

2023

ADVISORY REPORT

A guide to create valuable collaborations
with future partnerships

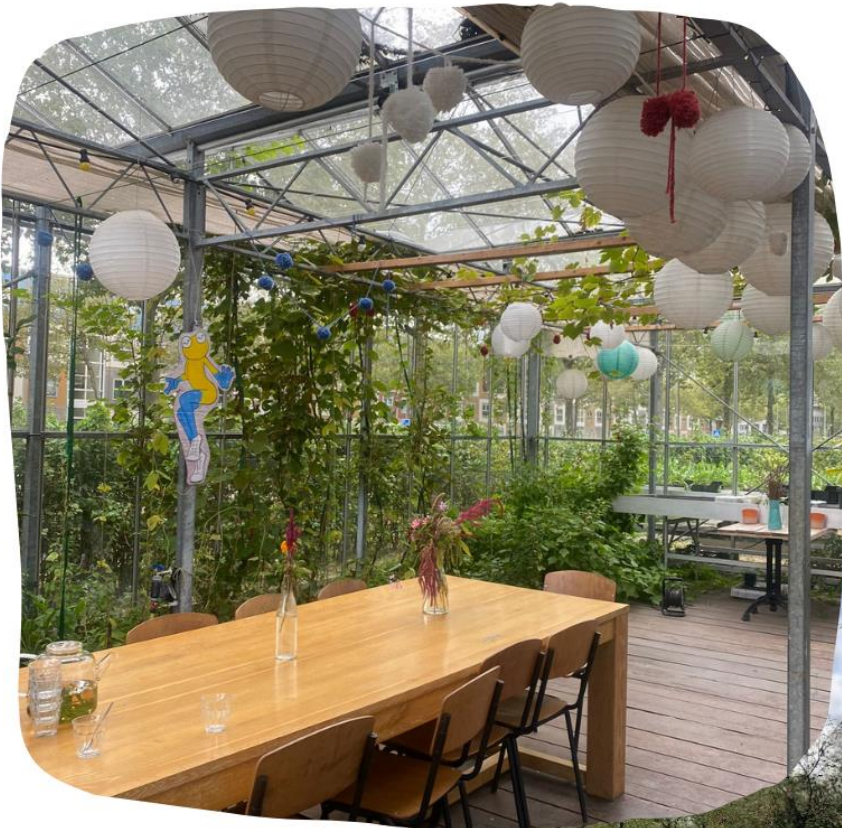


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Executive Summary

CVD is an organization that supports people who have been ostracised from society and provides a safe environment. Already they provide classes, housing opportunities, and other services that allow and assist various levels of societal reintegration. This work is done in combination with two other organizations, Pluspunt and Rotterdamse Munt. However, they wish to expand their network to provide further opportunities for the development of the people they are supporting (clients). Together, we came up with the solution to create a networking event that will further fulfil the goal of CVD. This will be done by creating long-lasting relationships with other organizations that have the same or similar goals in mind for their community. With this event, the project group hopes to lay the foundation for a better, healthier, and greener community for the people living within South Rotterdam.

The following advisory report is based on the work the project group did. The tools that they have used will be described and advice will be given for CVD, Pluspunt and Rotterdamse Munt and their future partnerships in order to create valuable, future projects and collaborations.

Project Definition

The project is about connecting CVD with new possible partnerships. The project team will achieve this by organizing a networking event in Rotterdam where new partnerships will be introduced to CVD. The expectation of CVD is that the team sets up a successful and informative networking event. This aims to have possible partnerships interested in cooperating at the end of the event. Since CVD is mainly focusing on the development of their clients, they are looking for partners who provide working opportunities to contribute to this goal.

Project Background

The project was given to Windesheim commissioned by CVD. The organization officially exists since 1971, has 500 employees, and is located in Rotterdam, specifically in the Rijnmond area. CVD provides housing and support in several areas to 3500 homeless people and people with mental disabilities who have struggled with integrating into society. CVD also offers coaching programs to help their clients through a personal approach. The services moreover include educational trainings to improve their skills in dealing with money, cooking, and other vital competencies (CVD, 2023). The organization is working on these goals together with their partners, which will be elaborated in the chapter "Stakeholder".

CVD impacts the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 1, 3, 4, and 8 (United Nations, n.d.). The specific SDGs are:

- No Poverty (SDG 1)

CVD and their partners support this SDG because they support homeless people improving their life skills. This will help them to get a job in the future and to receive an income.

- Good Health and Well-Being (SDG 3)

CVD and their partners contribute to this goal by providing shelter, food, and educational support to their clients. This aims to improve their health and well-being.

- Quality Education (SDG 4)

CVD and their partners offer workshops and other learning opportunities to people who have struggled with integrating into society. By educating these people, it opens a door for them to take their place in society.

- Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8)

CVD and their partners are committed to finding suitable jobs for their clients, which contributes to the overall economic growth.

Project Objective

The project group defines the project's objective with the SMART method. In general, it is always important to cover all these elements (**S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant, and **T**ime-bound) to have a good overview of the project and a clear roadmap of what the project aims to achieve.

Therefore, the different parts of the SMART method for this project are the following:

Specific, the goal of this project is to find new, valuable, and long-term future partnerships for CVD, Rotterdamse Munt, and Pluspunt.

Measurable, to gauge the success of the project, the number of possible partnerships that are willing to create a long-lasting collaboration with CVD will be measured. However, the quality of the future partnerships is even more crucial. To have a successful project, the client would be happy if there were two concrete collaboration agreements that would be created through the networking event. These collaborations are already successful when a follow-up meeting with one of the partners or a concrete exchange of resources takes place. Furthermore, one of the biggest measurements is client satisfaction. So in this case, CVD, if they are happy with the outcome of the project.

Achievable, due to some miscommunication at the beginning, it was not always clear if the goals and milestones could be reached. However, the project team is actively working together with their clients and did research. Furthermore, they received more information about CVD, Rotterdamse Munt, and Pluspunt. Therefore, they are sure to create an event where possible partnerships can have the opportunity to decide if they want to work together with CVD or not.

Relevant, the project is relevant on a small scale, for the clients of CVD, to support them in learning new skills to improve their opportunities in the job market as well as to grow and develop individually. Moreover, the project also has an impact on a broader scale because CVD can be a pioneer for other cities or organizations that work together with

homeless and mentally disabled people. These organizations could get inspired by the collaboration of CVD and their new partnerships to tackle problems that these people are facing.

Time-bound, the project group will work in their autumn semester of 2023 on that project and create an event on the 1st of December. However, CVD, Rotterdamse Munt, and Pluspunt will hopefully work together with new partnerships in the future.

To conclude, the SMART method is a helpful tool at the beginning of each project or collaboration. It helps and supports keeping the team focused on the important things that should be achieved. Furthermore, the method guides the planning process, measures if the project is meeting its intended goals, and allocates the available resources. It ensures that everyone who is involved in the project understands the project's purpose and direction and that all participants are working together towards a common goal.

Project Scope

The scope of the project is to help CVD expand their network of partners. Additionally, the partners have to be located in the South of Rotterdam and must be able to provide learning and job opportunities. The scope will be reached through a networking event that will be created and organized by Windesheim students with the help of CVD and Pluspunt. With the networking event, the goal of the project will be achieved. Additionally, this advisory report will serve as a guide to create effective collaborations. The whole decision process of the deliverables can be seen in Appendix 1.

Stakeholders

This part of the report gives advice for working with future partnerships. The project team has based these conclusions on its experiences of working in project groups and working with clients. During this project, the team worked together with the clients Wendy and Anniek. Wendy works for CVD, and she started as the main contact person. Anniek, an

employee of Pluspunt, took over the role of contact person when Wendy was unavailable. Even though CVD remained the main client in the project, it became clear how closely CVD and Pluspunt worked together. Throughout the process, Pluspunt also became the second main stakeholder and client in our project. Two meetings were held with Wendy in person, one at Windesheim and the other one in Rotterdam at the location of De Munt. Afterward, the team and Wendy proceeded with online meetings to check in and give updates on the project, as this was more efficient than traveling to Rotterdam. Between the meetings, contact was held through E-mail. For the planning of the event, an online Co-creation session was held with Anniek. During this, goals, objectives, and a clear plan for the event were finalized. A more detailed explanation of the Co-creation session can be found later in this report. Anniek committed to arrange the location and the food and continued to give feedback on the outline of the event schedule along with Wendy. Several meetings were held after the Co-creation session both with and without the clients to perfect the final event and make sure everyone was on the same page.

The Project Team's Experience

Through the collaboration with CVD, there were several points of miscommunication, especially at the beginning of the project. The project group overcame this by holding more meetings with the team and checking in with the clients weekly. They were also able to communicate their own opinions and expectations more clearly. Moreover, there were a few bigger scope changes at the start of the project, the team learned that in order to avoid this in the future, clear objectives and goals should be set. This would have also been useful during the unavailability of the client since the project group experienced a bit of a halt to the project during this period.

Communication with Partnerships

1. A Main Contact Person

It is recommended that the main contact person, responsible for keeping in contact with the partnerships, should be available full-time to respond and communicate. This would

help to improve partnership relations, by stimulating faster and smoother communication. Additionally, there should be a backup person in place from CVD if the first contact person is not available or cannot be reached. Also, it is advised to have a contact person from both Pluspunt and De Rotterdamse Munt if their organization will be involved. This would provide a deeper understanding of the organization's work.

2. Expectations Being Set in Writing

To ensure good communication there should be clear expectations set from both sides (CVD and the partnerships) early on. This should be one of the first steps after starting a collaborative effort. There are multiple ways to set clear expectations, a good way is to first list clear goals and objectives or implement the SMART method. However, the best way to define them is hosting a Co-creation session. It creates space to discuss expectations and ensures that everyone shares a similar perspective. The Co-creation session will be explained further in this report.

Collaborating with Partnerships

1. Clear Objectives and Goals

During the collaborative processes, there should be an open mind for input and new ideas from both sides. By defining clear objectives and goals together, a better understanding of the project is created. This could help increase efficiency and help avoid misunderstandings and connect to setting clear expectations.

2. Identify Strengths

By looking at the resources and strengths of all participants, it will be easier to assign roles and responsibilities. There can be strengths within the partnership organization that can be a positive addition to either CVD or the project in general.

3. Identify Risks and Possible Changes

It is recommended to look at the possible risks or changes that could occur within the collaboration and in CVD itself. For example, if adjustments are made within the organization of CVD, this could impact the scope or time plans of the collaboration. By managing and

communicating clearly to stakeholders as soon as possible, there is further potential for flexibility.

4. Make Sure Both Parties Are Benefiting

Ensuring a satisfactory outcome for both participating parties will increase motivation. This also shows signs of mutual respect and can help create a stronger bond.

Reaching Out to Partnerships

As getting in contact with new partnerships can be a challenging task, the following tips will offer practical advice to expand the network of the organization.

1. Attend networking events.
2. Build strong relations with partnerships so that they can help with connecting CVD to partnerships that might be well suited.
3. By creating the opportunity for collaborative projects, partnerships could be attracted to work with the organization. Therefore, this should be promoted on the CVD website or in other forms.
4. Enhance social media platforms. Concerning Instagram, CVD could create highlights for their stories. For CVD and Pluspunt it would be beneficial to create content together and draw attention to each other. Moreover, they can create interactive content through quizzes in their Instagram stories to receive more attention and link their website at the end. By being more engaged on social media it will be easier to connect with other organizations and interested people. Consequently, curious partners will be able to get a closer and more personal look at the company.

SiD Methods

The following chapter provides a professional overview of the SiD methods used during the project in cooperation with CVD.

Use of ELSI Model

At the very beginning of the project, the ELSI model was used to provide a general overview of CVD's various dimensions and impacts. The ELSI model is a framework that includes the aspects of Energy and Materials, Life, Society, and Individual. Moreover, the model includes the aspects of time, space, and context to ensure a multidimensional view of the topics mentioned. An overview of all aspects can be seen in the following picture:

Picture 1: ELSI Model



(Bosschaert T, 2017)

By working on the different topics, it was possible to identify the main aspects on which CVD is working. The following picture gives an overview of the brainstorming session the team did. It is apparent that CVD is mainly represented in the areas of Health, Economy, and Ecosystem.

Picture 2: ELSI Model of CVD



To provide a recommendation for further use of the ELSI model, it can assist in improving the connection with already existing and new partnerships in general. For example, the organizations can work individually on the ELSI model and then compare the results with the draft produced by the project team. By evaluating together with CVD on the topics and comparing them with each other, general objectives and expectations can be identified first. Furthermore, the comparison allows all parties to understand in which areas they can work together, how they can benefit from each other, which resources can be shared, or how the already existing cooperation can be improved.

Based on the advantages of using the ELSI model, the following chapter takes a closer look at another strategic approach: the Co-creation session.

Co-creation Session

The project team hosted a Co-creation session with the contact person Anniek. A Co-creation session is usually hosted by project managers and includes important stakeholders for intense collaboration and multidimensional input. During the session, project goals are

identified, interrelationships within the project are recognized and understood, solutions are found, and several conclusions are made at the end (Bosschaert T, 2017).

The format Miro, which is a digital whiteboard that can be used to visualize topics by sticky notes and to work collaboratively together, was applied for the Co-creation session. Because one of the clients did not take part in the Co-creation session, the content and outcome described further will be used as an example. At the end of each chapter, advice for further Co-creation sessions will be given.

Review of Newly Provided Information

The Co-creation session in this case provided new information on the project in various aspects. The first brainstorming part on the mission and vision of the project resulted in a concrete goal of establishing new partners with organizations based in the South of Rotterdam. Consequently, the long-term goal that came up in the Co-creation session is that the organizations are interested in establishing a long-term partnership with CVD. Apart from that, important suggestions from the client like the alternative location in case of bad weather conditions or the availability of heaters and blankets were considered. These aspects are important for organizing a successful event for the possible partners.

To ensure that the Co-creation session provides new information, the team evaluated that the information was mainly the outcomes of the brainstorming sessions. Therefore, it is recommended that the thoughts and opinions of the participants should be collected, for example on sticky notes on a poster or on the platform Miro. Moreover, the questions asked for the topics should be well prepared.

Review of New and Different Insights and Learnings

Another significant insight from the Co-creation session was that openly discussing the outcomes of the brainstorming session promoted a mutual comprehension of the project among all participants. This ensured that everyone was working towards the same objectives. The brainstorming part helped to identify and collect the needs and ideas of the

different participants while the following discussion part led to a clear definition of goals as well as solutions for potential problems. The perspective of the client moreover helped to understand that hosting the event in English might not be the best option for all clients. The team furthermore decided to prepare the invitation and the informative part of the event in Dutch to meet the needs of the clients best.

It is consequently recommended to address possible problems, such as language in this example, during the Co-creation session and to take these into account in the further process of the collaboration. In addition, clear communication from both sides and addressing upcoming questions are recommended to create transparency on both sides.

Principles and Practices for the Audience Design

In response to a client change and time management, the team decided to host the Co-creation session online. To ensure optimal organization the client has been given the access data to the Miro board a few days in advance. During the Co-creation session, the structure of the SiD cycle and the different questions asked laid the foundations for a productive solution finding. Because the team did not know the new client before the meeting, every topic of the SiD cycle was introduced first before the participants wrote the answers to the questions individually down. Following, the main points of the brainstorming phase were discussed in the group.

This method is recommended especially for new stakeholders because including both discussion and individual thinking allows to address different learning methods and ensures that all participants can talk about their ideas in their preferred way. The additional option to use anonymous sticky notes would guarantee a complete equal evaluation of the content in the discussion part.

Engaging Methods and Professional Planning

The Co-creation session was planned for two hours and included 30 minutes of introduction and the clarification of expectations at the beginning, followed by the first SiD

cycle topics. After one hour, a break of ten minutes took place to ensure productivity in the following topics. Afterward, the team and the client continued working together on the SiD cycle. Every participant of the project team introduced and evaluated one topic of the SiD cycle followed by a brainstorming session of approximately 5 minutes in which everyone wrote their thoughts on the sticky notes in Miro.

The introduction and clarification of expectations, in the beginning, are recommended to understand each other's roles and backgrounds and set foundations for collaboration. Moreover, a flexible approach with time is suggested. If the brainstorming phase is finished ahead of time, the moderator can open the discussion on the topic earlier or summarize key outcomes before moving to the next topic.

Documentation and Outcome

In the following, the evaluation of the different SiD cycle outcomes will be introduced.

Picture 3: Overview of Goals, Vision on Indicators after Brainstorming



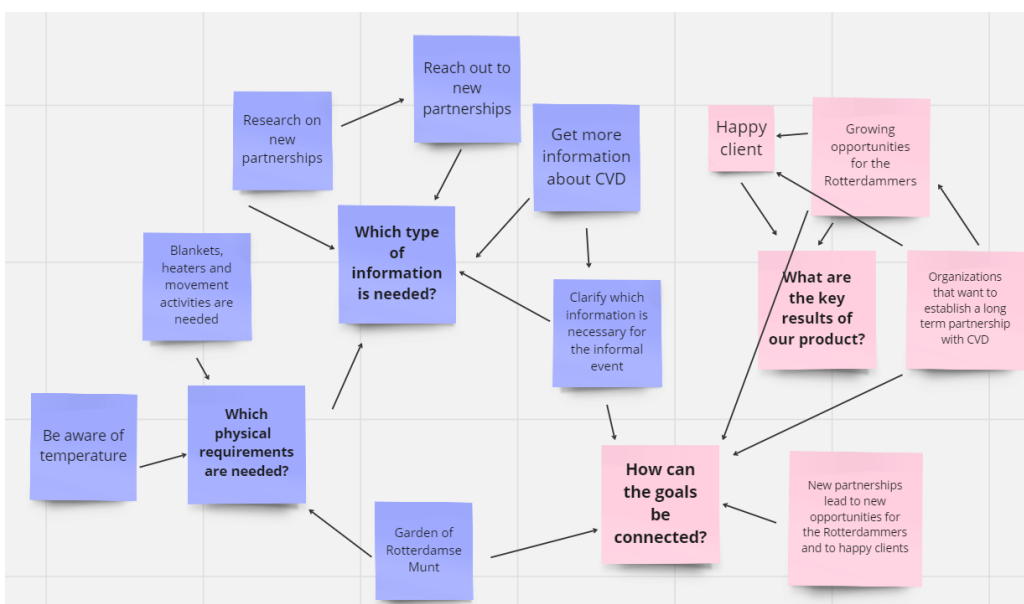
The first cycle aimed to define the goals, visions, and indicators. *Picture 3* gives an overview of the questions discussed and the answers of the brainstorming session.

Picture 4: Results for the Goals, Visions and Indicators cycle after evaluation of the team

What is the goal of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish long lasting partnerships between CVD and new organizations • Deepen connection with already existing partnerships
What are the qualities a possible partner must have?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located in Rotterdam Zuid • Support people with disabilities • Provide working opportunities/useful skills to reintegrate Rotterdammers back to society
What are our ambitions we try to reach?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More attention on CVD • A successful and informational event • Happy clients • Connection between CVD and other organizations is well established
What are the possible indicators that reflect how our progress is going?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of organizations that show up at the event • Amount of partnerships that are established • Amount of partners that want to participate in the follow up event • happy client

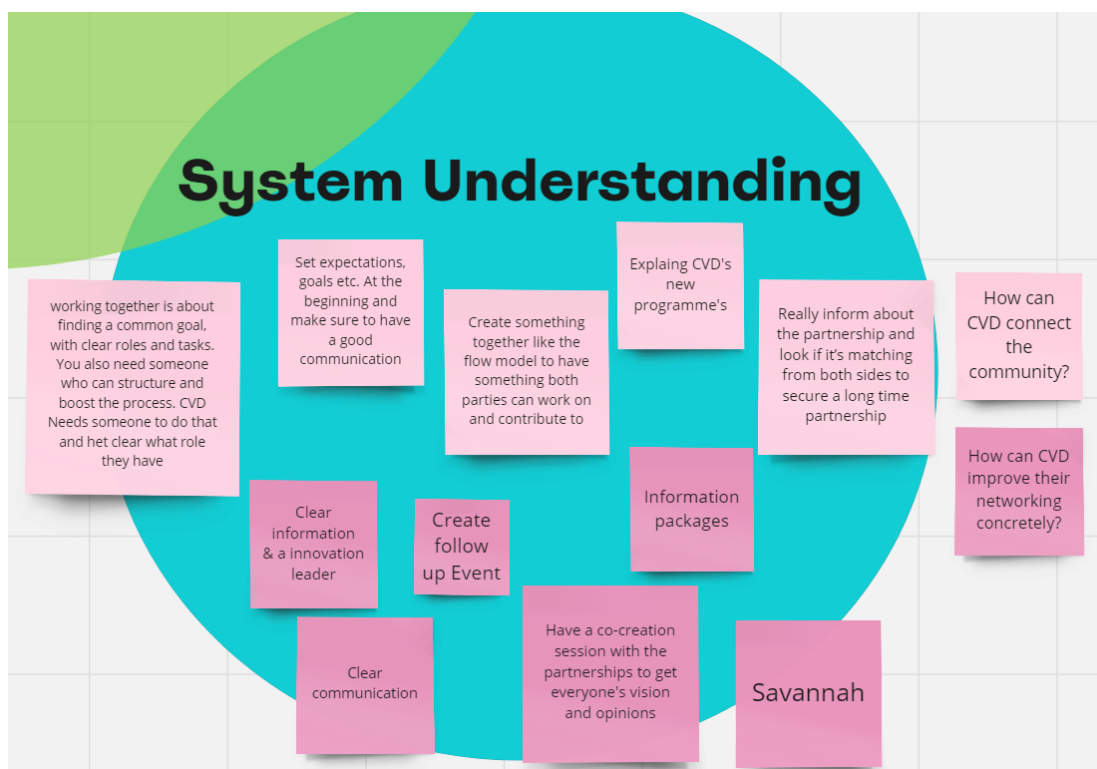
The evaluation and summary of the topics can be seen in *Picture 4*: It is recommended to evaluate the first part of the SiD cycle like in the example to provide a clear overview of the topics, visions, and indicators.

Picture 5: Results for the System Mapping Cycle after evaluation of the team



The second part “System Mapping” aimed to dive deeper into the aspects of space and content of the project and how the factors are combined with each other. Apart from evaluating the brainstorming part in topics, the team decided to put the results into a Mind map. The Mind map is recommended to highlight the most important aspects of the projects as well as to get a rough overview of the structure the project might have. Further, the structure can help for example to divide tasks between the stakeholders.

Picture 6: Results for the System Mapping cycle after the evaluation of the team



The third cycle focused on the understanding details of the project and the goals. By asking concrete questions, more detailed aspects of the projects were discovered. It is recommended to ask specific questions to the stakeholders to discover new insights on the project. A deeper understanding also can lead to potential problems which can be solved in the following cycle.

Picture 7: Overview of problems that might occur after evaluation of the team

Problems that might occur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No suitable organizations are found • No one is interested in joining the event • Partnerships do not want to work with CVD • We do not have enough information about CVD to answer questions at the event • The temperature is too low for an event in the garden
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The fourth cycle dived deeper into the topic of problem-solving and planning of the further steps. The team decided to write down the problems in a list to get a clear overview.

Picture 8: Overview of timeline after evaluation of the team

week 10 06.11-12.11.	week 11 13.11-19.11.	week 12 20.11-26.11.	week 13 27.11-03.12.	week 14 04.12.-10.12.	week 15 11.12.-17.12.
co creation session contact the partnerships ↓ create the invitation flyer, choose the partnerships we want to contact	plan the event meeting with Anniek ↓ create an outline for the event & make a list of the things we need, pitch our idea to Anniek & Wendy, send her the list of things we will need	deadline of our assignment plan the event more in detail, confirmation of partnerships that will attend	week of event ↓ make the last steps for the event have a meeting with Anniek & Wendy again to talk about final things	Final presentation	

For the milestones, the team recommends drawing a timeline for the general process and the general time management as well as to get a clear overview of tasks that must be done. Moreover, the process of the project can be tracked more easily.

Picture 9: Overview of problems and solutions after evaluation of the team

Stakeholders	
Problem	Solution
Language barrier	Roos and Moon will translate the content in dutch
Which and how much information should be provided at the event?	Clear communication about the content with Wendy and clear goal for the event
Partnerships the team reaches out to are not interested	Present the benefits of working with CVD clearly
Is the quantity of the researched partnerships enough?	Focus on quality, not quantity
Budget	
Problem	Solution
Travel takes too much budget	Drive by car to save costs
We will need more money than expected for the event	Overview of needed things for the event
Location	
Problem	Solution
Location can be too cold	Breaks to move around, provide warm drinks and heaters
Time	
Problem	Solution
Time is too short to organize a good event	Good communication structure within the team and with the client
Not enough time for the partners to decide on their participation	Try to prepare invitations and reach out as soon as possible Prepare everything for another event CVD can organize on their own

The last cycle focused on evaluating the main points of stakeholders, budget, time, and location that came up during the former phases. In order to do this the main boundaries of the project have to be set. In the brainstorming and discussion session on that cycle, the team focused on topics like the realization of the project and whether the steps chosen were good enough to reach the goals. It is recommended to make a comparison of the problems and the fitting solutions that the stakeholders found in the brainstorming and discussion session. Moreover, any uncertainties should be discussed during that phase to ensure that every stakeholder has the same expectations. Another advice for that cycle is to make a clear comparison of the problems and their corresponding solutions. In order to quickly solve problems that might occur during the process.

Apart from the content evaluation, which was prepared and presented in the earlier section, the team evaluated further aspects of the Co-creation session via feedback from the client and the team members to ensure constant improvement.

Further Strategies for the Application

The organization and realization of the Co-creation session and the ELSI model described in the earlier chapter can be used for existing and new partnerships. A Co-creation session in general can allow to dive deeper into new insights and opportunities for both parties. Aspects that can be considered apart from the SiD cycle process are

expectations both parties have for long-lasting partnerships and projects they want to work on. Hosting a Co-creation session with the SiD cycle can assist further in finding out if the partnerships share the same goals for the collaboration. It will moreover allow defining goals and learning from each other's perspective by sharing different insights on assorted topics. This will provide a deeper understanding of the perspectives as well as the unique needs and preferences of the different stakeholders.

Conclusion

Throughout the creation to completion of this project, the project team hopes to have made a significant impact on CVD and its partnerships through creating opportunities to network and connect to new organizations across south Rotterdam. By following the advice of this report, we hope to give CVD new tools such as the SiD Method to expand the community of south Rotterdam and improve the lives of their clients.

The learnings of the Co-creation session including the feedback of the client, equipped the team with the necessary preparation to successfully create the upcoming networking event, which will be a Co-creation session as well. The findings will be elaborated afterwards with the clients to ensure constant improvement.

Appendix

Appendix 1

Inspiration Book

https://www.canva.com/design/DAF1XXeaWIU/fH2S1ejcP_kqMKA_9qUIbA/edit?utm_content=DAF1XXeaWIU&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton

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