

# CAREER PATHWAYS TOOLKIT:

An Enhanced Guide and Workbook  
for System Development

## **ELEMENT ONE:**

BUILD CROSS-AGENCY PARTNERSHIPS  
AND CLARIFY ROLES



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**MSG**  
MANHATTAN STRATEGY GROUP

# CAREER PATHWAYS TOOLKIT:

An Enhanced Guide and Workbook  
for System Development

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## **ELEMENT ONE: Build Cross-Agency Partnerships and Clarify Roles**

**A cross-agency leadership team clarifies the roles and responsibilities of each partner and gains high level support from political leaders for an integrated career pathways system.**

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### **Key Element Components:**

- Engage cross-agency partners and employers.
- Establish a shared vision, mission, and set of goals.
- Define the roles and responsibilities of all partners.
- Develop a work plan and/or Memorandum of Understanding for the partnership.

## Introduction to Element One

The establishment of a comprehensive career pathways system requires strong leadership at the State and local levels, as well as meaningful employer engagement. The leadership team, as defined in this Toolkit, refers to a cross-agency team at the State level established to design, implement, and continuously improve upon the State's career pathways system. The leadership team may be the State's Workforce Development Board, a subcommittee of the State Board, or an entity that exists for administering State career pathways systems. Regardless of its origin, the policies and strategies of the State leadership team regarding career pathways must be consistent with the State Plan required in WIOA, signed on July 22, 2014.

WIOA requires the governor to establish a State Workforce Development Board to assist the governor in carrying out critical functions of the State's workforce development system. Included in this mandate is the requirement to establish strategies to support the use of career

### CAREER PATHWAYS FYI: WIOA FUNCTIONS OF STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

#### State Board shall assist the governor in—

- (1) developing, implementing, and modifying the State Plan;
- (2) reviewing statewide policies or programs and aligning workforce development programs that support a comprehensive and streamlined workforce development system;
- (3) developing continuous improvement strategies for:
  - (A) identifying and removing barriers to better coordinate, align, and avoid duplication of services;
  - (B) supporting the use of career pathways;
  - (C) conducting effective outreach and providing access for individuals and employers;
  - (D) establishing industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations;
  - (E) encouraging the identification of regions for workforce planning;
  - (F) providing assistance to Local Boards to support the delivery of services; and
  - (G) providing staff training and awareness across programs;
- (4) establishing a comprehensive system of State performance accountability measures;
- (5) identifying and disseminating information on best practices;
- (6) developing and reviewing statewide policies affecting the coordinated provisions of services through the State's One-Stop system;
- (7) developing strategies for technological improvements to facilitate access to and improve the quality of services provided through the One-Stop delivery system;
- (8) aligning technology and data systems across One-Stop partner programs;
- (9) developing allocation formulas for the distribution of funds for adults and youth;
- (10) preparing annual reports;
- (11) developing statewide workforce and labor market information systems; and
- (12) developing other policies to enhance the performance of the workforce development system.

pathways for the purpose of providing individuals, including low-skilled adults, youth, and individuals with barriers to employment (including individuals with disabilities) with workforce development activities, education, and supportive services to enter or retain employment.

The State Workforce Development Board has a strong role in convening a broad base of stakeholders to provide input on the State's workforce development system. WIOA requires the governor, in partnership with the State Workforce Development Board, to submit a four-year Unified Plan. The State's Unified Plan requires cross-agency partnerships of four core programs: Title IB youth, adult, and dislocated worker activities; Title II adult education and literacy activities; sections 1-13 of the Wagner Peyser Act relating to employment services; and Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

WIOA encourages the participation of additional employment and training programs to develop a Combined Plan that includes the core programs and one or more programs in order to develop a more comprehensive education and workforce system. The Combined Plan may include programs such as secondary education, postsecondary education, veterans, recently laid-off workers, youth and adults lacking workplace skills, individuals with disabilities, justice-involved individuals, English language learners, new Americans, and incumbent workers.

Whether the State submits a Unified or Combined Plan, the cross-agency partnership works to align systems and provides education and training options that focus on the skill demands of regional and local economies. Collaboratively, the partners establish a vision, mission, goals, and strategies that promote the implementation of career pathways systems and programs that ultimately lead to an individual obtaining employment at a family-sustaining wage. Successful partnerships make it possible to leverage resources in order to expand upon the services available to all learners.

At the Federal level, agencies are working together to break down silos, create solutions, share successes, and help each other improve outcomes for individuals they serve. Since 2011, USDOL/ETA; Health and Human Services/Administration for Children and Families (HHS/ACF); and Department of Education/Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (ED/OCTAE) have jointly promoted the widespread adoption of career pathways. Federal agencies have worked together on ways to align resources and build capacity among a wide range of stakeholders to ensure that adults and youth have opportunities to gain industry-recognized credentials and skills that allow them to secure employment and advance along a career ladder.

The agencies issued a joint letter in April 2012 defining career pathways as a "series of connected education and training strategies and supportive services that enable individuals to secure industry-relevant certification and obtain employment within an occupational area and to advance to higher levels of future education and employment."

The same interagency team has hosted three National Dialogues on Career Pathways. In April 2014, they also issued a joint [Request for Information](#) for recommendations about career pathways from stakeholders in the public and private sectors. A diverse group of 141 respondents completed the questionnaire and provided information about existing career pathways systems. The [national summary report](#) covers the broad cross-section of stakeholders' responses and describes the roles and responsibilities of career pathways partners. The respondents also describe how they are handling funding, outcome measures, employer engagement, and scaling programs and provide a list of best practices. With the passage of WIOA, the Departments are seizing the opportunity to drive joint efforts to build the necessary capacity to implement WIOA successfully. In addition, OCTAE seeks to take

**CAREER PATHWAYS FYI: Joint letter from 12 Federal Agencies Promotes the Use of Career Pathways**

In April 2016, 12 Federal Agencies signed a historic, joint letter pledging to promote career pathways across the government. This letter builds on existing work that has fostered increased and better coordination of programs and services. The letter outlines how the agencies will provide updated information and resources to help States, regions, local entities and tribal communities integrate service delivery across Federal and State funding streams. While state and local partners build career pathway systems, at the Federal level, we recognize that we can support our partners' efforts through our policy, performance, and funding. Additionally, the Departments continue to incorporate career pathways approaches into a wide range of program investments, evaluation and research activities, and technical assistance efforts. It demonstrates the commitment of these agencies to promote the use of career pathways as an efficient approach to training and education. [http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEN/ten\\_36\\_11\\_att.pdf](http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEN/ten_36_11_att.pdf)

advantage of the possibility of a newly reauthorized Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act (Perkins Act) and to maximize its previous investments in career pathways.

In April 2016, a joint letter was signed by 12 Federal agencies, which greatly expands and strengthens the previous commitments to Career Pathways and provides updated information and resources to help States, regions, local entities, and tribal communities integrate service delivery across Federal and State funding streams. This letter also ensures that interested partners and agencies—whether focused on education, workforce development, or human and social services—are aware of this joint commitment for improved collaboration and coordination across programs and funding sources.

At the State level, partnerships have also evolved across the country. State-level partners can build and maintain career pathways systems that support the development of career pathways programs, adopt a shared vision and strategy, and commit their agencies or organizations to carrying out specific roles and responsibilities. In addition, partnerships can help states develop a plan and work toward braided funding.

## Component 1.1: Engage Cross-Agency Partners and Employers

Comprehensive career pathways systems require participation at many different levels. The State leadership team represents a diverse group of State and local public agencies, private and nonprofit organizations, and employers representing different sectors in the economy to guide the process of developing the career pathways system. They model interagency collaboration, integrate sector strategy principles, craft and implement common goals, and develop a shared vision of how career pathways can benefit the local community and its citizens. The leadership team may embrace the opportunity provided by WIOA to convene a broad stakeholder group, adopt a shared vision, and embed the concepts into their own strategies and policies to support a comprehensive career pathways system. The leadership team may engage additional partner representatives to form an operations team responsible for designing, implementing, and operating the career pathways education and training programs. Other partners that become stakeholders support the career pathways work. As career pathways systems continually develop and change, partners may move back and forth among the roles as needed. A Partner Contact Information spreadsheet ([Worksheet 1.1a](#)) is provided to assist in identifying partners and gathering contact information. It is important to keep this list up-to-date as additional members join and/or agency partner members change. In addition, review the Governance Structure worksheet ([Worksheet 1.1b](#)), which may be helpful in identifying the appropriate representative and/or agency that has the authority to negotiate on behalf of the program.

Early on in the development of a career pathways system, the team will want to decide which person and/or agency will take the lead in coordinating the leadership group activities and assigned tasks involved in carrying out the initiative.

### Leadership Matters

For career pathways systems to be successful, senior State and local leaders, including State and local elected officials, support the leadership team by actively endorsing and championing the initiative through their actions, funding, and legislation. It is very helpful for the governor and State Workforce Development Board to provide leadership to promote and/or steer the partnerships that are necessary to build and sustain a State-level career pathways system. The passage of WIOA strengthens this requirement and puts the responsibility on convening a broad base of stakeholders with the governor and the State Workforce Development Board.

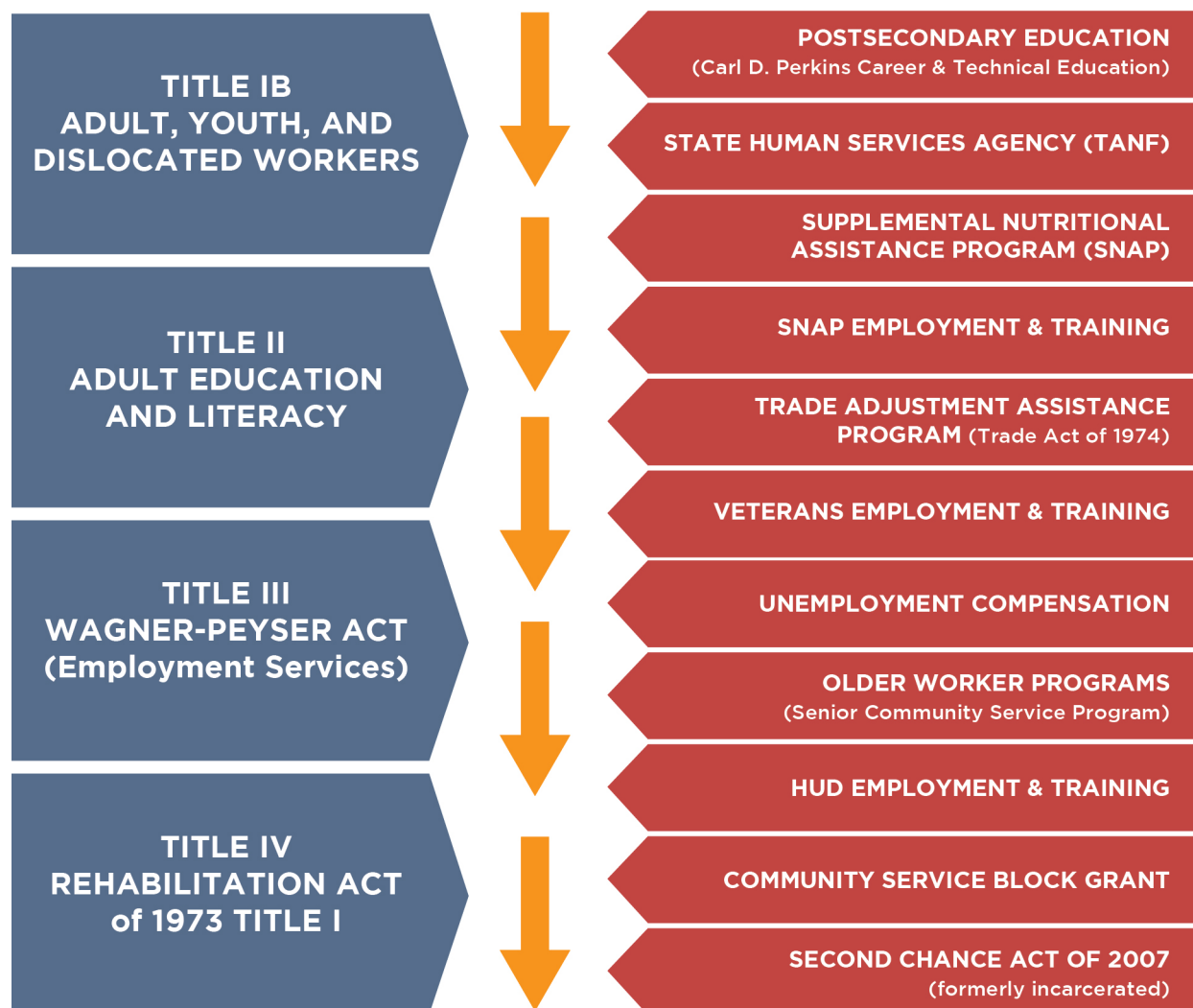
### WIOA Core Partners/Unified Plan Development

WIOA core partners are explicitly delineated in the Act and are representatives of Federal programs operating at the State and/or local levels. The State-level representatives on the cross-agency leadership team should include at a minimum the WIOA core partners who must be involved in creating the Unified State Plan related to the career pathways system. The Unified Plan shall lay out a four-year strategy for the core programs. The State Plan may include additional partners that can assist in identifying the resources that can contribute to blended funding of a career pathways system, and the State may include one or more of these partners and submit a Combined Plan in lieu of a Unified Plan.



**WIOA CORE PARTNERS****WIOA ADDITIONAL  
PARTNERS/COMBINED PLAN**

(may include one or more)

**CAREER PATHWAYS****Team Development and Sustainability**

Leadership team members who are knowledgeable of how effective career pathways systems work will be more engaged in the process. The leadership team may consider training team members on the benefits to participants, organizations, and employers in maximizing the overall impact on the local or regional economy. Partnerships provide real support for the effort that go beyond token letters of support. To create a win-win partnership, the team will do several things:

**Understand Each Other's Programs**

- Understand each other's specific goals, resources, and program performance measures and requirements.

- Conduct an asset/resource mapping session. Though many of the participating organizations and agencies are trying to achieve similar objectives—such as strengthening the local economy—they measure their progress in different ways. By understanding the core elements of each partner’s work, the leadership team can develop a systemic framework that can complement everyone’s goals. An Asset Map Worksheet ([Worksheet 1.1c](#)) is included in this module to help you identify the services/assets each partner provides and the populations it serves.

### **Understand Career Pathways**

- Make sure all partners understand the big picture of developing a career pathways system. Partners adopt a shared definition of career pathways and key related concepts to embed them into their own strategic plans/goals/strategies and into new and existing policies to support career pathways.

### **Focus on Mission**

- Reflect the mission in all career pathways materials and constantly remind partners that the success of the career pathways system depends on the participant outcomes and how well they align with employer demands.

### **Communicate Expectations**

- Clearly communicate expectations of each of the participating partners while also acknowledging the value of their contribution to the overall effort. Partners need to realize the importance and impact of their contributions.

### **Use Performance Data**

- Use performance data to demonstrate progress and impact. This will also support partner buy-in and reinforce continued engagement over time. When the team regularly reviews data and compares itself to benchmarks, partners can make course corrections and are clear that their contributions are adding value.

A periodic review of State and local team membership can ensure that the team includes representatives that support key functions and services within the system. In addition, new partnerships expand as the group seeks to engage new target populations.

To help determine the value, cost, and risk of adding new members to an existing partnership or in creating a new partnership, a Pre-partnership Checklist ([Worksheet 1.1d](#)) is included in this module. The responses to the Pre-partnership Checklist can help senior managers decide whether to include new partners and/or to approve resource commitments required for the new partnership.

A separate Existing Partnerships Checklist ([Worksheet 1.1e](#)) is available to assess existing partnerships on a periodic basis. The senior leadership team may want to review this second instrument to assess the effectiveness of their partnerships, uncover problem areas, help develop strategies for course correction, and determine the need to sustain each partnership.

The leadership team will not be able to implement the career pathways system without the help of the staff members within the agencies and organizations represented on the leadership and operations teams. Therefore, once the leadership team convenes, it is important to inform all State and local staff members about the career pathways system development and implementation plan. Training multiple agencies’ staff together on the new career pathways system will model collaboration and ensure that all staff members learn the same information.

## 1.1a PARTNER CONTACT INFORMATION

Directions: Identify partners by agency, person, and contact information

### A. WIOA Core Partners/Unified Plan Development

Partner	Agency	Point of Contact	Email	Phone Number
WIOA Title I Adult, Youth, & Dislocated Workers				
WIOA Title II Adult Education & Literacy				
WIOA Title III Amendments to Wagner-Peyser				
WIOA Title IV Amendments to Rehabilitation Act				

### B. WIOA Additional Partners/Combined Plan Development

Partner	Agency	Point of Contact	Email	Phone Number
Older Americans Act				
Trade Adjustment Act				
Veterans Employment & Training Services				
Unemployment Compensation				
TANF				
SNAP				

Partner	Agency	Point of Contact	Email	Phone Number
Perkins Act – Postsecondary				
Perkins Act – Secondary				
Second Chance Act of 2007 – Corrections				
Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Employment & Training				
HUD Employment & Training				

### C. Industry Sector Partners

Partner	Agency	Point of Contact	Email	Phone Number

**D. Other Partners**

Partner	Agency	Point of Contact	Email	Phone Number

## 1.1b GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

This worksheet is an example of some of the programs that may be considered for inclusion for partnership in a State leadership team. The intent of this worksheet is to identify the governance and oversight structures of Federal programs. Extra rows are provided to add or delete programs as needed, including applicable State or local programs. This may be helpful in determining which agency or oversight board to engage in negotiating formal agreements, such as an MOU. Remember it is best to involve these oversight bodies up front to ensure a collaborative process.

Use the chart below to indicate if the Federal program is represented on any of the entities listed in the columns (State Boards, Regional Boards, Local Boards, school districts, regional collaboratives, and local collaboratives). Indicate representation with a check mark or write the name of the representative, if known.

<b>Federal Programs</b>	<b>State Boards</b>	<b>Regional Boards</b>	<b>Local Boards</b>	<b>School Districts</b>	<b>Regional Collaborative</b>	<b>Local Collaborative</b>
<b>WIOA Title I Adult, Youth &amp; Dislocated Workers</b>						
<b>WIOA Title II Adult Education &amp; Literacy</b>						
<b>WIOA Title III Amendments to Wagner-Peyser</b>						
<b>WIOA Title IV Amendments to Rehabilitation Act</b>						
<b>Older Americans Act</b>						
<b>Trade Adjustment Act</b>						
<b>Veterans Employment &amp; Training Services</b>						
<b>Unemployment Compensation</b>						
<b>TANF</b>						

Federal Programs	State Boards	Regional Boards	Local Boards	School Districts	Regional Collaborative	Local Collaborative
<b>SNAP</b>						
<b>Perkins Act – Postsecondary</b>						
<b>Perkins Act – Secondary</b>						
<b>Second Chance Act of 2007 – Corrections</b>						
<b>CSBG Employment &amp; Training</b>						
<b>HUD Employment &amp; Training</b>						

Source: Minnesota Department of Employment & Economic Development

### 1.1c ASSET MAP WORKSHEET

A prerequisite for defining the roles and responsibilities of each of the partners within the career pathways system is an understanding and appreciation of the assets and limitations each partner is required to operate within, including the populations it serves and the allowable services the partner may provide.

Use the chart below to document the agency, services provided, and populations served by each WIOA core partner. Type or write in the appropriate information. The aim of this chart is to illuminate alignments and distinctions across funding streams.

#### A. WIOA Core Partners

Partner	Agency	Assets/Services Provided	Populations
<b>WIOA Title I Adult, Youth, &amp; Dislocated Worker</b>			
<b>WIOA Title II Adult Education &amp; Literacy</b>			
<b>WIOA Title III Amendments to Wagner-Peyser</b>			
<b>WIOA Title IV Amendments to Rehabilitation Act</b>			



**B. WIOA Additional Partners**

Partner	Agency	Assets/Services Provided	Populations
Older Americans Act			
Trade Adjustment Act			
Veterans Employment & Training Services			
Unemployment Compensation			
TANF			
SNAP			
Perkins Act - Postsecondary			
Perkins Act - Secondary			
Second Chance Act of 2007 - Corrections			

Partner	Agency	Assets/Services Provided	Populations
CSBG Employment & Training			
HUD Employment & Training			

### C. Industry Sector Partners

Partner	Agency	Assets/Services Provided	Populations

**D. Other Partners**

Partner	Agency	Assets/Services Provided	Populations

### 1.1d PRE-PARTNERSHIP CHECKLIST

The intent of the Pre-partnership Checklist is to guide the thinking of the State and Local Workforce Development Boards or the State and local leadership teams for career pathways to assess the value, costs, and risks of creating a partnership or adding new members to the existing partnerships. The responses to the Pre-partnership Checklist questions can also help senior managers decide whether to approve resource commitments needed for the proposed new partnership. Consider some type of evidence to back up the given responses. There might not be answers to every question at this very early phase, but these are important factors to consider. Please provide as much detail as possible in the responses.

A separate Existing Partnerships Checklist ([Worksheet 1.1e](#)) is available to assess existing partnerships on a periodic basis. The State or local leadership team may want to review this second instrument, as it will provide guidance on the issues project leads may consider and work toward clarifying with their partners. This Pre-partnership Checklist is also helpful in forming partnerships at the regional level.

Complete the Checklist by providing responses in the boxes below from the perspective of the partnership being explored. The responses, as written, are not intended to be shared with the other partners. After partners have completed this checklist, convene to discuss and identify next steps.

Your name:

Partnership name:

1. Proposed partners:

2. Purpose of partnership:

3. What is the expected duration of the partnership?

4. Who are the decision makers for membership into the partnership?

5. Describe the governance of the partnership.

## Alignment

6. What assets does each partner bring to build and sustain a statewide career pathways system? (refer to [Worksheet 1.1c: Asset Map Worksheet](#))

Partner List	Partner Name	Asset That Partner Brings
Partner 1		
Partner 2		
Partner 3		
Partner 4		
Partner 5		
Partner 6		
Partner 7		
Partner 8		

7. Why does(do) the proposed partner(s) wish to engage with the partnership?

Partner List	Partner Name	Benefit to Partner
Partner 1		
Partner 2		
Partner 3		
Partner 4		
Partner 5		
Partner 6		
Partner 7		
Partner 8		

8. Do the proposed partners have a shared vision? Please state that vision.

9. Does the proposed partnership have the potential to enhance the State's career pathways system?

☐ yes    ☐ no    ☐ somewhat    ☐ don't know

Please explain how.

10. Why collaborate now?

11. Is there a clear commitment to the partnership by senior levels of management from all agencies/organizations involved in creating the partnership? Please identify the level of commitment for each partner.

**Partner 1 Name:**

Clear commitment?

☐ yes      ☐ no      ☐ somewhat      ☐ don't know

What is the evidence of that commitment?

**Partner 2 Name:**

Clear commitment?

☐ yes      ☐ no      ☐ somewhat      ☐ don't know

What is the evidence of that commitment?

**Partner 3 Name:**

Clear commitment?

☐ yes      ☐ no      ☐ somewhat      ☐ don't know

What is the evidence of that commitment?

**Partner 4 Name:**

Clear commitment?

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ somewhat ☐ don't know

What is the evidence of that commitment?

**Partner 5 Name:**

Clear commitment?

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ somewhat ☐ don't know

What is the evidence of that commitment?

**Partner 6 Name:**

Clear commitment?

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ somewhat ☐ don't know

What is the evidence of that commitment?



**Partner 7 Name:**

Clear commitment?

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ somewhat ☐ don't know

What is the evidence of that commitment?

**Partner 8 Name:**

Clear commitment?

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ somewhat ☐ don't know

What is the evidence of that commitment?

12. Have you identified the key stakeholders (workforce development agencies, secondary and postsecondary education, adult basic education, economic development, and employers) and communication strategies?

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ somewhat ☐ don't know

13. How will the costs be distributed among the partners?

14. What are the potential risks to each agency involved in the partnership?

Agency List	Agency Name	Risk to Agency
Agency 1		
Agency 2		
Agency 3		
Agency 4		
Agency 5		
Agency 6		
Agency 7		
Agency 8		

15. Are partners willing and able to take risks, alter policies, and/or add flexibilities, if necessary?

**Partner 1 Name:**

Willing to take risks?

☐ yes    ☐ no    ☐ somewhat    ☐ don't know

**Partner 2 Name:**

Willing to take risks?

☐ yes    ☐ no    ☐ somewhat    ☐ don't know

**Partner 3 Name:**

Willing to take risks?

☐ yes    ☐ no    ☐ somewhat    ☐ don't know

**Partner 4 Name:**

Willing to take risks?

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ somewhat ☐ don't know**Partner 5 Name:**

Willing to take risks?

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ somewhat ☐ don't know**Partner 6 Name:**

Willing to take risks?

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ somewhat ☐ don't know**Partner 7 Name:**

Willing to take risks?

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ somewhat ☐ don't know**Partner 8 Name:**

Willing to take risks?

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ somewhat ☐ don't know

16. Is there a mechanism to balance priorities and resolve disagreements?

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ somewhat ☐ don't know

17. Is there a clear and reasonable exit strategy for a partner, and have you identified how it would impact the partnership?

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ somewhat ☐ don't know

**Resource requirements (financial and other, e.g. staff, space)**

18. What partner resources are required to **launch** the partnership?

19. What partner resources are required to **sustain** the partnership?

20. What is (are) the partner(s) willing to contribute?

Partner List	Partner Name	Partner Contribution
Partner 1		
Partner 2		
Partner 3		
Partner 4		
Partner 5		
Partner 6		
Partner 7		
Partner 8		

21. Do you have a plan to acquire other funding to launch and sustain the partnership?

☐ yes      ☐ no      ☐ somewhat      ☐ don't know

Please explain:

Source: These materials are based off of [Cornell University's Library Partnership Assessment Tools](https://ecommons.cornell.edu/bitstream/handle/1813/40156/Pre-PartnershipCheck2.pdf?sequence=7&isAllowed=y), available here: <https://ecommons.cornell.edu/bitstream/handle/1813/40156/Pre-PartnershipCheck2.pdf?sequence=7&isAllowed=y>

### 1.1e EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS CHECKLIST

Use this tool periodically to check on the progress of the career pathways leadership team partnership and to address problems, should they develop (e.g., stagnation, uneven participation, undue conflict). It is not an assessment of the overall career pathways system; rather, it is meant to help determine whether a partnership is functioning as well as it could. It is extremely important that all partners practice total transparency in order to build trust and accountability in the partnership. See the [Decision-Making Models on page 57](#) for strategies on problem resolution.

Use the responses to assess the effectiveness of the partnership, uncover problem areas, allow for course correction, or terminate the partnership. Respondents must be frank and open. This is not a job performance critique, but an assessment of how the partnership is working.

Complete this form to assess the global status of the existing partnerships amongst the leadership team. Alternatively, the form can be completed multiple times to assess specific partnerships amongst the entities represented on the leadership team.

Please enter your name and the name of your partnership:

Your name:

Partnership name:

## A. Clarity and Realistic Purpose

1. Describe the purpose of the partnership.

Is the purpose of the partnership:

- ☐ Meeting your expectations
- ☐ Not meeting your expectations
- ☐ Exceeding your expectations

2. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

- a. The partnership is on track toward accomplishing the intended outcomes.

- ☐ agree
- ☐ somewhat agree
- ☐ somewhat disagree
- ☐ disagree
- ☐ don't know/NA

- b. The deliverables are on target.

- ☐ agree
- ☐ somewhat agree
- ☐ somewhat disagree
- ☐ disagree
- ☐ don't know/NA

c. The deliverables are on time.

- ☐ agree
- ☐ somewhat agree
- ☐ somewhat disagree
- ☐ disagree
- ☐ don't know/NA

d. The achievements are celebrated.

- ☐ agree
- ☐ somewhat agree
- ☐ somewhat disagree
- ☐ disagree
- ☐ don't know/NA

e. There are barriers to achieving the intended outcome of the partnership

- ☐ agree
- ☐ somewhat agree
- ☐ somewhat disagree
- ☐ disagree
- ☐ don't know/NA

3. Please comment on your choices above:

If the current level of accomplishments is not meeting your expectations, what will help you meet them?

If the current level of accomplishments is exceeding your expectations, what contributes to the success?



**B. Commitment and Buy-in**

4. Is the current state of commitment and buy-in meeting, not meeting, or exceeding your expectations?
- ☐ Meeting your expectations
  - ☐ Not meeting your expectations
  - ☐ Exceeding your expectations
5. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:
- a. Senior levels of management from the partner organizations show their commitment.
- ☐ agree
  - ☐ somewhat agree
  - ☐ somewhat disagree
  - ☐ disagree
  - ☐ don't know/NA
- b. The State's Workforce Development Board shows its commitment.
- ☐ agree
  - ☐ somewhat agree
  - ☐ somewhat disagree
  - ☐ disagree
  - ☐ don't know/NA
- c. All partner agencies are committed.
- ☐ agree
  - ☐ somewhat agree
  - ☐ somewhat disagree
  - ☐ disagree
  - ☐ don't know/NA
- d. Partners exhibit total transparency within the partnership.
- ☐ agree
  - ☐ somewhat agree
  - ☐ somewhat disagree
  - ☐ disagree
  - ☐ don't know/NA

e. Stakeholders are informed. By “stakeholders,” we mean those with an interest in the partnership, but not necessarily participating directly.

- ☐ agree
- ☐ somewhat agree
- ☐ somewhat disagree
- ☐ disagree
- ☐ don't know/NA

f. Stakeholders are committed.

- ☐ agree
- ☐ somewhat agree
- ☐ somewhat disagree
- ☐ disagree
- ☐ don't know/NA

6. Please comment on your choices above:

If the current level of accomplishments is not meeting your expectations, what will help you meet them?

If the current state of commitment and buy-in is exceeding your expectations, what contributes to the success?

### C. Operational Arrangements of the Partnership

7. Are the operational arrangements meeting, not meeting, or exceeding your expectations?

- ☐ Meeting your expectations
- ☐ Not meeting your expectations
- ☐ Exceeding your expectations

8. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

a. The costs are distributed fairly.

- ☐ agree
- ☐ somewhat agree
- ☐ somewhat disagree
- ☐ disagree
- ☐ don't know/NA

b. The benefits are distributed fairly.

- ☐ agree
- ☐ somewhat agree
- ☐ somewhat disagree
- ☐ disagree
- ☐ don't know/NA

c. The tasks are distributed fairly.

- ☐ agree
- ☐ somewhat agree
- ☐ somewhat disagree
- ☐ disagree
- ☐ don't know/NA

d. Adequate discretionary resources are allocated to ensure success.

- ☐ agree
- ☐ somewhat agree
- ☐ somewhat disagree
- ☐ disagree
- ☐ don't know/NA

e. Adequate staff resources are allocated to ensure success.

- ☐ agree
- ☐ somewhat agree
- ☐ somewhat disagree
- ☐ disagree
- ☐ don't know/NA

f. The level of trust between the partners is sufficient for effective collaboration.

- ☐ agree
- ☐ somewhat agree
- ☐ somewhat disagree
- ☐ disagree
- ☐ don't know/NA

g. Communication between partners is adequate and effective.

- ☐ agree
- ☐ somewhat agree
- ☐ somewhat disagree
- ☐ disagree
- ☐ don't know/NA

h. The partners are appropriately recognized for their contributions.

- ☐ agree
- ☐ somewhat agree
- ☐ somewhat disagree
- ☐ disagree
- ☐ don't know/NA

i. Stakeholders are committed.

- ☐ agree
- ☐ somewhat agree
- ☐ somewhat disagree
- ☐ disagree
- ☐ don't know/NA

j. The degree of transparency in financial and other resource arrangements is sufficient.

- ☐ agree
- ☐ somewhat agree
- ☐ somewhat disagree
- ☐ disagree
- ☐ don't know/NA

9. Please comment on your choices above:

If the current state of operational arrangements is not meeting your expectations, what will help you meet them?

If the current state of operational arrangements is exceeding your expectations, what contributes to the success?

## D. Assessment, Course Correction and Promotion

10. Are the current assessment, course correction and promotion efforts meeting, not meeting or exceeding your expectations?

- ☐ Meeting your expectations  
☐ Not meeting your expectations  
☐ Exceeding your expectations

11. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

- a. There are shared metrics to assess results.

- ☐ agree  
☐ somewhat agree  
☐ somewhat disagree  
☐ disagree  
☐ don't know/NA

- b. Based on the assessment results, the goals, objectives, and arrangements are reevaluated and, where necessary, revised.

- ☐ agree  
☐ somewhat agree  
☐ somewhat disagree  
☐ disagree  
☐ don't know/NA

c. Successes are well communicated to stakeholders and beyond.

- ☐ agree  
☐ somewhat agree  
☐ somewhat disagree  
☐ disagree  
☐ don't know/NA

d. This partnership is efficient and effective in achieving the intended outcome for all partners.

- ☐ agree  
☐ somewhat agree  
☐ somewhat disagree  
☐ disagree  
☐ don't know/NA

e. Benefits outweigh costs for partners.

- ☐ agree  
☐ somewhat agree  
☐ somewhat disagree  
☐ disagree  
☐ don't know/NA

12. Please comment on your choices above:

If the current assessment, course correction and promotion efforts do not meet your expectations, what is your plan for improvement?

If the current operational arrangements are exceeding your expectations, what factors contribute to the success?

Source: These materials are based off of [Cornell University's Library Partnership Assessment Tools](https://ecommons.cornell.edu/bitstream/handle/1813/40156/Existing-PartnershipCheck3.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y), available here: <https://ecommons.cornell.edu/bitstream/handle/1813/40156/Existing-PartnershipCheck3.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y>

## Component 1.2: Establish a Shared Vision, Mission, Goals, and Strategies



Once the career pathways leadership team is formed, it is important that the State system partners (in conjunction with local/regional partners) are committed to a shared vision of industry sector-based career pathways for youth and adults and to a strategy for building, scaling, and sustaining State and local/regional career pathways systems. All partners should be committed to the same mission and aligned with common goals and strategies. The vision provides a directional statement and a framework for the team's area of influence and responsibility by describing the desired future state of the community in a way that inspires the team to progress. A mission statement—a brief description of the team's fundamental purpose—helps the team agree on what to work on together. Defining these elements will allow the team to establish an agreed-upon set of goals with accompanying strategies and aid in the development of a plan to guide collaborative work. As the system evolves over time, the team commits to reviewing and revising the vision, mission, goals, and strategies regularly to match changing interests and ensure the plan is consistent with the State's Unified/Combined Plan. The leadership team may find it helpful to develop its shared vision, mission, goals, and strategies during a strategic planning session.

The State leadership team will want to share its strategic plan with local operations team members. The local Workforce Development Boards will want to ensure their vision, mission, goals, and strategies are consistent with the State leadership team's strategic plan and/or the State's Unified or Combined Plan.

### CAREER PATHWAYS FYI: Career Pathways and WIOA

WIOA increases the emphasis on cross-system alignment, strategic planning, performance measurement, and data collection/utilization.

### CAREER PATHWAYS FYI: Career Pathways and WIOA

WIOA makes development of career pathways strategies a function of the State and Local Workforce Boards and encourages career pathways activities under all parts of the Act. The career pathways approach provides a framework for State and local Unified/Combined planning that reorients existing education and workforce services (including those authorized under WIOA) from myriad disconnected programs toward one system focused on individuals' postsecondary and economic success.

## Component 1.3: Define the Roles and Responsibilities of all Partners

The leadership team should adopt a shared strategy and formally commit their organizations to carrying out specific roles and responsibilities and to communicate and coordinate with each other to build, scale, and sustain career pathways systems. While some agencies provide services to the general population, others may serve only “targeted” populations. It takes a variety of agencies and/or funding streams to provide comprehensive services to both targeted and universal populations. Partners may continue to define roles and responsibilities by organization and assign critical responsibilities to each team member.

A prerequisite to defining the roles and responsibilities of each of the partners within the career pathways system is shared knowledge of the services each agency provides, the populations it serves, and the service models on which its programs are based.

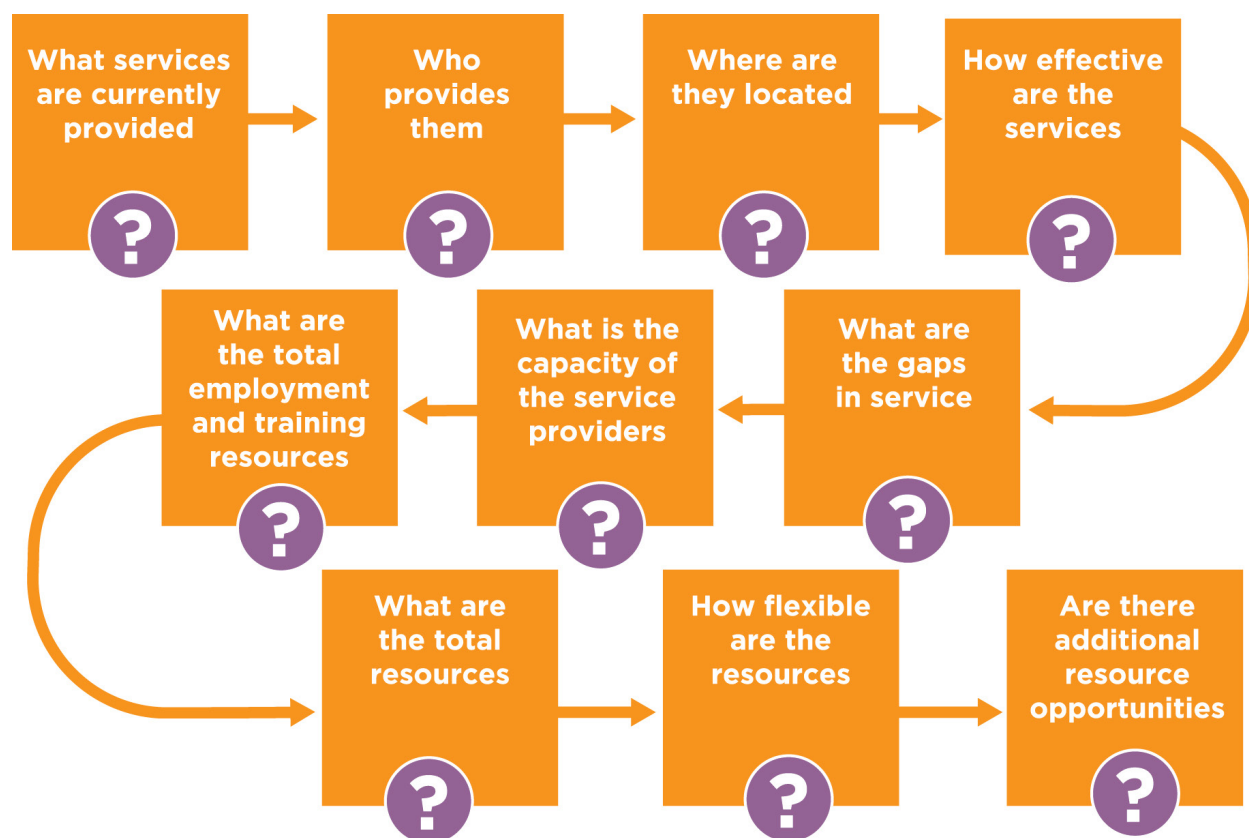
**Asset mapping/resource mapping** will allow partners to know what each public and private agency can provide to achieve the career goals of all populations, including the specific services for targeted populations. Refer back to the Asset Map Worksheet ([Worksheet 1.1c](#)). The process will produce the data necessary for coordinating services among multiple agencies and identifying funding streams that can support the development of career pathways systems. The asset mapping process will allow all parties to understand each other’s existing roles and responsibilities. The team can develop an operational and strategic plan and assign team members functional roles and/or individual task responsibilities. The team may decide to formalize these relationships with a written agreement or within an MOU to support sustaining relationships over time.

### CAREER PATHWAYS FYI

All partners are responsible for leveraging and coordinating new Federal, State, and/or private/philanthropic resources to support the local/regional career pathways system and programs.



Mapping will facilitate the following questions:



It is important to define the roles and responsibilities of all partners. The chart on the following page outlines some of the common roles and responsibilities assigned to the key partners involved in developing career pathways systems.

Early in the development of career pathways systems, the team may decide which person and/or agency will take the lead in coordinating the leadership group activities and will assign tasks involved in carrying out the initiative. Consideration should be given to the establishment of at least one full-time staff position within the lead agency to oversee and coordinate leadership team activities and related system development tasks.

The following chart is an example of typical cross-agency roles. The chart is not all inclusive or prescriptive and State agency partnerships may wish to complete a matrix for their own partnership. A Matrix of Partner Roles & Responsibilities Worksheet ([Worksheet 1.3a](#)) is below.

Responsibility	Workforce Agencies	Educational Institutions & Agencies	Economic Development Agencies	Human Services Agencies	Community Based Organizations	Employers
Assess skills	•			•	•	
Assist with financial aid		•				
Assist with tuition and fees	•			•	•	•
Create a job friendly business environment			•			
Create links between credit and non-credit programs		•				
Develop curriculum		•			•	•
Develop curriculum with multiple entrances/exits and “modularized” (chunked) sections		•			•	•
Deliver training		•			•	•
Design programs		•			•	•
Engage employers	•	•	•	•	•	
Expand export opportunities			•			
Fund innovation			•			
Identify industry-recognized credentials	•	•		•	•	
Identify skill sets						•
Promote portability and flexibility		•				
Provide academic and personal counseling		•				
Provide career and personal counseling	•			•	•	
Provide case management	•				•	•
Provide credit for prior learning		•				
Provide employment						•
Provide incentives for business expansion			•			

Responsibility	Workforce Agencies	Educational Institutions & Agencies	Economic Development Agencies	Human Services Agencies	Community Based Organizations	Employers
Provide incentives to train incumbent workers			•			
Provide job placement assistance	•	•			•	•
Provide job retention services	•				•	
Provide job search assistance	•				•	
Provide labor market information	•		•			
Provide professional development opportunities	•	•		•	•	
Provide support services	•	•			•	•
Provide system navigation	•				•	
Provide trainers/faculty		•				•
Provide training facilities & equipment	•					•
Provide work-based learning opportunities						•
Recruit and make referrals	•			•	•	
Recruit new business development			•			

## Clarify the Working Relationship between State and Local Partners

In addition to clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the various collaborating partners, the leadership team may want to define the working relationship between the State-level and local-level agencies and partners. For example, is decision making happening at the State level with the expectation that local officials implement these decisions? Alternatively, is decision making happening at the local level, with State officials acting in an advisory and supporting capacity?

However decision making occurs, it is important to ensure that there is a clear understanding of the roles of each partner and an agreement that spells out those roles. Like other partnerships, it may be useful to formalize these relationships with a written plan and/or an MOU.

**PROMISING PRACTICE: Virginia Career Pathways – Align Systems**

In the spring of 2008, Governor Tim Kaine issued an executive order establishing the Virginia Career Pathways Task Force. This task force included representation from the eight State agencies charged with administration and oversight of the Commonwealth's workforce development system, as well as a representative from the Commonwealth's economic development office. Charged by the governor to develop a career pathways strategic plan, the members met regularly over several months to develop a shared vision, consistent definitions, and systemic expectations of what career pathways meant for the various workforce programs. In December 2008, the task force issued Virginia's career pathways strategic plan, *Bridging Business and Education for the 21st Century Workforce: A Strategic Plan for Virginia's Career Pathways System*, which outlined a vision for the system and specific goals and outcomes across agencies and programs.

In the years since the release of that plan, the group has continued to meet, collaborate, plan, and problem solve. While the name has changed from task force to workgroup and membership has shifted, the core group has remained committed to the partnership because of real progress made in building career pathways into Virginia's workforce development system as well as the trust and respect that has grown among the members. The core group consists of representatives from the Governor's Office, Department of Labor and Industry, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, Virginia Community College System, Department of Social Services, Virginia Employment Commission, and Virginia Economic Development Partnership. The results have exceeded everyone's early expectations, and they include truly collaborative interagency programming, tens of millions of dollars in public and private grants, and legislation that has advanced recommendations that grew out of the work.

### 1.3a MATRIX OF PARTNER ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES WORKSHEET

Define the roles and responsibilities for each partner in the cross-agency partnership. Write or type an "X" in the appropriate column of the Overview Matrix below if that agency/program will be responsible for the specific task. Further define the action in the section in the Specifics Matrix beginning on page 45. Print additional sheets to add more partners.

#### 1. Overview Matrix

Partner 1 Agency/Program:	
Partner 2 Agency/Program:	
Partner 3 Agency/Program:	
Partner 4 Agency/Program:	
Partner 5 Agency/Program:	
Partner 6 Agency/Program:	
Partner 7 Agency/Program:	
Partner 8 Agency/Program:	

Responsibility	Partner 1	Partner 2	Partner 3	Partner 4	Partner 5	Partner 6	Partner 7	Partner 8
1. Assess skills								
2. Assist with financial aid								
3. Assist with tuition and fees								
4. Create a job-friendly business environment								
5. Create links between credit and non-credit programs								
6. Develop curriculum								

Responsibility	Partner 1	Partner 2	Partner 3	Partner 4	Partner 5	Partner 6	Partner 7	Partner 8
7. Develop curriculum with multiple entrances/exits and “modularized” (chunked) sections								
8. Deliver training								
9. Design programs								
10. Engage employers								
11. Expand export opportunities								
12. Fund innovation								
13. Identify industry-recognized credentials								
14. Identify skill sets								
15. Promote portability and flexibility								
16. Provide academic and personal counseling								
17. Provide career and personal counseling								
18. Provide case management								
19. Provide credit for prior learning								
20. Provide employment								
21. Provide incentives for business expansion								
22. Provide incentives to train incumbent workers								
23. Provide job placement assistance								
24. Provide job retention services								
25. Provide job search assistance								
26. Provide labor market information								
27. Provide professional development opportunities								
28. Provide supportive services								
29. Provide system navigation								
30. Provide trainers/faculty								
31. Provide training facilities and equipment								

Responsibility	Partner 1	Partner 2	Partner 3	Partner 4	Partner 5	Partner 6	Partner 7	Partner 8
32. Provide work-based learning opportunities								
33. Recruit and make referrals								
34. Recruit new business development								
35.								
36.								
37.								
38.								
39.								
40.								
41.								
42.								
43.								
44.								

## 2. Specifics Matrix

Partner agency/program name:

Responsibility	Role this partner will take
1. Assess skills	
2. Assist with financial aid	
3. Assist with tuition and fees	
4. Create a job-friendly business environment	

Responsibility	Role this partner will take
5. Create links between credit and non-credit programs	
6. Develop curriculum	
7. Develop curriculum with multiple entrances/exits and “modularized” (chunked) sections	
8. Deliver training	
9. Design programs	
10. Engage employers	
11. Expand export opportunities	
12. Fund innovation	
13. Identify industry-recognized credentials	
14. Identify skill sets	
15. Promote portability and flexibility	
16. Provide academic and personal counseling	
17. Provide career and personal counseling	
18. Provide case management	



Responsibility	Role this partner will take
19. Provide credit for prior learning	
20. Provide employment	
21. Provide incentives for business expansion	
22. Provide incentives to train incumbent workers	
23. Provide job placement assistance	
24. Provide job retention services	
25. Provide job search assistance	
26. Provide labor market information	
27. Provide professional development opportunities	
28. Provide supportive services	
29. Provide system navigation	
30. Provide trainers/faculty	
31. Provide training facilities and equipment	
32. Provide work-based learning opportunities	

Responsibility	Role this partner will take
33. Recruit and make referrals	
34. Recruit new business development	
35.	
36.	
37.	
38.	
39.	
40.	
41.	
42.	
43.	
44.	

## Component 1.4: Develop a Work Plan and/or Memorandum of Understanding for the Partnership

Once the leadership team establishes a shared vision, mission, goals, and strategies governing the partnership, the team is ready to develop a work plan consistent with the strategies delineated in the Unified/Combined Plan. The work plan is necessary for the partnership to accomplish its goals. The work plan should identify who, what, when, and how the strategies will be implemented.

**Who:** One or more individuals representing an agency responsible for each task, accomplishing the task, and providing progress reports.

**What:** The annual priorities based on a current and projected rigorous assessment of the needs of the State/regional economy, the selected targeted industry sector(s), and the capacity of the system.

**When:** The timelines assigned to each task, which include the completion dates.

**How:** The strategies required to accomplish each task along with the criteria for system metrics and evaluation.

The work plan may include many of the considerations described in the Partnership Work Plan Considerations graphic (see next page) in the development of the key strategies and tasks. A helpful MOU Template ([Worksheet 1.4a](#)) is included in this module to help decipher what topics, policies, and/or guidelines the team may wish to include in the MOU.

**Partnership Work Plan Considerations**

## 1.4a MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) TEMPLATE

### MOU Inventory

Use this template to document the topics, policies, and guidelines that may be included in the MOU. This template is appropriate for a career pathways system MOU at the State or local level, as well as for the larger WIOA MOU.

To complete this template:

1. Have each partner complete the template separately, using the blank fields to elaborate on their selections in order to share additional thoughts.
2. Compile, compare, and discuss the responses. At the beginning, the team should agree upon what will and will not be included in the MOU, but do not begin the negotiations of these topics.
3. Based on discussion with the partners, create a final joint version of this template.
4. Use this joint template for future meetings to negotiate the MOU.

### Purpose

1. Vision

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include

2. Mission

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include

## 3. Shared Goals

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include

## 4. Duration (start and end dates)

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include

**Organizational Structure**

## 5. Identification of Partners

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include

## 6. Geographic Area (define State or region)

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include

7. Define [Decision-making Model](#): Cooperative, Collaborative, Integrated, or Other

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include

## Meetings

### 8. Attendance

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include

### 9. Quorum

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include

### 10. Meeting Frequency

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include

### 11. Special Meetings

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include

## Partner Roles & Responsibilities

### 12. List (may be an addendum to the MOU. Refer to [Worksheet 1.3a](#))

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include

13. Financial contributions: Cash and In-kind (refer to Element Four Worksheet 4.2a)

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include

## Policies and Considerations

14. Data Sharing

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include

15. Metrics Collective Impact (refer to Element Six, Component 6.4)

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include

16. Financial Policies/Procedures

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include

17. Fundraising Policies/Procedures

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include



## 18. Conflict Resolution Guidelines

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include

## 19. Confidentiality Policy

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include

## 20. Intellectual Property Policy

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include

## 21. Conflict of Interest Policy

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include

## 22. Diversity/Inclusivity Policy

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include

## 23. Accessibility Policy

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include

## 24. Documentation Policies (retention and destruction)

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include

## 25. Indemnification Clause

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include

## 26. Risk, Security, and Insurance Policies

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include

## 27. Compliance with Federal Regulations

assign importance: ☐ critical ☐ optional ☐ do not include

## 28. Compliance with State Regulations

assign importance:   ☐ critical   ☐ optional   ☐ do not include

## 29. Compliance with Local Regulations

assign importance:   ☐ critical   ☐ optional   ☐ do not include

## 30. Other (fill in other topics if desired)

assign importance:   ☐ critical   ☐ optional   ☐ do not include

## 31. Other (fill in other topics if desired)

assign importance:   ☐ critical   ☐ optional   ☐ do not include

## 32. Other (fill in other topics if desired)

assign importance:   ☐ critical   ☐ optional   ☐ do not include

## Decision Making Models

### COOPERATIVE MODEL

**Each partner:**

- maintains its own decision-making responsibility;
- remains autonomous;
- retains own identity;
- has own staff & budget;
- has full responsibility for its actions.

### COLLABORATIVE MODEL

**Each partner:**

- shares decision-making responsibility & authority;
- has particular roles & responsibilities;
- is accountable to each other;
- contributes resources;
- surrenders some measure of its autonomy.

### INTEGRATED MODEL

**Each partner:**

- transfers decision-making authority to a new structure/entity;
- integrates its resources with other partners;
- administers according to common policies & procedures;
- surrenders a considerable amount of its autonomy.

### Decision Making:

- by consensus
- agreement not necessary in all cases

### Decision Making:

- by consensus
- agreement necessary

### Decision Making:

- by vote if necessary
- agreement necessary

Adapted from Colorado Nonprofit Association. (2013). *Collaboration Toolkit: Creating an MOU Worksheet: MOU Inventory*. Retrieved from <http://www.coloradononprofits.org/wp-content/uploads/MOU-toolkit-MOU-Inventory-Worksheet.pdf>

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