

Homeland Security Community Partnership Resources



Five Steps towards Success:
A Guide to Creating a Homeland Security
Partnership
&
**The 2005 Grantee
Partnership Directory**
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Table of Contents

A. Five Steps towards Success: A Guide to Creating a Homeland Security Partnership

Getting Started	3
I. Identify your Organizational Assets	4
II. Develop a Homeland Security Proposal	6
III. Research the Prospective Partners.....	8
IV. Dialogue with Prospective Partners.....	10
V. Create a Written Agreement	14
Appendix A: Organizational Assets Worksheet.....	16
Appendix B: Homeland Security Project Proposal Worksheet.....	17



FIVE STEPS TOWARDS SUCCESS: A GUIDE TO CREATING A HOMELAND SECURITY PARTNERSHIP

Homeland Security is a pressing concern for all of society and especially those stakeholders working to make your local community a safe, healthy, and accommodating place to live. Community stakeholders may be found in almost



every aspect of day-to-day life such as governmental agencies, religious groups, private businesses, schools, hospitals, and non-profit organization. While each of these community stakeholders has a specific focus, they collectively share a common goal with your volunteer program: *working towards the most successful and secure community possible.* Developing partnerships with local stakeholders allows

for the pooling together of skills, people, and resources in order to achieve your common goal for the community. This guide describes the essential steps in developing strategic community partnerships for homeland security projects. Included in this guide is a directory of nationally-based partner organizations as resource in helping you begin your search for a successful partnership.

Getting Started

Identifying and establishing a working relationship with a homeland security partner in your community can be both a satisfying and challenging experience. Sometimes by chance community partnerships develop between professional contacts or neighborhood associations – however most partnerships take a considerable amount of planning and time in order to develop a productive and lasting affiliation. A successful partnership is characterized by a written agreement between two or more agencies that clearly identifies a common objective, the areas of mutual benefit, and the specific commitments and responsibilities of all partners.

The basic steps for achieving a successful partnership include:

- 1. Identify your organization's assets**
- 2. Develop homeland security project ideas**
- 3. Research prospective partners**
- 4. Dialogue with prospective partners**
- 5. Create a written agreement**

Approaching possible partners with a clear understanding of the assets and goals of both your own and the prospective organization -- in addition to providing specific suggestions for working together -- increases your chances for achieving a productive working relationship that will effectively serve your community.

I. Identify your Organization's Assets

Identifying exactly what your organization has to offer in a potential partnership will help you focus on the most promising types of organizations and homeland security community projects that could result from a collaborative relationship.



As a nonprofit organization, one of your greatest assets is your volunteers! For example, your volunteers can very quickly complete tasks that may be otherwise time-prohibitive to a partner organization, such as safety inspections or hazard assessments. Understanding the skills, knowledge, and experience your volunteers have is the first step in planning for a partnership.

Some of your volunteer assets will be fairly obvious depending upon the types of projects they have contributed to in the past. However, most volunteers have a broad range of skills, knowledge, and experience that may have remained untapped that could be particularly useful and attractive to a homeland security partner organization. Make sure you periodically update the full range of contributions that your volunteers have to offer.

Examples of Relevant Volunteer Assets

Skills	Knowledge	Experience
• Administrative skills	• Counseling/mental health	• Childcare experience
• Artistic skills	• Engineering knowledge	• Fundraising
• Communication skills	• Medical experience	• Community organizing and outreach
• Computer skills	• Languages	• Elder/disability assistance
• Construction/labor	• Technical knowledge	• Disaster relief
• Emergency response	• EMS & safety	• Disaster victim
• Project management	• Community history	• Community leadership
• Event planning		

The collective hours volunteers are available to serve is an enormous asset to offer any partnership, as are your volunteers' enthusiasm and dedication to the good of the community. In addition to your volunteers, your organization also brings other assets to a potential partnership. These assets may include material resources such as meeting spaces, special equipment, transportation, etc. or 'non-material' assets such as a technical expertise, program delivery capability, community networks and leadership, member diversity, credibility, 'name recognition', and/or media access.

The combination of your volunteers, material and non-material assets represents a unique set of resources to offer any homeland security partner. It is vital that you identify these assets as the first step in planning for a partnership. The 'Organizational Assets Worksheet' in Appendix A can be used to help identify the key resources of your organization.

Taking Stock of Volunteer Assets

Your organization is the sum of all the skills, knowledge and experience of your individual volunteers. The more you know about these assets, the greater your ability to form a successful partnership. Involve your volunteers in this process, by developing a simple survey or having a meeting in which volunteers



brainstorm any type of skill, knowledge, and experience that they can offer. It is a good idea to explain to your volunteers that you are seeking partnership opportunities for a homeland security projects in order that they fully understand the range of activities that are involved.

*Remind them that homeland security addresses ALL hazards, including natural, technological, and intentional (terrorism, sabotage, civil disorder). Additionally, help them to understand the cycle of emergency and disaster management – **preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery**. Skills that address any of these four phases are likely to be an asset to your organization as you work through the partnership process. To help your volunteers*

conceptualize their skills, you may wish to provide examples of projects that illustrate each of these four phases, family disaster education in the preparedness phase, clearing debris and brush or securing furniture to walls in the mitigation phase, search and rescue and first aid in the response phase, or victim counseling in the recovery phase. The range of options should be presented as virtually limitless, bounded only by your and your volunteers' imaginations. Unfortunately, many of your volunteers may inadvertently

underrate or devalue the skills and experiences that they possess. You may want to note that their contributions can come from a wide range of backgrounds such as paid/volunteer experience, leisure activities, creative interests or hobbies, classroom activities/projects, or their culture and customs.

II. Develop Homeland Security Project Ideas

You may already have an idea for your project or are in the process of identifying something that is of interest to your volunteers and your community. Involving volunteers in generating ideas for a homeland security project increases your chances of developing a proposal that will be successful and address needs of the community. In working with ideas for a project, keep in mind the four general types of homeland security activities in which National Service are engaged: disaster prevention, preparation, response, and recovery.

Below is a list of ideas for homeland security activities to use as starting points in designing a project and developing the proposal:

- Backstopping fire or police officials to allow them more time in the field.
- Business continuity planning assistance.
- Creating a CERT program, staffing and fundraising.
- Creating emergency preparedness materials for schools, newspapers, supermarkets, etc.
- Designing and performing emergency management public education.
- Fire code inspections for day care or community facilities.
- Forming disaster response teams or victims' assistance teams for minor and major disasters.
- Helping emergency responders perform exercises.
- Individual and family emergency planning campaigns.
- Mitigation assistance for members of the community, businesses, and government offices.
- Promoting emergency preparedness for pet owners.
- Rebuilding homes destroyed in disasters to be more disaster resistant.
- Registration of special needs populations who would require individual attention in times of disaster.
- Risk reduction measures – removal of wildfire fuel, cleaning floodwater diversion channels.
- Updating the status of the community's emergency shelters.



Once you have identified the general areas in which your organization can be most effective, you need to identify possible ways to partner with other organizations to implement the homeland security project or activity. In developing the project, you will want to clearly indicate the assets your organization can bring to the project and to identify the areas of need that will require a partner to fill. The material and non-material resources of your partner(s) may include any of the following which combined with your assets will greatly enhance the likelihood of success of the project:

- Authority to perform technical work (fire inspections)
- Community and EMS contacts
- Data resources (e.g., people who have special needs in the community, seniors)
- Equipment (e.g., computers, phones, workstations, equipment specific to the needs of a project)
- Leadership
- Projects for volunteers
- Community reputation/trust
- Space for volunteers to work
- Supplies (e.g., paper, books, manuals, flashlights, safety vests, teaching resources)
- Training for your volunteers
- Transportation to perform project tasks

Realize that the preliminary project ideas you propose to potential partners will most likely be revised a number of times with their input. It is important to work together with your partner(s) to outline the specific objectives for the project and how you will collectively go about accomplishing them.

The process of identifying how your specific organizational assets can be used to compliment the assets of potential partners to support the proposed homeland security activities will help you identify organizations with which you would like to partner. For example, when you begin to design a project where volunteers learn how to direct traffic in flooding disasters, you will quickly recognize that this requires some legal authority. A partnership with the police department could

provide you with both the training and the authority your volunteers would need to carry out that particular project.

Brainstorming Project Ideas

Brainstorming sessions are a great way to generate and build upon ideas for your homeland security project. Include your volunteers in the sessions and explain that you are seeking to build partnerships in the community to implement the project. An entire project can often be developed from a simple suggestion. For example, a volunteer may suggest that they could direct traffic during a disaster. You might then suggest that volunteers could also learn how to help in other types of situations where evacuation is necessary. From that idea, they could expand upon the project to help the office of emergency management identify evacuation routes and ensure that those routes are clearly marked. This could lead to volunteers designing a public education project to teach residents about how to use the evacuation routes and when to use them. By brainstorming together, you will see your volunteers interests and talents emerge. Group brainstorming sessions allow for this “snowball effect” to occur. Volunteers will be able to build off of each other’s ideas, in effect designing an increasingly refined list of project ideas.

III. Research the Prospective Partners

Once you have an idea about types of projects in which your organization would like to engage based on community need and organizational and volunteer assets and interests, you can now begin to search throughout your community for one or more partners. To identify possible partners, you should access several readily available resources and not rely solely upon your immediate experience or memory. There are often many more potential partners in your community than you would initially anticipate; the discovery of these potential partner agencies or organizations may even lead you to revise or consider new project ideas.

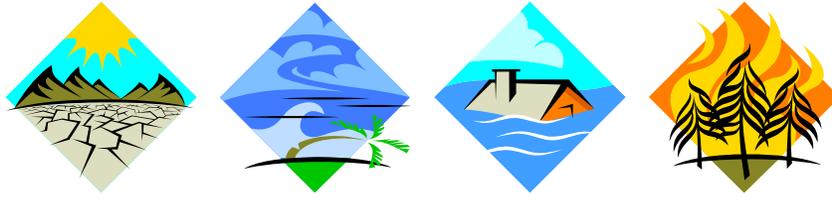


The **TAHS Partnership Directory 2005** included in this guide is a good place to start your search. Other places to look include the Yellow Pages, the Government (Blue) Pages; community newspapers, and your local library. On the internet check your local government websites, online directories

(www.yellowbook.com, for example), general search engines (Google, Yahoo, Infoseek, Lycos), and the website of your nearest VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters).

There are many **types of agencies and organizations** that may be interested in participating in a homeland security project. Some organizations and agencies to consider include:

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- ▶ Fire Departments
 - ▶ Police Departments
 - ▶ Emergency Management Office
 - ▶ Search and Rescue Organizations
 - ▶ Hospitals & Clinics
 - ▶ Emergency Medical Services/
Ambulance Companies
 - ▶ Town Department of Recreation
 - ▶ Local Executive Government Office
(Mayor/Council)
 - ▶ Schools (Elementary, Middle, High,
Community College, University)
 - ▶ Day Care Centers
 - ▶ Convalescent Homes
 - ▶ Assisted Living Centers
 - ▶ Retirement Communities
 - ▶ Civic Organizations (Rotary, Lions)
 - ▶ Individual Local Businesses
 - ▶ Local Branches of Large Corporations
 - ▶ Unions & Employee Organizations
 - ▶ Business Associations
 - ▶ Religious Organizations & Groups
 - ▶ Youth Groups
 - ▶ Transportation Associations &
Businesses
 - ▶ Non-Profit Agencies
 - ▶ Home Building & Construction
Associations
 - ▶ Emergency Response and Public
Safety Organizations (ARC)
 - ▶ Relief Organizations (Salvation Army)
 - ▶ Amateur Radio Operator Associations
 - ▶ Outdoors & Recreation Groups
 - ▶ Parents' Associations
 - ▶ Agricultural Organizations
 - ▶ News Media (Radio, Print, Television)



Once you identify potential partners, your next task is to gather as much information as possible about each of the specific organizations or agencies. This can be accomplished in a number of ways, such as by looking for websites on the internet or by informal conversations with colleagues. For example, you would want to make sure that an agency has the specific jurisdiction that you need for your project before presenting them with a proposal. It is also a good idea to be knowledgeable about the organization's mission, size, products, philanthropic history, management structure, and location(s). Most importantly, having a good understanding of potential partners will make your project planning stronger and reflect well on your organization as you approach prospective organizations for their assistance.

IV. Dialogue with Prospective Partners

Once you have a good understanding of a particular agency or organization with which you are interested in partnering, the next step is to develop a brief proposal in order to present your suggested ideas to the prospective homeland security partner. Developing a proposal will help you to clarify how your assets and those of a partner can work together to accomplish a common goal.

Write a brief project proposal

The purpose of writing a proposal is to quickly convey your ideas for a homeland security project to your potential partners. Your proposal does not need to be long – in fact a short, one or two-page proposal is much more effective than one that is lengthy and descriptive. Many of the details of your proposal will eventually be negotiated between you and your partner so the introductory proposal will not account at all for the needs and interests of your future partners. It is almost certain that your proposal will be modified - even if slightly - as you begin establishing the partnership. Your openness to such revisions may be one of your greatest selling points.



Your homeland security proposal should include the following items:

- **Project title**
- **General objective of homeland security project**
- **Proposed activities of your organization and volunteers**
- **Proposed activities/requirements of your prospective partner**
- **Project benefits for partner organization, your organization, and community.**

Begin with a descriptive title that clearly states the intentions of the project, such as “Public Emergency Preparedness Education”. Following the title, include a single paragraph which is a summary description of what you would like accomplish as result of your efforts. Do not include too many details in the description in order to allow for your partner’s input. Next, you should list the actions and requirements your volunteer organization will be responsible for followed by what you would like your partner organization to contribute. Finally, list the benefits each organization will enjoy as result of the partnership and the project.

Your proposal must present your case to prospective partners in as positive a light as possible and make a convincing case that the partnership will be beneficial to all parties involved. Potential partners will be carefully considering their involvement with you and the project. Some key points that your potential partner will be looking for as they review your proposal are listed below.

- ***The project will not burden their staff/employees:*** Most organizations will be very reluctant to form a partnership unless they feel that their staff/employees will have little or no increased burden to their present duties.
- ***The project does not put anyone at risk:*** Potential partners will also be concerned that a partnership could possibly include a risk to their reputation, staff, or assets.
- ***The project will benefit the partner:*** You must highlight the benefits to your potential partner that will result from the partnership; demonstrate in your proposal how collaborating with your organization will also benefit the community at large.
- ***Your organization is financially self-sufficient:*** Partnerships should *not* be made to satisfy a monetary need – do not approach an organization with this in mind because it will be difficult to show how a partnership would be to their greatest benefit. If at all possible, avoid placing a funding

requirement into the proposal that will be the sole responsibility of your prospective partner – nothing will scare them away more effectively! It is, however, okay to show in a project budget that you plan to fundraise in order to meet a funding shortfall – your partner may have ideas or contacts to help you in your search.

The attached proposal planning worksheet (in Appendix B) may be of help in starting this process. Make sure you use a separate worksheet for each project idea that you are developing.

Finally, the presentation of your proposal document should be professional and attractive – make sure it is printed on only one side of the page. In most cases, you will not personally meet most of the internal stakeholders so it is vital that this document is both informative and convincing. Be sure to include contact information, and a link to your website if one exists, so that individuals can contact you for questions or comments.



Presenting your partnership proposal

Once you are ready to present your proposal, you should begin making contact with someone at the prospective organization who is in a leadership position. You should try to limit your first contact with the potential partner to an informal discussion. Also, you do not want to scare away a possible partner by coming on too strong or appearing anxious. Generally phone calls work much better than emails or letters because interactive phone conversations allow for your ‘personality’ to come through. Emails and letters tend to be much easier for people to disregard entirely or respond to with a prematurely negative reaction.



It is important that you establish contact with a representative or executive that you feel has sufficient authority to champion your proposal internally. Once this is done begin by explaining your organization, stressing your positive standing in the community and the positive impact on the community that you have enjoyed. Let your contact know that you would like to propose a homeland security project that involves your two organizations

forming a working partnership, and ask if she would be willing to meet with you to discuss

these ideas further. Though ideally you would wait to share the details of the proposal until you meet face to face, some contacts may want to hold the conversation right then and there on the phone so you should be prepared to have a more in-depth conversation if needed.

When setting up a meeting with the prospective organization, make sure that you are as flexible and accommodating as possible. How you eventually 'sell' your organization and your project is dependent upon your personal presentation style and the type of project you have designed. As a rule, however, you will have to successfully demonstrate that your organization is one that can and should be taken seriously, and that the project you are proposing is something the prospective partner should consider.

In preparing your 'project pitch', review how you can demonstrate the following points:

- Your organization **demonstrates a proven track record**.
- Your organization is **comprised of motivated, skilled, educated volunteers** who want to make their community a better place.
- Your organization **maintains a great reputation** in the community.
- Your organization **offers contacts** throughout the community (individuals, schools, government, and businesses) through members' social interactions.
- Your organization is **fully insured** and assumes all liability of volunteers and their actions.
- The proposed project is **mutually beneficial**.
- The proposed project is **adaptable**, and will be the product of input from all partners.
- The proposed project does **not involve partner in volunteer management** issues.
- The proposed project **exists within the missions** of all partner organizations.
- The proposed project **does not impose a financial burden** upon the partner organization.
- The proposed project **helps, not hinders**, the organization's employees in performing their regular duties.
- The proposed project **contributes to the partner organization's image** in the community.
- The proposed project **improves the community** and the lives of its members.
- The proposed project brings **positive media attention** to the partner organization.



V. Create a Written Agreement

Your first meeting with the prospective partner will most likely be the beginning of an ongoing conversation about the nature of the proposed project and the responsibilities of each partner organization. Therefore do not expect your first meeting to conclude with a signed agreement or even with all your questions answered. Remember that you have had weeks or months to think about the proposal and your prospective partner will need to carefully consider the project and discuss it with their own stakeholders to gain internal consensus.

Do your best to leave the first meeting with a scheduled date for a follow-up meeting or phone conversation. Establish tasks that each organization will complete by the next meeting, and remember to be as positive as possible about however small or large steps forward you have made. Make sure your



partner knows that you are willing and expecting to modify the project in order to accommodate the specific needs and interests of all parties involved. Establish a means for communicating these changes so that you can come to your next meeting with an approvable product that is sure to make all parties happy.

With luck and through considerable effort, you will eventually come to an agreement with your partner. The more specific your partnership agreement is in terms of what each partner will contribute (requirements), tasks each partner will perform, dates each task will be performed by, and measures of performance, the easier it will be to manage the project in the long term. Managing a project that involves resources and people outside your organization brings about many new challenges that can be addressed most successfully through good communication; a clear written agreement between partners can be the best foundation for effective communication.

The following lists highlight what characterizes successful and challenged partnerships. Consider these points throughout the process of creating a partnership in order to ensure your efforts to create a homeland security partnership are successful.

Characteristics of Successful and Challenged Partnerships

Successful Partnerships

- Agreement that a partnership is necessary.
- Respect and trust between different interests.
- The leadership of a respected individual or individuals.
- Commitment of key interests developed through a clear and open process.
- The development of a shared vision of what might be achieved.
- Time to build the partnership.
- Shared mandates or agendas.
- The development of compatible ways of working, and flexibility.
- Good communication, perhaps aided by a facilitator.
- Collaborative decision-making, with a commitment to achieving consensus.
- Effective organizational management.

Challenged Partnerships

- A history of conflict among key interests.
- One partner manipulates or dominates.
- Lack of clear purpose.
- Unrealistic goals.
- Differences of philosophy and ways of working.
- Lack of communication.
- Unequal and unacceptable balance of power and control.
- Key interests missing from the partnership.
- Hidden agendas.
- Financial and time commitments outweigh the potential benefits.

Creating a homeland security partnership may take a significant amount of time and preparation. However, the benefits gained by your respective organizations and the community can be considerable. The pooling together of skills, people, and resources to implement a homeland security project can create lasting and productive partnerships to ensure a safe and secure community well into the future.



Read about real partnership success stories at the Project TAHS website:

www.ProjectTAHS.org

Appendix A: Organizational Assets Worksheet

List all of your **Volunteer Assets** in the table below.

Skills	Knowledge	Experience

List all of your **Organization Assets** that would be relevant to a homeland security project:

Material Assets (Equipment, transportation, meeting space, etc.)	Non-Material Assets (good reputation, diversity of volunteers, community leadership, etc.)

Appendix B: Homeland Security Project Proposal Worksheet

Name of Partner(s):

Project title:

General objective of homeland security project:

Proposed activities for your organization/volunteers:

Proposed activities and inputs of your potential partner:

Project benefits for partner organization, your organization, and community.