



# The Process of Creativity and Collaboration in the Design of Landmark Bridges

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## Abstract

This paper explores the fundamental basis of creativity and collaboration and the processes and behaviours which underpin it. It explores the conditions required for good collaboration and having established the principles it looks at how these principles align with the creation of a number of landmark bridges

**Keywords:** creativity, collaboration, iconic, bridges, process.

## 1 Introduction

Creativity is an essential element in the design process but the best examples of creativity in the field of bridge design often seem to emanate from strong collaboration between people and organisations with complementary aspirations, skills and cultures.

Definitions of creativity, however, are multiple and varied, and factors influencing creativity myriad and various. Moreover, the definition, the influences and their measures don't seem to be linked in a systematic way. Creativity is not a concept that can be readily measured, nor compared, and is often incremental. It's probably safe to assume though that to be creative, an idea ought to be novel, have purpose and be resource efficient.

However creativity is defined and exhibited, the need for it has never been greater, because the design and construction environment has never been more complicated. Challenges such as multi-stakeholder involvement, long-term resiliency, skill shortages and environmental concerns now compound long-standing considerations of cost, schedule, quality and public safety. So too do

external factors such as regulatory issues, public opinion and client and community preferences.

And even if a designer has a creative solution to offer, there must be a client who not only wants it but also is willing to pay for it. Least cost often outplays best value in the selection process. Creativity and innovation ultimately rely on Client insight and support and an acceptance of risk.

So whilst the definition and recipe for successful creativity is somewhat uncertain there are components which seem to be evident in most creative collaborative relationships, and ones that produce outstanding solutions.

## 2 Leadership

Most successful business processes require good leadership and design is no exception. For an organisation or project team to be creative, design has to be at the heart of how the business operates. A key characteristic of successful creative and collaborative processes is often the presence of one or more design champions who drive the development of the design function and its recognition both internally and externally.

It is also probably no coincidence that the best of these design champions tend to be charismatic,