

# 1 - IDENTIFY AND INVOLVE KEY R2P PARTNERS

Safety and health research to practice (r2p) partnerships are formed to reduce the number of job-related injuries and illnesses in the construction industry by advancing the use of safer equipment and work practices. Such partnerships may be initiated by an individual or group of organizations to address a specific hazard or to more broadly improve safety and health in a specific segment of the construction industry.

Members of effective r2p partnerships say that one of the keys to success is making sure the right stakeholders – the people and organizations most directly affected by or have the ability to influence the issue(s) – are involved.

*It's the expertise of the people at the table. For example, if you sit around a table with five engineers; you're going to find an engineering answer. – Masonry r2p Partner*

Choosing the right partners is an important process; treat it like “dating.” Do not feel pressured to “get married” right away by forming a formal partnership if you are not ready. Take your time to identify and assess the partner or partners that best suit your effort and then start taking steps to develop a partnership.

This section focuses on what to consider when selecting partners for a new partnership or expanding an existing one. We begin by identifying the stakeholders, move to assessing the right mix of partners from the stakeholders, and then provide tips for structuring and ensuring full participation in the partnership.

Section 1 Contents	Page #
1.1: Identify Stakeholders and Potential Partners	<b>7</b>
Tool 1-A: Issue(s) Bull's Eye	7
Tool 1-B: Stakeholder Perspectives	8
1.2: Assess Potential Partners	<b>9</b>
Tool 1-C: Think In-Depth About Potential Partners	10
Tool 1-D: Potential Partner Assessment	11
Tool 1-E: Consider Facilitators and Champions	12
1.3: Involve Partners	<b>14</b>
Case Study: Massachusetts Floor Finishing Safety Task Force	15
Case Study: Stakeholder Roles in the Asphalt Partnership	16
Tool 1-F: Four Levels of Partnership	18
1.4: Partnership Models	<b>19</b>
Tool 1-G: Models of Partnership	20

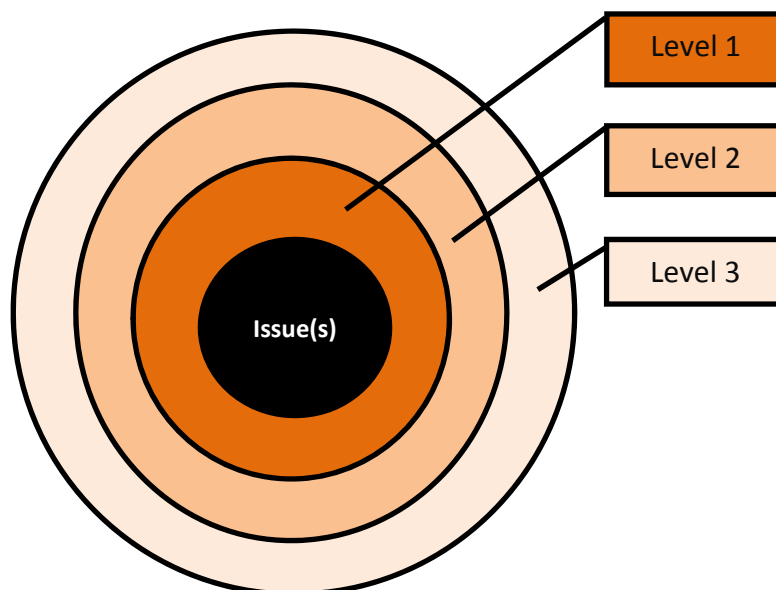
## 1.1 IDENTIFY STAKEHOLDERS AND POTENTIAL PARTNERS

When identifying potential partners, it is important to consider those individuals and organizations that have the greatest interest in and influence over the issue(s) you want to address and the outcome(s) you hope to achieve (the purpose of the partnership). **Tools 1-A** and **1-B** can help you think broadly about who these key stakeholders are, as well as which ones might be a priority to include in your partnership.

### TOOL 1-A: ISSUE(S) BULL'S EYE

#### Instructions:

1. Write the issue(s) and what you hope to accomplish through a partnership in the center of a piece of flip chart paper or a whiteboard; draw three rings around the issue(s); label the rings Level 1, Level 2, or Level 3. Each level refers to a type of stakeholder:  
*Level 1:* Stakeholders who are actively engaged in or directly affected by the issue(s), are highly influential, and have critical perspectives to consider.  
*Level 2:* Stakeholders who may be impacted by the issue(s) and are able to influence other stakeholders.  
*Level 3:* Stakeholders who have the potential to be convinced about the importance of the issue(s) and could be helpful supporters.
2. Brainstorm and write the names of the stakeholders (organizations or persons) that have an interest in or connection to the issue(s) on sticky notes; place the sticky notes in one of the rings based on your knowledge of how close or pivotal each is to the issue(s). *Tip: If you are doing this in a group, you may want to have each individual decide who the key stakeholders are on their own and place their sticky notes on the target. The group can then discuss the possibilities and move sticky notes around to reflect consensus.*



**TOOL 1-B: STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES**

**Instructions:** The following list of common stakeholder perspectives in r2p partnerships can be used as a checklist or brainstorming tool for considering possible partners. The last column asks whether the stakeholder would likely be a “core partner” or an “additional resource” that could be involved on an as-needed basis (see **Tool 1-G: Models of Partnership for further explanation**).

<b>Interest, Roles &amp; Perspectives</b> <i>What interest does this person/organization have in the issue(s)? What role or perspective could this partner contribute? What decisions do they influence?</i>	<b>Name(s) of current or potential participants</b>	<b>Core Partner (C) or Additional Resource (R)</b>
<b>Workers/Labor</b> Interest, role, and/or perspective:		
<b>Contractors/Employers</b> Interest, role, and/or perspective:		
<b>Researchers</b> Interest, role, or perspective:		
<b>Government Agency Representatives &amp; Policy Makers</b> Interest, role, or perspective:		
<b>Tool or Equipment Manufacturers or Suppliers</b> Interest, role, or perspective:		
<b>Designers, Engineers, &amp; Architects</b> Interest, role, or perspective:		
<b>Others (see ideas below)</b> Interest, role, or perspective:		

Examples of types of collaborating stakeholders and organizations:

- Trade Associations
- Labor Unions
- Joint labor-management apprenticeship committees
- Joint labor-management, association, or employer safety and health committees
- Community colleges/other training providers
- Commercial training organizations
- Non-profit organizations (national, regional, or local community-based organizations)
- Equipment manufacturers
- Material suppliers
- Tool and equipment rental firms
- Owners (public or private sectors)
- Insurance associations
- Insurance companies
- State-based insurance providers
- Workers
- Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
- State OSHA
- Other federal government agency (e.g., Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH))
- Local government agencies (e.g., local building inspectors, licensing and permitting offices)
- Research foundations
- Academic institutions/researchers
- Other research institutions
- Policymakers
- Public interest groups
- Contractors/employers
- Students

## 1.2 ASSESS POTENTIAL PARTNERS

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Researching potential partner organizations to determine if their issues and interests are compatible with the partnership's goals and to identify the resources, skills, and influence they could bring to the partnership is an important step. Explicitly identifying the benefits and the possible challenges of each potential partner may help you, the facilitator(s), or other partnership organizers anticipate opportunities as well as sensitive issues.

When assessing potential partners from the stakeholders identified in **Section 1.1**, there are a variety of factors and desired partner characteristics to consider, such as:

- ❖ Compatibility
- ❖ Historical relationships and trust issues
- ❖ Benefits of collaboration to the potential partner and the partnership as a whole
- ❖ Resources each potential partner can bring
- ❖ Level of interest in collaborating on the issue(s)
- ❖ Level of concern for the issue(s) and support for what the partnership hopes to accomplish

[Adapted from: National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. (2012). *Partnerships for Environmental Public Health: Evaluation Metrics Manual*, Chapter 2, Activity 1: Identify Partners, [http://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/supported/assets/docs/j\\_q/peph\\_evaluation\\_metrics\\_manual\\_chapter\\_2\\_508.pdf](http://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/supported/assets/docs/j_q/peph_evaluation_metrics_manual_chapter_2_508.pdf).]

As part of your assessment and outreach to potential partners in person, take time to establish rapport and build trust:

- a. Give a general overview of the partnership's issue(s);
- b. Explain the specific actions needed to address the issue(s) and why a partnership is needed.
- c. Ask about their organization and perspective.
- d. Ask about their organization's needs and discuss how the partnership might help meet those needs.
- e. Ask what resources their organization could contribute to the partnership.
- f. Make a clear and specific "ask" of those invited to partner.

The questions in **Tool 1-C** can be used as a guide as you begin to make decisions about which stakeholders to invite to be part of your partnership. **Tool 1-D** is a worksheet for recording your answers to the questions.

**TOOL 1-C: THINK IN DEPTH ABOUT POTENTIAL PARTNERS**Instructions:

The following list of questions can be used to consider the benefits and challenges to working with potential partners to address the issue(s) and what the partnership hopes to accomplish.

*Note – use only those questions that are relevant to your partnership.*

1. What potential partners have been identified? **(see Tools 1-A and 1-B)**
2. Which potential partners could help us better address our issue? **(see Tools 1-A and 1-B)**
3. Have we identified new and nontraditional partners? **(see Tool 1-A: The Issue Bull’s Eye)**
4. Do the potential partners understand and support the partnership’s priorities or have similar priorities?
5. Do the potential partners have a history of good relations with each other? Is there a shared respect for each partner’s or potential partner’s organization and work? If not, can the differences be overcome?
6. What are the potential drawbacks to partnering with each organization?
7. What specific resources will each potential partner bring to the partnership? Is there a particular strength or resource that will contribute to the success of the partnership?
8. What resources would be valuable? Who has those resources?
9. Could collaboration reduce costs or make reallocating funds possible?
10. Is there a person who could be a “champion” and will work to make sure the partnership happens? **(see Tool 1-E: Consider Facilitators and Champions)**

[Adapted from: CDC National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program. (2011). *Engaging, Building, Expanding: An NBCCEDP Partnership Development Toolkit*, Introduction, [http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/nbccedp/pdf/toolkit/NBCCEDP\\_Toolkit.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/nbccedp/pdf/toolkit/NBCCEDP_Toolkit.pdf); and the Labor Occupational Health Program. (2008). *Strategic Partnerships: Checklist*.]

**TOOL 1-D: POTENTIAL PARTNER ASSESSMENT**Instructions:

Use the following chart to keep track of the advantages and challenges of working with different potential partners based on the discussion generated from the questions in **Tool 1-C**. Use more than one copy of this chart if you want to consider more than 3 potential partners, or adapt the chart to best suit your needs.

What is the issue(s), and what do you hope to accomplish through the partnership?

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Potential Partners	[Partner A]	[Partner B]	[Partner C]
<b>Previous Experience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>History of good relations</li> <li>Shared respect</li> </ul>			
<b>Potential Benefits of Partner Involvement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for priorities - understanding of issue(s) and support for what is hoped to be accomplished</li> <li>Similar work culture</li> <li>Specific strength or valuable perspective</li> <li>Specific resources partner can bring</li> <li>Community/Industry/Academic buy-in</li> <li>Experience working in a partnership</li> <li>Research or evaluation skills</li> </ul>			
<b>Potential Drawbacks or Challenges of Partner Involvement</b>			
<b>Potential benefit TO partner (what will they get out of it?)</b>			
<b>Potential challenges FOR partner (what concerns might they have?)</b>			
<b>Other Notes</b>			
<b>Next Steps</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Would potential partner be a good core partner or resource?</li> </ul>			

Once you have identified partners, **Tool 1-E** includes questions to consider when determining which of your partners can fill the two leadership roles that experienced partnerships have described as being pivotal to success: facilitators and champions.

- ❖ **Facilitators** help build trusting relationships between partners and help the partnership run smoothly. They lead the group process, making sure all voices are heard, and all partners are engaged. They take a leading role in driving the agenda, and often ensure that administrative and logistical needs of the partnership are fulfilled. Facilitators are often individuals who come into the partnership already well-respected and trusted by other partners. **See Section 2: Understand the Art of Facilitation** for more about this role including the differences between a “neutral facilitator” and a “facilitative leader.”
- ❖ **Champions** are often respected leaders in their fields who are firmly committed to the partnership and its goals. They use their credibility and influence to convince their colleagues to support the effort, creating early buy-in and momentum for the partnership.

### TOOL 1-E: CONSIDER FACILITATORS AND CHAMPIONS

This tool includes questions to consider when determining which of your partners can fill the two leadership roles that experienced partnerships have described as being pivotal to success: facilitators and champions.

#### Instructions:

The following chart can be used to list the people currently filling, or potentially able to fill, the facilitator or champion roles. While these roles may get filled organically over the life of the partnership, taking a moment to consider these roles may enable you to strategically target particular individuals for participation or leadership.

Roles and Perspectives	Name(s) of Current or Potential Participant
<p><b>Facilitators</b> – <i>Who can bring different people together? Who can effectively communicate with others? Who can make sure that all voices and perspectives get heard? Who is trusted to be neutral and not “take sides?”</i></p>	
<p><b>Champions</b> – <i>Who are the respected leaders in their field? Who can provide access to different communities or target population? Who has the influence to convince people within the industry to do the right thing? Who can help navigate choppy waters? Who knows and is willing to engage the government and regulatory world?</i></p>	

**Additional Resources**

For additional information on assessing key stakeholders, visit the following resources:

- ➔ **Characteristics of Effective Partners in Community-Based Participatory Research –**  
<http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/cbpr/u2/u21.php>
- ➔ **4 Levels of Engagement in Partnering - the CDC's Partnership Development Toolkit**  
**(pp. 3-4)** [http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/nbccedp/pdf/toolkit/NBCCEDP\\_Toolkit.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/nbccedp/pdf/toolkit/NBCCEDP_Toolkit.pdf)

## 1.3 INVOLVE PARTNERS

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The partners you select will bring unique skills, experience, and expertise to your r2p partnerships, allowing them to play different roles. While their level of participation may change and evolve over time, it is useful to consider the different roles individuals and organizations can take on and their unique capacities.

Examples of the roles partners played in two different partnerships are described in the following case studies of the Massachusetts Floor Finishing Safety Task Force and the Asphalt Paving Partnership.

### Case Study: Massachusetts Floor Finishing Safety Task Force

One partnership that illustrates the importance of having diverse collaborators who each bring their unique strengths and perspectives was the Massachusetts Floor Finishing Safety Task Force. The deaths of three Vietnamese immigrant floor finishers between 2004-2005 catalyzed key stakeholders to come together and take action to prevent further deaths and injuries.

The floor finishing industry in Massachusetts is small, which made the major stakeholders relatively easy to identify. The differing perspectives of the stakeholders presented both challenges as well as benefits. Partners included a workers' advocacy organization, small floor finishing contractors and distributors, a Vietnamese community-based organization, university researchers, a community clinic, and government agencies. The diversity of the partnership ensured that the group's work was grounded in actual working conditions, the community context, and the floor finishing product market, and allowed the group to consider the range of differing perspectives needed to reach consensus and ultimately address the problem of highly-flammable lacquer sealer use in floor finishing.

All partners played critical roles, and each was credited by others with taking on important facilitating and coordinating roles:

**The Massachusetts Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health (MassCOSH)**, an advocacy and workers' rights organization, acted as the main facilitator and convener of the Task Force and led the work on creating and conducting survey research.

**VietAID**, a well-established community development organization serving the Vietnamese community, helped bridge the worlds of small business owners, the broader community, and other members of the Task Force in their work together. They conducted outreach via Vietnamese media and found a bilingual certified master floor finisher able to provide training to all the floor finishers. They were instrumental in conducting survey research as well.

Doctors at the **Dorchester Health Center** provided the professional credibility and evidence that helped to get the Vietnamese community on board with the idea that lacquer sealer should not be used.

A representative of the **University of Massachusetts Lowell** played a facilitating role as well, and took the lead in assembling reports and research supporting the partnership's work.

**Small business contractors and product distributors** provided information on floor finishing products and procedures and a way to directly involve the industry. "The core expertise from the business community was essential...we couldn't have made progress without them. They knew exactly what products were used, how they were used, what the challenges were for using other products, how they were sold, and who buys them....," one Task Force partner explained.

The **Department of Public Health, the Fire Marshal's Office, and Department of Labor Standards** were not official members of the Task Force, but served as advisors and resources on various health and legislative matters. The Fire Marshal's Office, for example, provided details on the types of fires that occur from floor finishing and details about fire response and regulations.

### Case Study: Stakeholder Roles in the Asphalt Paving Partnership

According to the Asphalt Paving Partnership, actively including all key stakeholders in an issue has been a key factor in their success, with each partner and partner organization making critical contributions. In their initial joint effort, which focused on the development of engineering controls for asphalt paving fumes, all of the collaborators promoted and created buy-in for partnership activities within their respective constituencies, made themselves fully available to other partners when needed, and contributed some level of time and financial resources. Partners also took on more specific roles:

The **National Asphalt Pavement Association** or NAPA was often credited with providing leadership in initiating the group and in the administration and facilitation of the partnership. They actively invested in the functioning of the group, retaining a veteran labor lawyer with years of experience at high levels of government as the partnership's facilitator and contributing funding for research. NAPA's member contractors, engineers, and other professionals also provided practical and technical paving expertise.

**Labor** contributed technical and practical expertise on safety and health issues as well, and also brought critical worker protection perspectives to the partnership. Labor's guidance and participation has lent credibility to the group's, and especially industry's, role in worker protection efforts over the years. In the Work-Zone Safety Partnership the group formed later, the **Laborers International Union of North America** took the lead in convening stakeholders and organizing the work.

**Manufacturers** designed, developed, and tested controls for their paving machines, committed to implementation of the changes through the group's voluntary agreement, and also invested substantial resources in the research, development, and testing efforts.

**Government** partners provided a range of resources and skills. **NIOSH** contributed scientific research and evaluation expertise and helped shepherd the partnership's work through the agency's practice guidelines and hazard review processes. **OSHA** drafted the group's voluntary agreement, used their weight as a regulatory agency to bring partners together to sign it, and provided the critical legal cover against anti-trust claims that was necessary for all manufacturers to be involved. The **Federal Highway Administration** was credited with providing essential resources for the group's early work.

As demonstrated in the case studies, it is important to determine each partner's appropriate level of participation. An individual's or organization's role and the ability to meet expectations of support and involvement should be considered when selecting partners. The following four levels of participation provide a way to define a partner's role(s) and clarify expectations:

**Networking** - the partner is willing and able to use their connections, websites, publications, and social media to gather and share information to advance the partnership's work.

**Coordinating** - the partner is willing and able to combine their efforts in support of a common activity, for example, publicizing a partnership outcome.

**Cooperating** - the partner is committed to the overall partnership's goals and provides resources and activities to the partnership in support of the goals.

**Collaborating** - the partner is formally committed to sustaining the partnership and reaching its goals.

Early in your partnership, you can use these four levels and **Tool 1-F** to guide a discussion about the level of engagement partners believe is required for the effort and what they are able to commit. Or, if you have an established partnership you may use this discussion to refine and communicate your vision of the partnership to new partners.

**TOOL 1-F: FOUR LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION**Instructions:

1. Distribute a copy of the table to the partners. Using the issue(s) that brought the partners together, ask the partnership to identify the level of support to which they are willing and able to commit.
2. Repeat this exercise if there is more than one issue.
3. Keep track of the discussion and summarize the results in a report to share with all of the partners.

Issue(s) \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>Networking</b>	<b>Coordinating</b>	<b>Cooperating</b>	<b>Collaborating</b>
<b>Level of Support Required:</b>	<b>Individual Level</b>	<b>Individual Level</b>	<b>Management Level</b>	<b>Systems Level</b>
<b>Purpose:</b>	Exchange information & periodically hold joint activities	Support a common activity	Support a common goal	Share resources & achieve common goals and outcomes
<b>Coordination:</b>	Short-term or episodic, even if occurring at regular intervals	Mid- to long-term plans with activities occurring at regular intervals	Mid- to long-term plans with activities occurring on a regular basis	Mid- to long-term plans with financial agreements and joint management needed
<b>Institutionalization of the Partnership:</b>	Informal	Informal with some form of written documentation of partner expectations	The mission of each partner organization supports the joint activities, and documentation of the partnership	Formal written partnership agreements for the duration of the partnership
<b>Responsibilities of Partnership Members:</b>	Only certain partners are involved	Only certain partners are involved in specific activities	All partners are involved	All partners are involved

[Adapted from: Positioning Public Child Welfare Guidance. (2013). *Types and Levels of Partnership*, <http://www.ppcwg.org/strategicpartnerships-types.html>.]

## 1.4 PARTNERSHIP MODELS

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Selecting a partnership structure that will allow the partnership to meet its goals is also important. There are many different partnership models. The following are examples of two different ones that have worked successfully in the construction industry. While these models show many groups or members in a partnership, a partnership can involve as few as two different partners.

The first, **Labor-Management Partnership Core**, is an industry-wide model established to address the broad goal of improving safety and health in a segment of the construction industry. The core partners in this model include those organizations that have the same level of concern and interest in all safety and health issues facing the industry in which they work. When this core group identifies an issue, it brings in other partners with specific expertise, influence, or interest in the issue who will be able to help the partnership reach its intended outcome (e.g., greater use of a safer work practice, or a new type of equipment, etc.)

*You always need the three organizations [union, contractors' association, and joint labor-management entity] because if you don't, nothing will happen. If any one of these organizations says no to something, it won't happen. – Masonry r2p Partner*

The second partnership model, **All Partners Are Key Partners**, addresses a pre-defined issue and outcome. Although such a partnership may expand its scope at a future date, its initial focus is narrow. Those with the expertise and influence needed to achieve the intended outcome are brought in as partners from the start. All partners are key because without one or more of the partners the intended outcome could not be achieved.

*The core is still NAPA on the contractor side. The core is still the Operating Engineers and the Laborers on the labor side. The core is still NIOSH, OSHA, and the equipment manufacturers. But let's say the top five are still the top five. So it's the same group more or less that has been working on this. – Asphalt Partner*

**Tool 1-G** provides a brief introduction to these two partnership models and questions to help you identify a model for your partnership.

**TOOL 1-G: MODELS OF PARTNERSHIP**Instructions:

1. Hand out copies of each model or draw each model on flip chart paper or a whiteboard.
2. Use the following questions to guide a discussion of which model (or a variation of the two) will work best for your effort(s).
  - Which model best reflects the structure you had in mind when selecting the partners?
  - What changes would you make to the model to make it a better fit?
  - What would be the advantages of this type of model for your group?
  - What disadvantages would there be?

**Model 1. Labor-Management Partnership Core**

A partnership can be made up of a core group of labor and management partners who invite additional stakeholders, such as manufacturers or researchers, to participate as needed depending on the safety and health issue at hand.



**Model 2. All Partners Are Key Partners**

All partners are identified as key partners and are full participants in every aspect of the partnership.

