

Notes on Partnerships for Youth-led Orgs...

Developing partnerships for your youth-led organization may provide additional ability to achieve your goals and garner further support from the community. A partnership is a mutual relationship created between two or more individuals or organizations for mutual benefits (this definition is not a legal term). To enter into a partnership may involve varying levels of commitment and risk for the individual or organization depending upon what they see as mutual benefit.

→ **When thinking about partnerships, ASK:**

- ★ What is the **interest** you/they have in this partnership?
- ★ How will I, or my organization **benefit** from this partnership and how will they?

TYPES of Partnerships:

Communication: Individuals and organizations link together to share information and possibly resources. Often the initial focus is narrow and specific, and often, long term. Risk is generally low to allow a free exchange of information.

Examples of Communication Partnerships:

Cooperation: Individuals and organizations decide at this level to try to accomplish a specific purpose or goal. Work is driven by individual people, rather than organizations (such as running an event together, or organizing information). Individuals involved may not really do anything different from their normal job, or service work. Risk is low to the organization, varying to the individual depending upon the nature of the cooperation.

Examples of Cooperation Partnerships:

Coalition: Organizations decide at this level to build linkages in a more formal way around an issue or common set of issues. A coalition creates more synergy to amass enough influence and resources to have an impact on an issue beyond what one group could do. Risk and commitment are moderate and organizations share a measure of responsibility for success and failure.

Examples of Coalition Partnerships:

Collaboration: Involves individuals and organizations and is the highest level of working together for mutual benefit. Organizational relationships are formalized and involve long-term commitment to accomplish a unique specific goal to the group of collaborators. Risk is high because collaborations require a commitment to participate in shared decision making and allocation of resources related to the activities the group mutually identifies as needs.

Examples of Collaboration Partnerships:

Keys to Successful Partnership Building

- ★ Shared vision
- ★ Skilled leadership
- ★ Process orientation
- ★ Diversity of groups and representation
- ★ Agenda driven by total membership
- ★ Accountability

Strategies that Lead to Successful Partnerships

- ★ Keep commitments and activities simple at first.
- ★ Develop common working guidelines related to how people are to work together.
- ★ Make clear communication a priority.
- ★ Spend time to get to know each other – use a variety of activities.
- ★ Include all members in all activities as much as possible.
- ★ Encourage members to articulate their needs.
- ★ Proactively deal with issues of turf and differing agendas.
- ★ Develop clear understanding of all roles for members and leaders.
- ★ Have some fun!