



Developing local partnerships

Lions and Leos know that we can achieve more when we work together. That's why partnering with like-minded organizations in your community is a great way to increase the visibility, reach, and quality of your service projects. This guide will help you prepare your club for a partnership, as well as identify and approach potential partners.

Fast facts

What is a partnership?

- » A group of organizations that share a common interest and agree to work together toward a common goal

Why should we partner with another organization?

- » Complement your club's strengths and fill in capacity gaps
- » Contribute additional assets and skills that improve your service projects
- » Act as a teammate in advocating for joint goals

Who could we partner with?

- » Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
- » Private businesses/corporations
- » Government agencies

Signs of a good partner

- ▶ Shared goals and values
- ▶ Expertise complementary to the partnership
- ▶ Strong communication skills; responsive
- ▶ Enthusiastic about volunteerism/service
- ▶ Well organized and dependable

Signs for caution

- ▶ Misaligned goals and values
- ▶ Unclear contributions to the partnership
- ▶ Difficulty communicating; unresponsive
- ▶ Lack of enthusiasm and motivation
- ▶ Disorganized and inconsistent

ACTIVITY 1

What do we want from a partner?

The best way to get started is by determining what you want from a partner. The *Lions and Leos Club & Community Needs Assessment (CCNA)* can be a helpful tool in determining your community's needs and opportunities for service, as well as your club's strengths and areas for improvement. Use this resource as a first step, if needed.

Answer important questions about your club using the worksheet below.

1 Club strengths and areas for improvement

List the strengths your club could contribute to a potential partner.

List your club's areas for improvement.

2 Partner contributions

What skills, assets and/or resources does our club need in order to strengthen our projects?

3 Potential partners

Are there any service providers we spoke to in Activity 3 of the CCNA who could contribute these skills, assets and resources?

What connections do our club members have to individuals or organizations who could contribute these skills, assets and resources?

Potential partner: _____ Contact person: _____

Contact information: _____



ACTIVITY 2

Is our club ready to approach a potential partner?

Choose one of the potential partners you identified in Activity 1 on the previous page.

Potential partner: _____

Goal of potential partnership: _____

Use the checklist below to determine if your club is ready to approach this potential partner.

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	We know what our strengths and areas for improvement are as a club.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	We know what types of service projects we would like to carry out.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	We know what contributions we need from a potential partner to make our service projects better.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	We know what contributions we can make to a potential partnership.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	We are ready to discuss common goals and objectives with a potential partner.

Next steps

If your club answered “yes” to most of the statements above:

Congratulations! You are ready to approach your potential partner. Move on to Activity 3.

If your club answered “no” to most of the statements above:

Was the checklist difficult to answer? If so, consider taking some time to reevaluate. The following resources may be a good next step toward preparing your club for a partnership:



The Club Quality Initiative

A strategic planning tool to help clubs identify opportunities for improvement



The Lions Learning Center

An online training center covering topics ranging from conflict resolution to goal setting to public speaking



ACTIVITY 3

How do we approach a potential partner?

Once you've considered your club's needs and identified a partnership opportunity that could improve your community impact, you'll want to make contact and begin a conversation.

Use the worksheet below to plan a conversation with your potential partner.

Conversation strategy	Notes
<p>Introduce yourself Explain the reason you initiated the meeting or call.</p>	
<p>Provide some context Share key details about Lions Clubs International and about your club:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Who we are » Your club's background and service work in the community » Your club's goals for the future 	
<p>Share goals and opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Share specific projects that you'd like to work on » Discuss the impact you can achieve together and why you are excited about working with them as a potential partner » Offer ideas about how your potential partner will benefit and/or be recognized as a result of the partnership 	
<p>Listen and respond Consider their ideas and be prepared to provide more information about your club, resources, and service project ideas.</p>	
<p>Decide on next steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Who else should you speak with? » How do you move forward? 	



QUICK TIPS

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Partnerships offer a great way to increase your impact! When you work together effectively and communicate clearly, you will be able to achieve common goals that benefit your club, your partner and your community. A good partnership is a win-win relationship.

