you have built your rubric, think through your partnerships overall:

1. What is working with your current partnerships?

2. What is not working with your current partnerships?

3. What do you want these partnerships to accomplish?

4. What are your goals for your organization's future partnerships?