

PARTNERSHIPS TEMPLATE

What support do you need from the community for your volunteer program to flourish? Who are your ideal partners?

This resource helps you create a vision describing the ways you'd like the community to aid your organization and cause. It also lets you identify ways you can give back to those who help you. Collaborating with your supervisor and other staff can make your final product stronger and more useful.

Step 1.

Who do we need to influence in order to implement our strategies? Identify a number of community groups or individuals who might be able to help you reach your volunteer goals. Keep in mind that the items on this list are less about recruiting and supporting volunteers than they are about building the organizational infrastructure to best utilize volunteers. Your list can include entities such as:

- County commissioners
- Local media
- Chamber of commerce
- Local businesses
- Schools

Step 2.

What do we want these people to do for us? What can we give back to them in return? After identifying the groups, the next task is to determine—in an ideal world—what you'd like the people you've identified to do for you. You can also describe what you can give in return.

Take the list you've generated above and use the name of each group as a heading. Below each item, write two or more things you'd like the people to do. Since this is a vision exercise, your ideas don't always need to be realistic; the main point is to focus on what you want.

Here are a couple of examples:

Schools

- "Wish list": Adopt our sixth-grade service-learning curriculum
- "Wish list": Provide transportation (bus) for classes to spend a day at our sites
- "Give back": Align curriculum to state standards
- "Give back": Volunteers provide teacher training

Local media

- "Wish list": Cover our volunteer day events
- "Wish list": Run public service announcements

- “Wish list”: Create a weekly volunteer recognition feature (that showcases our volunteers frequently!)
- “Give back”: Provide timely and engaging press releases

Next Steps

Share your document with your supervisor and others from your organization. More than likely you won't achieve all the items on your vision “wish list.” However, the document you create can become a powerful tool as you move forward and build relationships and partnerships. During formal and informal exchanges with the entities you listed, the document can help you keep focused on what you want. It will also help you create targeted messages when communicating with existing and potential partners and allies.

Adapted from McCurley, S., & Lynch, R. (2011). *Volunteer management: Mobilizing all the resources of the community* (3rd ed., Chapter 2, pp. 27–40.). Plattsburgh, NY: InterPub Group.