

Community Partnerships

A partnership is a relationship between individuals or groups where all parties are striving to achieve the same goals. There is usually a mutual benefit for the partners and partnerships often lead to long term relationships between people or organizations.

How to do partnerships form?

- By networking – know what organizations are in your community and what they are doing; look for similar goals, missions or activities.
- Invite key people from these organizations to library events and relevant meetings.
- Approach organizations with a clear purpose in mind and to meet a specific community need (for example, if your community needs financial literacy programs approach the local bank manager or financial advisor).
- Attend town or organization meetings and let the community know that the library is looking for partners to present programming or to assist with other services.
- Talk about what you can do for them and what they can do for you – emphasize the mutual benefit.
- Map out the roles of the library and the partner so that everyone knows what they are responsible for.

Partnerships take time and patience to grow and often start with one small program – make the first move. In this age of shrinking budgets, partnerships are an important way to share resources and to effectively serve your community.