



Taken for Grant-Ed: Considering Collaborating on a Research Grant?

Research collaboration is trending in response to:

- Increased mobility, connectedness, and shared interest among researchers
- Funding context (e.g. SSHRC's Partnership Development Grants, Partnership Grants)
- Acknowledgement of the complexity of problems and the consequent need for inter-sectoral, multi-disciplinary pursuits to addressing them

Any of the above may be your impetus for pursuing a team-based research grant. As a beginner in team-based research, what do you need to consider?

1. Assess researchers' capacity for collaboration, not only their technical expertise and academic background
2. Account for the potential team members' career stages—this impacts not only what they can contribute but how they will work as a team member in light of what they want to get from it (e.g. tenure, international recognition, publications, research experience, process knowledge)
3. Researchers in an early career stage may see team research as risky; researchers in a later career stage may treat team research as second nature—think about balance
4. A research team will work if the vision is shared. If you self-generate an idea and expect others to simply execute the plan to achieve it, you may encounter numerous motivation challenges
5. Teams are mutually dependent—because everyone plays a role, the success of one makes possible the success of others. All team members must be willing to share decision making and give up autonomy.
6. The academic outcomes may be front and central to your research project; however, remember that intangible elements like enhanced work style, improving the quality of the methodology, and creating networks are outcomes that funders consider important.
7. Incorporating team meetings and a process for generating feedback is an important part of a partnership grant. You must consider how and when this will happen.
8. Effective team leaders have self-awareness. Consider your leadership style, how you communicate, your approach to conflict resolution, and approach to giving and receiving feedback.
9. "Forming" the team is the beginning step—this can be top-down or bottom-up. Successful team functioning, however, requires considerable time. You need to work out how you will get there.
10. Collaborative research takes more time than individual projects. Work with a team because the challenge REQUIRES it, not because you think it will be easier and faster.

Bennett, L. M., & Gadlin, H. (2012). Collaboration and team science: From theory to practice. *Journal of Investigative Medicine*, 60(5), 768-775.