

LIVING LAB

Where knowledge grows

Developing a Partnership

- Establish clear objectives for different parties i.e. students, academic staff and operations/professional services staff.
- It is helpful getting to know your partners so that there is an understanding of what their drivers and expectations are.
- Seek out areas of mutual benefits that all partners want to achieve such as specific outputs or outcomes.
- Identify who undertakes what tasks and mutually agree on timelines.
- It can be useful to agree on the frequency of in-person meetings early on and make sure to keep updated via email.
- Agree what will be shared publicly and what will remain confidential.
- Be aware that there will sometimes be different communication styles and language e.g. theoretical or technical terminology.
- People's availability, level of commitment and even levels of interest can change over time.
- People might have different expectations (e.g. time, communication) so it is useful to establish clear expectations from the start.
- In some instances, researchers might be concerned that they will be limited by University official positions, strategies and policies.
- Different stakeholders may not all always agree on the recommendations drawn from the project, so ensure to discuss these things openly.
- The priorities, budgets and timescales can change for any of the partners over time. For this reason, maintaining regular communication and transparency on any impacts on the project plan are key.

(This has been adapted from the University of Edinburgh Living Lab and Edinburgh Living Lab toolkit prepared by Liz Cooper, Catherine Magill and Ewan Klein)