

## GUIDELINES FOR PROJECT PARTNER ENGAGEMENT

### FOR PROJECT LEADERS

Creating strong and productive project partnerships can play a major role in the growth and potential success of your Enactus projects and social enterprises. From providing expert advice, through to unlocking the necessary resources that allow for implementation, having a suitable partner can be the difference between a project that achieves empowerment and one that does not. The following eight steps are a guide on how to achieve and manage a successful project partnership

#### **STEP 1 Identify the Project Partner**

Your team needs to consider what you are looking for in a project partner. It is essential that you share the same ethos and that together you can create a shared mission.

#### **STEP 2 Approaching a Potential Project Partner**

After identifying your potential project partner, you will need to begin building relationships by introducing yourself via telephone and email with a view to setting up a face to face meeting. In this email, you should set out who you are, your aims and what the project partner could gain from this partnership. Create a one-page PDF document that provides a clear overview of your team and your project. Please remember to include a clear description of what Enactus is:

*Enactus is a leadership development programme for third level students. Enactus students create, and implement, social entrepreneurial projects to create a better, more sustainable world for us all. In doing so, the students develop the skills that will help them become socially conscious leaders of the future.*

You must also provide the Project Partner with a copy of the Charter for Project Partner Engagement.

#### **STEP 3 Conducting a Needs & Strengths Assessment**

Once your team has approached a project partner and they are happy to work with you, you will then need to conduct an extensive needs and strengths assessment. You may have already completed this, but you will be required to review, and potentially redo this, according to the partner. Please remember to always record your findings as these will be used to build your solution. Examples of needs assessments include:

- Focus groups
- Key informant interviews
- Community meetings
- Surveys
- Data Analysis

A needs assessment should be continuous and you should always consult with your project partner and/or project beneficiaries to ensure their needs are being met.

## **STEP 4 Vision, Mission & Goals**

When developing a vision, mission and goals for the project, in conjunction with your project partner, it is important to integrate your findings from your needs assessment. Please refer to the Enactus project criterion when setting goals as all projects must have impact and have the potential to empower.

When setting goals be honest regarding how much time and resources, both you and your project partner, can allocate. Set honest expectations, being aware of study and exam periods as well as holiday time. A good partnership is mutually beneficial with clear expectations from both sides.

## **STEP 5 Project Plan Creation**

You will need to identify when, where and how the project will start, who will carry out the necessary tasks and how the results will be measured. This plan can be used to track progress. After creating the project plan, the team should consult the project partner to ensure they are happy with the plan and to afford them the opportunity to add to or edit the plan. The team should be open to feedback and receptive to new ideas.

## **STEP 6 Roles & Responsibilities**

It is essential to clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of both the team and project partner. This ensures that all parties understand their roles and limits the chances of work being omitted.

## **STEP 7 Communication Plan**

A communication plan should be agreed upon to ensure the success of your project. This plan should establish who is in charge of managing the communication between the team and the project partner. It should include a framework for reporting project updates and arranging meeting dates. We recommend that minutes are taken at meetings to accurately document discussions.

## **STEP 8 Evaluation & Assessment**

Throughout the project it is essential to assess the outputs and outcomes in order to measure it's success and identify areas of improvements. Upon completion, the project itself, and the partnership, must undergo a full evaluation.