

# Forming Partnership Agreements

## A Protocol for Building Shared Understanding Among Partners

### Introduction

The first step in the formation of a partnership agreement is to develop a shared understanding among partners regarding the intended results, benefits, and expectations of partnering together. This protocol can be used by partners independently or with a facilitator to build trust and mutual appreciation.

### Protocol Outline

1. Introductions
  - a. Partners introduce themselves, their roles and their organizations
2. Review objectives for partnership
  - a. Develop a shared understanding of the partnership’s goals and objectives
  - b. Gain a deeper understanding of partners’ program, organizational, and systems context for implementation
  - c. Identify roles and contributions for each partner
3. Develop a shared understanding of goals and objectives
  - a. What will we work on together?
  - b. What do we hope to achieve because of this work?
  - c. What do we believe will change for people and communities because of this partnership? (Explore specific racial/ethnic community outcomes)
  - d. Why do we intend to do this work together?
4. Discuss partners’ program, organizational and systems context for implementation



Each partner can share information about their context as relevant to the partnership using the implementation formula as a guide.

- a. Improved Family, Community and Opportunity Outcomes:

- i. What are the mission and goals of the partner’s organization?
    - ii. What outcomes does the partner target?
    - iii. With what range of racial/ethnic communities does the organization work?
  - b. What Works:
    - i. What programs or strategies does the partner implement?
    - ii. How do these programs or strategies fit with local context? (Explore cultural alignment across different racial/ethnic communities)
    - iii. To what extent are the programs or strategies well-defined?
    - iv. How does the partner monitor or assess implementation?
  - c. How It Works:
    - i. To what extent has infrastructure been developed to support delivery of programs or strategies? For staff competency? For organizational and systems capacity?
    - ii. What specific steps have been taken to address issues of diversity, inclusion, and equity?
  - d. Where and With Whom It Works:
    - i. How have stakeholders been engaged in implementation to date?
    - ii. What kind of team conducts and/or supports this work?
    - iii. How are disaggregated data being used to understand and improve implementation?
    - iv. How do communication efforts support implementation to date?
- 5. Identify roles and contributions for partners
  - a. What can we contribute to the partnership?
  - b. What do we hope to receive from the partnership?
  - c. What will we create together? (Explore the commitment to racially equitable work)
  - d. How frequently will this partnership be reviewed?
- 6. Next Steps
  - a. Determine who will draft the partnership agreement
  - b. Determine a timeline for revising and vetting the agreement