

Board Members' Guide to Partnership Planning Checklist

Board leadership is critical to developing effective collaborations between nonprofit organizations. Below is a checklist that can be utilized to ensure you and your fellow board members are asking the right questions and taking the appropriate steps to create a sustainable and equitable partnership.

MISSION ALIGNMENT

- Does my potential partner's mission align with or complement our organization's mission?

RESOURCES

- Is there an imbalance in resources available among the potential partners? If yes, what are potential challenges in this relationship?
- Is my organization able to identify its niche in this partnership?
- Can my organization demonstrate our value in this partnership?

CULTURE

- Are there differences between my potential partner's organizational culture and our own organization's culture that can become a barrier to successful partnership?
- Is my organization willing to invest time and resources to create a consensus for change that supports the partnership?

SIZE

- Are there staff members and champions identified among the partnering organizations?
- Is the amount of human resources dedicated to the partnership manageable?

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- Is the board involved in the process of identifying a potential partner?
- Does the board support the partnership?
- Has the board identified the policies that enable the executive director and staff to carry out the partnership's arrangements, as well as resources to allow them to perform optimally?

DUE DILIGENCE

- Do we have enough information on the stability and operational effectiveness of my potential partner?

IDENTIFYING INTENDED OUTCOMES

- What are the benefits or intended outcomes of the partnership?
- Has my organization identified and agreed with the benefits or intended outcomes of the partnership?

REAL AND OPPORTUNITY COSTS

- Are the expected benefits or outcomes from the partnership greater than the cost or resources needed for partnering?

EVALUATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Do we have a mechanism for monitoring the outcomes of the partnership on a regular basis?