

To collaborate or not to collaborate, that is the question.

Instructions: A research organization approaches you about joining them as a community partner for one of their approved research projects. Complete this checklist by answering the "Guiding Questions." Each guiding question has an explanation preceding it to help guide what to think about or consider when responding to the questions.

**Use the corresponding worksheets to conduct internal conversations and guide conversations with the research organization.**

	NO	SOMEWHAT	YES
<p><b>BENEFITS</b></p> <p>This may be the most crucial part of your decision-making process. What benefits will your organization or communities get from collaborating on the project? Consider how this project aligns with your mission, goals, and values. <b>Benefits can be tangible, such as providing a service, product or intervention that can directly impact the people you serve. Benefits can also be intangible, like increased awareness of a problem, policy change, improved community health and wellness, redistribution of funds, revamping social service and health systems, and other long-term social changes.</b></p>			
<p><b>GUIDING QUESTION:</b> Do you think your organization, or the people you serve, will benefit from this project?</p>			
<p><b>Financial benefits are essential when deciding to take on a project. However, it's not the only type of benefit to consider. Consider which of the following benefits would be helpful for your organization or the people you serve:</b></p>			
<p><b>FINANCIAL</b></p> <p>Financial Benefit includes receiving money for the project. However, it could also take another form, such as gaining experience that makes you an excellent collaborating partner for additional and larger grants.</p>			
<p><b>TECHNOLOGICAL</b></p> <p>Technical Benefit includes access to 1) technology like software needed for the project; 2) an app for your organization or the people you serve; or 3) technical information or skills.</p>			
<p><b>POLICY OR LAW CHANGES</b></p> <p>Policy Benefit includes using project findings to improve influence and awareness for your community. For example, having more organizations, and even some with high profiles, advocating for a community need can generate strong demand for change.</p>			
<p><b>TRAINING AND/OR EXPERTISE GROWTH</b></p> <p>Training Benefits include members of your organization/people in your community receiving special training or sharpening their expertise by doing the project.</p>			
<p><b>BUILDING AWARENESS</b></p> <p>Building awareness of your work, brand, or agency and influencing public policy is often considered a worthwhile benefit for some organizations.</p>			
<p><b>EDUCATION</b></p> <p>Organizations and agencies often learn from partnership projects about how other organizations do things, new processes, or even new areas of expertise. Additionally, there may be educational opportunities regarding specific topics for the people you serve. Furthermore, by participating in the project, they can gain a chance to get involved in more profound ways like learning about changing policies or how to be an ambassador of information for critical issues in the community.</p>			

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**SHORT TERM BENEFITS**

Other benefits to consider are those with an immediate impact. These benefits might not be so long-lasting, but they are still valuable. An example is that publicity about a project might increase your organization's visibility in the surrounding community.

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**LONG TERM BENEFITS**

Partnering on a project could be a way to start a long-term partnership that can generate more projects and money and contribute to sustainability down the road.

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**SOMETHING ELSE**

You and your organization might have other benefits that you value. Your organization and community can weigh the costs and benefits of this project. Are there other benefits that would make this collaboration even more appealing to your organization or community? Bring them up to the research partner. Even if it's not possible to achieve them on this project, you may be able to build toward them in future projects.

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**NOTES:**