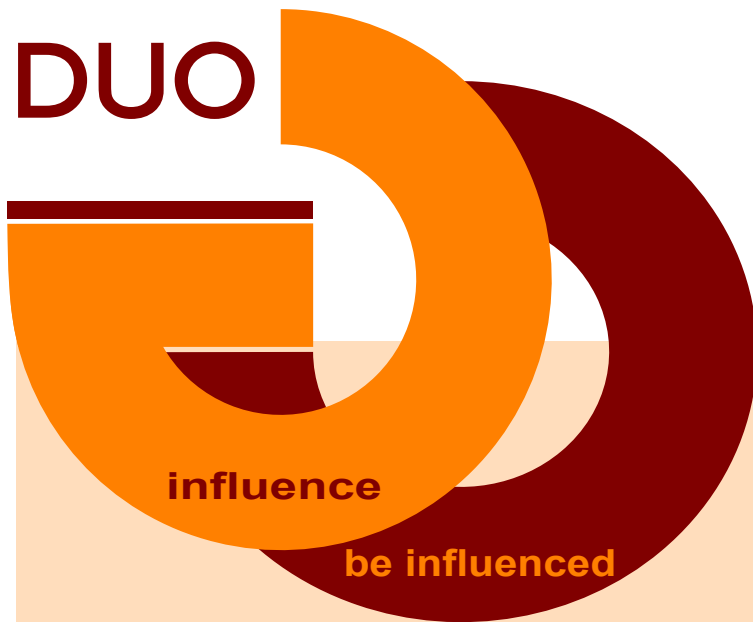


DUO

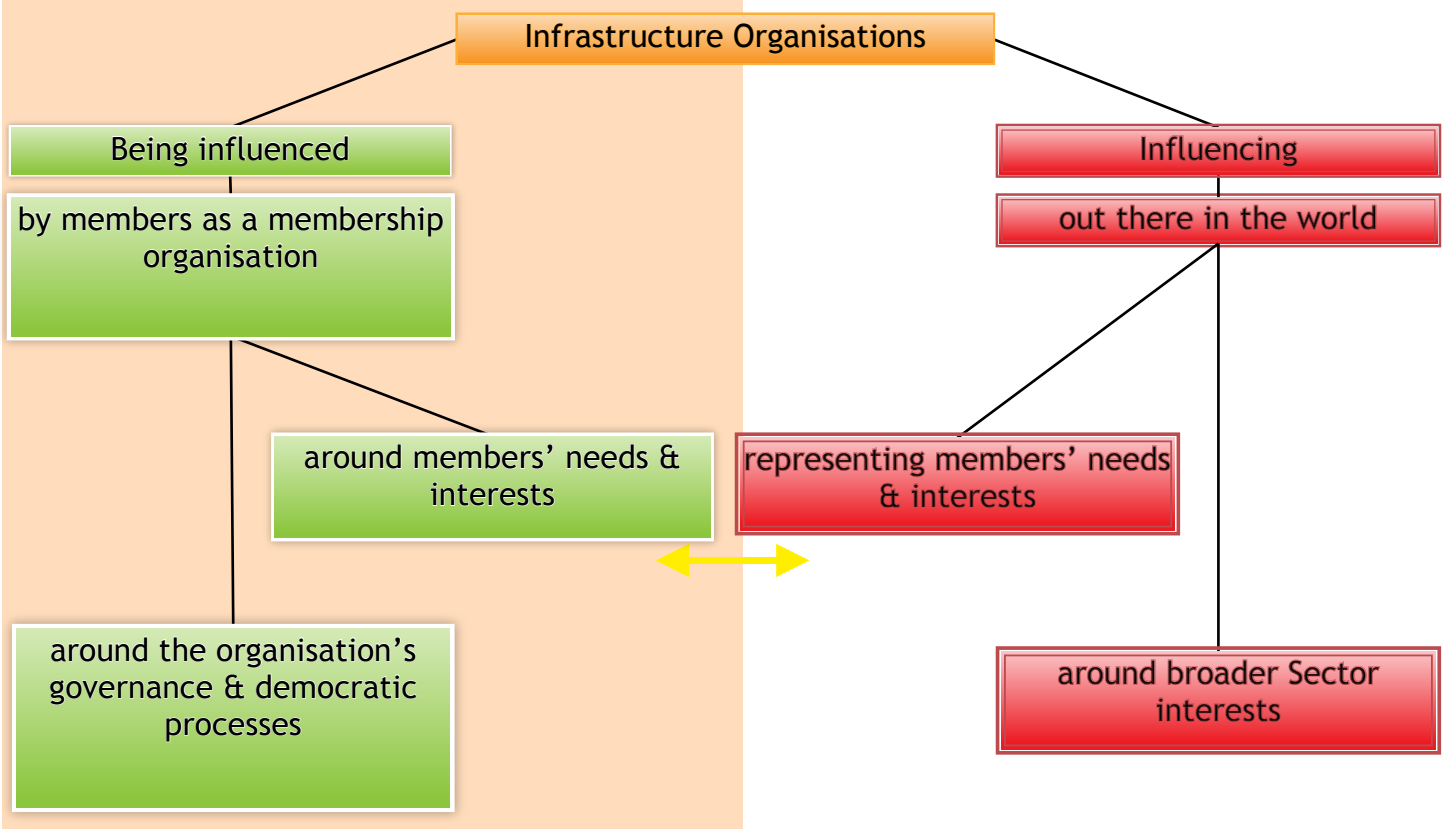


a practical framework to support voluntary sector infrastructure organisations to influence and be influenced in a way that is empowering both to themselves and to their members

By the very nature of their role, Infrastructure Organisations often find themselves facing in different directions and subject to a whole range of complex needs from their members and from those who see them as representative bodies, speaking on behalf of their members.

DUO aims to:

- stimulate discussion and suggest ways forward that will help to develop all aspects of this work.
- contribute to the existing drive to increase community influence at all levels, focusing on one of the roles that Infrastructure Organisations can play around influencing on behalf of those with the least power in our democratic processes.



Some of the questions that DUO raises

Do we need to change the culture of our own organisation?
Do we need to be more empowering in the way we work?

Are we working **with** our members - rather than **for** - or even doing things **to** them?

Are there tensions between member and local state expectations of our role?

Do we understand the many barriers to influence?

What is our role in relation to the statutory sector?
Should we be guardians of the process whereby the Sector has some influence?

Do we **really** listen to our members and respond to what we hear?

What are we prepared to concede - or not - on behalf of our members?

Do we listen to some voices more than others?



People who have been attracted to DUO work in organisations like:

Local Council for Voluntary Service

HealthWatch

Regional Voluntary Sector Forum

Rural Community Council

Voluntary Sector Forum

... and work on things like:

Commissioning & Procurement

Community area partnerships

Community engagement

Community forum support

Community involvement in health & social care

Community-led planning

Compact

Disability services

Equality & diversity practice

Member Services

Parish & Town Council support



What or who are members?

Who are we excluding?

Are we getting out to everybody?

How legitimate is our membership?

Do we make people passive recipients or active citizens?

Are we listening – are we talking? A

Do we respect that not everyone wants to be empowered and engaged?

Do we ask good enough questions of our members?

How do we understand structural power and positional power?

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