



**US Army Corps
Of Engineers**

Building Partnership Capacity – The NPO Partner's Perspective

Strengthening Public Land Partnerships



Establish Common Ground

- Focus on important needs
- Adopt shared vision
- Understand partners mission and organizational culture
- Utilize and integrate strengths of partner
- Ensure appropriate cross section of members

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Goals of this segment...

- Review the 501 c 3 non-profit persona – what are the drivers?
- Understand what non-profits look for in partnerships
- Examine ways to utilize and integrate strengths of partner

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Heart of the Non-profit

- Vision

- Mission

- Values

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- Goals and Strategies

- Law

- Agency Authorities & Regulations

- Agency Programs

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- Goals and Strategies

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Mind of the Non-profit

- Articles, By-laws, IRS designation
- Strategic Plan
- Business & program strategy

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- Funding plan
- Fund Balances

- Regulations
- Site management plan
- Implementation plans

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- Budget
- Execution

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Musculature of the Non-profit

- Board of Directors
- Director
- Staff
- Volunteers
- Members
- Donors/ Funders
- Executive
- Agency HQ Leadership
- Region/District
- Site manager
- Site staff
- Volunteers

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Blood of the Non-profit

- Contributions
 - Donations
 - Grants
 - In-kind time, treasure, talent
- Earned Revenue
 - Sales
 - Services fees
 - Investment earnings

GOVERNMENT

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Common Myths

- Non-profits are not accountable
 - IRS 501c3, 990, Independent Audit, Annual Report
- Non-profits are not businesses
 - Same bottom line: Income-Expense = Ability to stay in business
- Non-profits cannot make a profit
 - Unrestricted funds, Fund Balances, Reserves
- Non-profits can't lobby
 - Advocacy, 5%, special election

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So what does the nonprofit partner want?

- Mission fulfillment
- Opportunity to expand its resources
- Respectful 2-way partnership – not your ATM
- Community recognition
- Long term relationship

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Mission Fulfillment

- Match your site needs to the right partner – utilize searches & community participation to find great partners
- Lay out your needs fully – explain your site and plans – work to match mission and seek synergy
- Make sure it's fundable – respect the non-profit funding drivers

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Resource Growth

- Look for donation opportunities and participate ethically
- Don't be an ATM either, but create leverage
- Look for sustainable earned revenue opportunities
- Raise friends alongside your partner

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2-Way Partnership

- Set expectations, roles, responsibilities, results and evaluation measures at the beginning and together
- Don't view each other as a funder
- Find time-effective ways to communicate regularly
- Drive the partnership down into both staffs

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Community Recognition

- For your nonprofit partner this is essential for funding strategies
- Develop a public campaign plan as you develop each project
- Link your partner to opportunities to meet your site users and other partners
- Take your partner with you to public events

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Long Term Relationship

- Non-profits are perpetual organizations – they may select short term projects but they don't invest often in short term relationships
- Non-profits want to tell a continuous exciting story about their achievements
- Start with multi-year plan to build upon

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Common Non-profit Partner Activities

- Attract & manage volunteers
- Educate the public about the land and the public benefits
- Fund and manage projects
- Create sustainable resources
- Bring other partners to the table

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Some Partners Your Partner May Bring to the Table

- National Nonprofits
- Community Foundations
- Foundations and Regional Grant-maker Organizations
- Corporate “Citizens”
- Professional Associations
- Community Colleges, Business Schools, Universities

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Best Practices

- Focus on a clear mission and message
- Find the opportunities for sustainable earned revenue
- Demonstrate early 2-3 substantial, completed improvements and programs
- Recognize the benefits of the nonprofit persona

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Best Practices

Your circumstances will determine to some extent the agility and flexibility of the non-profit partner.

- Agency control and entrepreneurship vary.
- Agency leaders tend to move and continuity depends upon deep ties to the whole staff.
- The web of federal MOUs, cooperative agreements, etc. are common tools that carry weight and that all understand.
- The best communication practices pay attention to both formal and informal methods with the agency and encourage sharing the decisions and the work.
- The most successful non-profit partners have leveraged agency funds so that money or resources flow both ways.

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