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Collaboration in public construction—
contractual incentives, partnering schemes
and trustGeert Dewulf  & Anna Kadehors

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Abstract

It is increasingly common that public construction projects are procured and managed with explicit intentions to establish closer collaboration between partners. Opportunities for negotiation and the freedom to choose partners are more restricted in a public setting than in a private one. Thus, many relational requirements that are generally considered to be essential for public projects are often not formalized in public contracts. Based on two case studies, this article explores how this formalization of relational requirements in public contracts. It examines the exchange of information and the exchange of resources, together with the exchange of risk, together with the exchange of responsibility. The importance in public projects than in private ones. After signing a contract, it is

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important that the parties use the interpretive flexibility to signal trust and commitment and also that joint learning processes are organized to resolve ambiguities and enable joint learning. Formal partnering models are helpful in structuring this interaction, but also incentive arrangements may be important in shaping interaction and signalling trust.

Keywords: Collaboration partnerships trust

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