

## PAGE 01 - READINESS ASSESSMENT

# Collaborative Grant Application Readiness Checklist

Before You Submit a Joint Grant Proposal, Ask These Questions

Check each item your partnership has clearly addressed. Use your total at the bottom to determine your next step.

## Partnership Alignment

- Missions and values align across both organizations
- Each partner brings a distinct, complementary strength
- Leaders on both sides have given clear, explicit buy-in
- We have worked together before or piloted a shared activity
- We agree on the population and problem we are addressing

## Roles & Responsibilities

- A lead applicant has been identified and agreed upon
- Programmatic roles are documented in writing
- We have named staff leads at each organization
- Sub-grantee or fiscal sponsor roles are clarified
- Reporting responsibilities are defined for each partner

## Financial Planning

- A draft budget has been reviewed by both finance teams
- Indirect cost rates and allocations are agreed upon
- Cash flow and reimbursement timing have been discussed
- Audit, compliance, and 990 expectations are aligned

## Communication & Decision-Making

- A regular meeting cadence is set for the project
- We have agreed on how decisions will be made and escalated
- A conflict-resolution path has been discussed
- Public communications and credit-sharing are defined

### YOUR READINESS SCORE

Count the boxes you can confidently check.

**18-20 Checks**  
 Ready to pursue a collaborative application

**12-17 Checks**  
 Additional planning recommended

**0-11 Checks**  
 Hold a partnership planning session first

# What Is an MOU?

*Understanding Memorandums of Understanding of Nonprofit Partnerships*

## DEFINITION

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is a written agreement between two or more organizations that documents shared goals, defined roles, and the way the partners will work together. While not always legally binding, an MOU sets the foundation for trust, accountability, and shared success.



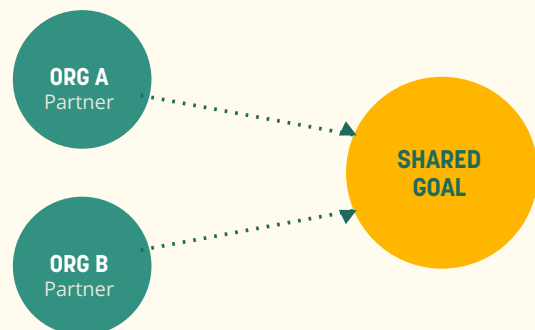
## BENEFITS OF AN MOU

- Clarifies each partner's responsibilities
- Reduces misunderstandings and scope creep
- Documents decision-making authority
- Provides a reference during staff transitions
- Strengthens grant applications and reporting

## WHY FUNDERS LIKE TO SEE MOUS

Funders increasingly look for MOUs because they signal that partners have already aligned on roles, finances, and outcomes — reducing risk and accelerating impact.

## HOW PARTNERS ALIGN



*Two partners. One shared goal. A documented path forward.*



**Strong partnerships begin with clear expectations.**

*— A guiding principle of effective collaboration*

PAGE 03 · PRINTABLE TEMPLATE

# Sample Nonprofit Partnership MOU Template

Print this page and complete it together — line by line — with your partner.

**PROJECT TITLE:****ORGANIZATION A (LEAD APPLICANT)****ORGANIZATION B (PARTNER)****PURPOSE OF THE PARTNERSHIP****PARTNERSHIP GOALS (2-4 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES)****ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF EACH ORGANIZATION****COMMUNICATION PLAN (MEETINGS, POINT OF CONTACT, CADENCE)****FUNDING & RESOURCE ALLOCATION****TERM OF AGREEMENT – START DATE****TERM OF AGREEMENT – END DATE****AUTHORIZED SIGNATURES**\_\_\_\_\_  
Organization A · Name, Title, Date\_\_\_\_\_  
Organization B · Name, Title, Date

# Partnership Planning Worksheet

**1** What problem are we solving together?

**2** Why are we pursuing this grant collaboratively?

**3** What unique strengths does each organization contribute?

**4** Who will serve as the lead applicant?

**5** How will decisions be made?

**6** How will success be measured?

## LOOKING FOR NONPROFIT PARTNERS?

FindPartnership.org helps organizations connect, collaborate, and create greater community impact through meaningful partnerships.

Visit [FindPartnership.org](https://FindPartnership.org)



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