Wabanaki Artisan Initiative

I. Identify Needs and Stakeholders
✓ Identify the population you wish to be of service to.
✓ Identify needs.
✓ Discuss your ideas with stakeholders - are the needs you identified really what they want and need? Are there other needs you missed that are more important to them?
⇒ Maine Indian Basketmakers Alliance (MIBA) serves basketmakers and artists from the four tribes in Maine (collectively known as the Wabanaki). Four Directions Development Organization is a native CDFI serving individuals and businesses from the Wabanaki tribes. Both organizations had identified artist promotional materials, increased sales opportunities, and business training as needs.

II. Identify Partners/Collaborators
✓ Identify other organizations that may be open to collaboration.
✓ Do you serve the same or similar populations?
✓ Do you share similar values and missions?
✓ Meet with potential partners to explore if working together can benefit your organizations and stakeholders.
⇒ MIBA and FDDC serve the same populations and share similar goals and values.

III. Identify Partner/Collaborator Strengths
✓ What are the strengths that each partner organization brings?
✓ What about resources?
⇒ MIBA brings established artist relationships and FDDC was able to provide resources and office space.

IV. Set Project Goals
✓ Identify goals and timelines.
⇒ For MIBA and FDDC the project goals were to provide increased sales opportunities by developing a website, to create marketing materials for artists (postcards, marketing tags), to promote MIBA’s existing artist shows, and to provide business training and services (photography, artist biographies, business help) to artists.

V. Coordinate Efforts
✓ How will projects be funded? Identify grants and funding sources?
✓ Do partners/collaborators have access to different funding sources?
✓ Coordinate funding efforts so partners are not competing against each other for potential grants?
✓ Make a work plan and coordinate which organization, employee, or volunteer will be responsible for the projects.
✓ Clear, open, and frequent communication is important.
✓ Think creatively.
⇒ For the MIBA/FDDC partnership sharing one employee was a creative solution to coordination efforts.

VI. Evaluate
✓ Communicate frequently to discuss progress.
✓ Be honest with each other about what is working and what is not.
✓ Are your projects having the desired outcome? Are projects having a positive impact for your stakeholders?
✓ Make adjustments as needed.