

## Evaluating Potential Partners

There are many items to consider when strategically choosing partners in order to ensure that the potential partner will assist in supporting and advancing your mission. This worksheet asks questions to guide your thinking process when assessing potential partners.

*Recommended data collection, analyses and interpretation:* The Evaluating Potential Partners (EPP) worksheet is a qualitative measure of the perceived value and benefits of establishing and maintaining partnerships that should be addressed as part of a discussion of key members of your organization who have responsibility for establishing and maintaining relationships with your program's partners. The items are designed to be an organizational self-assessment of perceived willingness and capacity to engage in a partnering relationship. For each item members are to consider, discuss and come to an agreement as to an individual's, group or organization partnership potential specific to: a) type; b) audience targeted; c) compatibility of values; d) benefit and challenges; e) mutual goals and aims; f) purpose [intended outcomes]; g) quality; and h) resources. Members are to take time and engage in a discussion that allow for agreements and disagreements on each item to be aired. Your team members' answers (second column) should reflect a consensus (mutual agreement) for each item that would lead to an overall decision about the viability of a potential partner(s).

Questions	Your Answers
Think about what type of organization would be most beneficial to pursue. Is it a nonprofit? Is it religious in nature? Is it large or small? Describe the organization. (Organization Type)	

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Questions <i>(cont.)</i>	Your Answers <i>(cont.)</i>
<p>What audiences are you trying to reach and who would be most helpful in reaching that audience? (Target Audience)</p>	
<p>What benefits would this organization provide? What are the drawbacks? (Benefits and Challenges)</p>	
<p>Is this organization or individual well-regarded in the community? Connecting yourself with an organization that has a bad reputation may hurt your position in the community. (Benefits and Challenges)</p>	
<p>What does each organization want to accomplish by working together? (Goals, Aims and Outcomes)</p>	
<p>Which kind of organizational relationship is necessary to accomplish those goals? (Purpose)</p>	

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Questions <i>(cont.)</i>	Your Answers <i>(cont.)</i>
Is there sufficient trust and commitment to support these kinds of relationships? (Quality)	
Are there resources available for this kind of organizational relationship, such as time, skills, client understanding, financial resources, community support, commitment, health and human resources? If not, can those resources be accessed? (Resources)	

How do the organization's values fit with yours? You will find managing a partnership much more difficult if your mission and goals do not align with each other. List your organization's values and your potential partner's values and see where they align: (compatibility of values)

Your organization's values	Your potential partner's values