

Partnerships



➤ Long-term partnerships take **time to develop**.

- Seed idea—initial vision.
- Connecting with appropriate people at the organization to assess interest.
- Discuss with key library staff.
- Inform Board.
- Determine costs (hard and soft – Absorb into current budget? Need a sponsor? Grant application? Include in next year’s budget?)
- Involve staff whose jobs will be affected (minimum) and all staff – to inform, seek ideas from, address concerns.
- The seed idea begins to grow into a far better, stronger vision.
- Can staff incorporate? Need to develop a “stop doing” list?
- Set up monthly meetings with a launch date one year out?

➤ **Five key factors.** The most successful partnerships:

- Supplement—as opposed to replace—the programs of other organizations.
- Advance the library’s vision and mission.
- Clearly outline administrative authority, funding sources, and each party’s obligations and expectations.
- Benefit the organizations equitably.
- Incorporate opportunities for evaluation.

➤ **Engage the community from the start!**

Include a Signing Ceremony/Celebration/Press Conference to officially launch the partnership. Invite all elected officials and leaders in the community. Include remarks by the Library Board President, partnership representatives, and leader of the County or City (ideally the mayor or county executive).