

# Complex Collaboration Model

*Conceptual Tool*



Part of the Complex Collaboration Toolkit.

# Introduction

## About the Tools and Toolkits

These tools and toolkits are hosted by **Healthy Campus Alberta**, a provincial community of practice committed to cultivating caring campus communities in Alberta. Originally developed by **Alberta Campus Mental Health Innovation** (an initiative carried out by the **Alberta Students Executive Council**), the tools and toolkits are learning-focused, living documents that serve to support our community of practice.

## About the Complex Collaboration Toolkit

Complex collaborations are essential to promote mentally healthy campuses across Alberta. Originally developed to support Regional Hubs, collaborative groups that originated amidst the launch of the Alberta Post-Secondary Mental Health and Addictions Framework, this toolkit is adaptable to any collaboration: interdepartmental, regional, provincial, national, or international. The toolkit frames complex collaboration as a point of connection among individuals, teams or organizations with complementary skills and resources willing to collaborate on a common objective. However, creating a shared approach for mutual gain is not an easy task. The complex collaboration model has been developed to provide some insights and approaches that weave together a variety of processes and theories to enhance the effectiveness of these complex collaborations.

## About the Complex Collaboration Model

The **Complex Collaboration Model** tool introduces the model that guides the rest of this toolkit. The model includes steps for actioning complex collaboration and considerations for operationalizing the model.

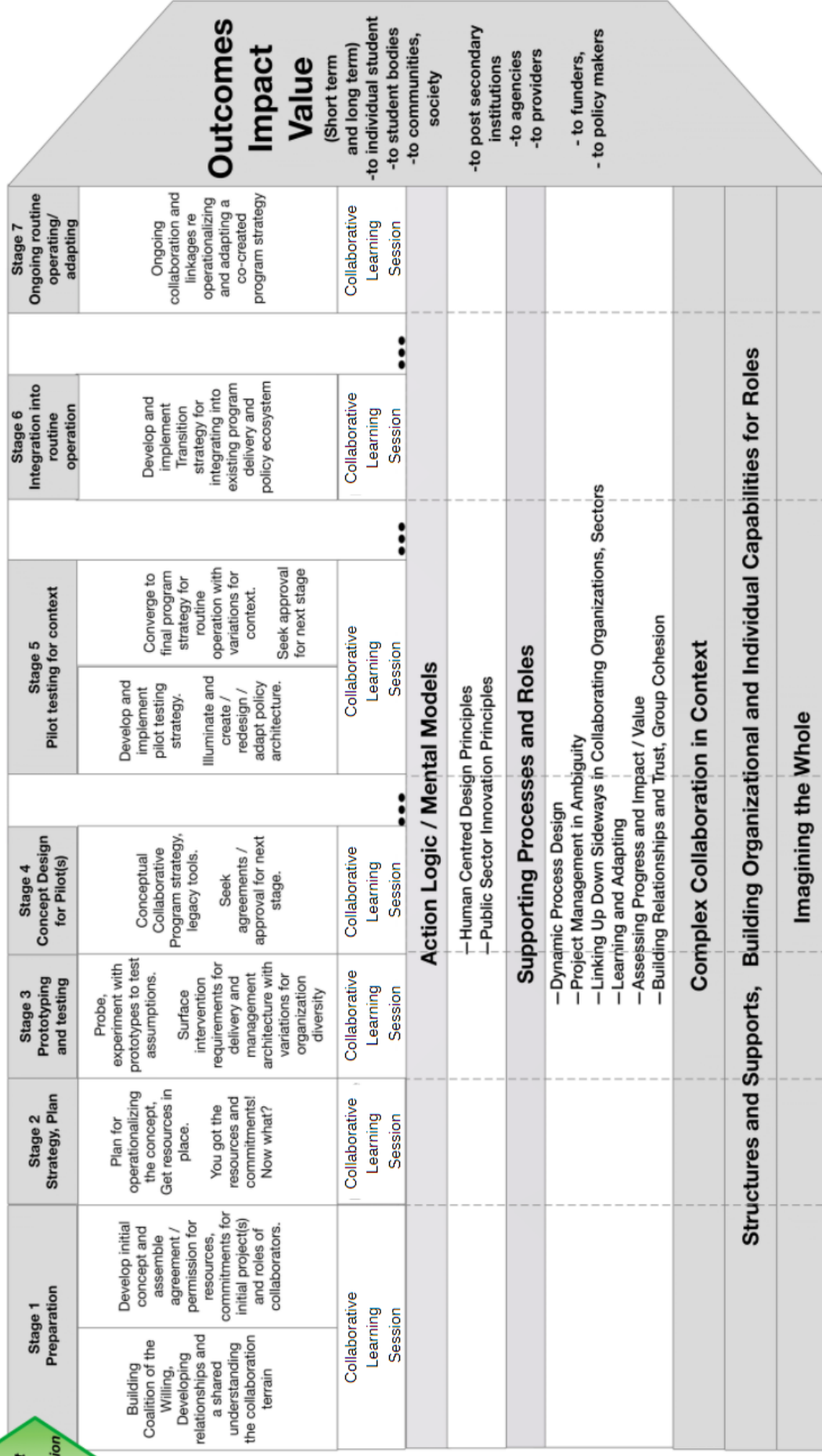
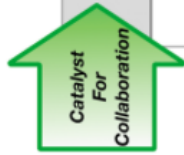
### **Who could use this tool?**

- Coordinators of collaborations among post-secondary institutions;
- Program planners in post-secondary student services or administration;
- Mental health professionals who work with post-secondary students.

### **What purposes could this tool serve?**

- Providing a framework to guide every step of a collaboration;
- Providing support for specific aspects of a collaboration;
- Initiating conversations about complex collaboration among organizations;
- Revisiting ongoing collaborations to make them more effective.

# Complex Collaboration Model



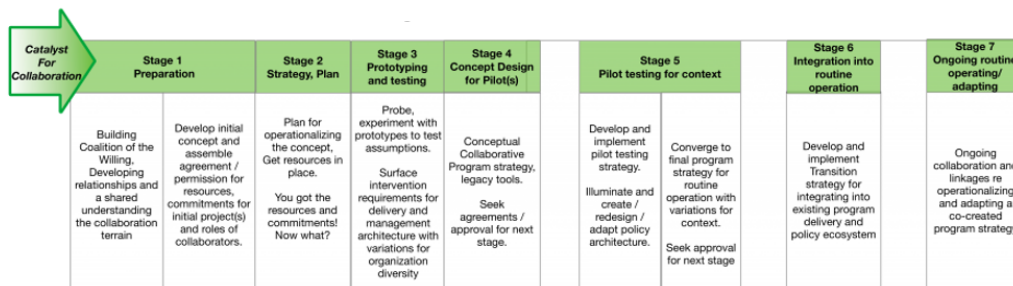
# Understanding the Model

## The Complex Collaboration Model

The visual model is presented in a linear fashion to illustrate the stages and elements. In practice the process is more complex, less linear and much more iterative and cyclical.

The value chain diagram contains three sections, each which have elements contained within:

### Actioning



### Operationalizing



### Outcomes



The elements are interdependent. They must be woven together as the collaboration grows and evolves. The process is a learning experience among all participants and can be confusing, especially when the objective is a disruptive innovation. The visual may help in communication, to provide a visual reference on the stage the process is at. The following sections provide an overview of the stages and each of the actioning and operationalizing elements.

# Using the Model

The Complex Collaboration Model is a flexible tool that can be used for all stages of the collaboration process, or a select few stages.

## **Understand**

Learn about complexity and collaboration by reading the *Framing Complex Collaboration Conceptual Tool*. Assess the level complexity in your collaboration using the *Assessing Complexity worksheet*.

## **Act**

Begin your collaboration! Use the seven-stage process in the *Actioning Complex Collaboration Practical Tool*. Each stage can be followed by collective learning among the members of the collaboration. Use the *Collaborative Learning Sessions Practical Tool* as a guide.

## **Operationalize**

The principles of human-centered design and public sector innovation can crosscut the collaboration. Read the *Operationalizing Complex Collaboration Conceptual Tool* to understand some relevant mental models and strategies.

## **Outcomes**

Evaluation and outcomes will vary for each collaboration. Read the *Outcomes of Complex Collaboration Conceptual Tool* for some resources to guide your outcomes and evaluation.

## **Case Study**

A hypothetical case study will guide you through the stages of the complex collaboration model. This case study is only one hypothetical example of a complex collaboration. It is simplified to demonstrate some of the typical activities within each stage of a collaboration. In practice, collaborations may look much more iterative and intricate.

As you work through the model, you can also think about collaborations you have been involved with throughout your practice. You can also think about a collaboration you might be embarking upon in the future.



Look for the case study symbol throughout the toolkit to learn more!