

September TA Peer-to-Peer Call Notes

Partnerships that Transform: A Peer-to-Peer Exploration of Effective Grant Collaborations



DATE: September 26, 2023

TIME: 3:00-4:30 P.M. EDT

GRANTEES IN ATTENDANCE

- Total Attendees: 21

BUILDING STRONG PARTNERSHIPS CHALLENGES DISCUSSION

Staff Turnover

- Some grantees shared that they have had challenges with turnover and transition of key staff within their partners' organizations, which can be especially problematic when essential knowledge, experience, or relationship rests with one particular person who leaves the partner organization.
- One grantee described the challenges of developing a relationship with a new staff person once turnover within a partner organization has occurred, particularly when the new staff person approaches the partnership differently than their predecessor did. The grantee suggested that in situations like these, it can be helpful to further cultivate relationships with other existing staff at the partner organization while simultaneously continuing to work to build the relationship with the new staff person.

Communication

- Another grantee shared that lack of communication with grant partners can be an issue, particularly when grant partners do not proactively share critical updates or issues.
 - Another grantee shared that having structured meeting schedules also helped to combat communication challenges with partners. Meetings can be scheduled on a consistent weekly, monthly, or quarterly basis throughout the entirety of the project, which helps push the partnership forward.
- A grantee shared that "ego" can be a challenge when individuals within partner organizations impede progress by focusing more on receiving individual recognition for themselves or their organization and ensuring job security rather than on recognizing the value of the partnership.
- One grantee shared that lack of clarity around roles and responsibilities, as well as lacking a shared vision and mission, became challenges for them.
 - To combat this challenge, the grantee worked with the partner organization to develop shared understanding of all roles and document responsibilities. The grantee also explained the benefits of the partnership for the organization to help find common ground and develop trust.
 - Having the partner help develop processes increases the likelihood that they will be on board with the partnership.

September TA Peer-to-Peer Call Notes

Partnerships that Transform: A Peer-to-Peer Exploration of Effective Grant Collaborations



EXPANDING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS DISCUSSION

- One grantee shared that they have an Advisory Board, made up of members representing all areas of the state. The Advisory Board gives the grantee access to information and contacts to expand the grant's reach and progress.
- Another grantee shared that they have done a lot of presentations throughout their service areas, which has helped to expand their partnerships and has led to more opportunities to present to new groups. Additionally, the grantee noted that:
 - It is important to have different presentations tailored to reflect the makeup and interests of the groups receiving the information; and
 - Having one-on-one conversations with different groups of people has helped to develop relationships.
- An AIR staff member shared that while it may seem obvious, it is important to “be nice” when working to expand partnerships, displaying the actions and behaviors to prospective partners that a grantee would want reciprocated. In other words, be the kind of partner you'd like to have.
 - This includes following through on commitments and providing help to people who may not be directly connected to the grant. These actions help to deepen the trust within the partner network.

LEVERAGING AND ALIGNING RESOURCES DISCUSSION

- A grantee shared that they host a Rural Healthcare Equity Summit, which was started to share and get ideas about how to increase the healthcare workforce across the state; the summit also fueled their application for the Department of Labor grant.
 - Since the summit began, several of the grantee's partners have been awarded additional Federal grants.
- Another grantee shared that they empower their partners to utilize their teams and their talents to better serve their apprenticeships. Other comments in this area included:
 - It is important to remind partners of the talents and resources at their disposal across the partnership network that can help their workforce.
 - Empower the partners to be innovative in terms of how they can utilize their resources.
 - A grantee shared that they also give their partners a choice in their roles, as giving someone the opportunity to work on something that they are good at can serve as an investment-building strategy.

September TA Peer-to-Peer Call Notes

Partnerships that Transform: A Peer-to-Peer Exploration of Effective Grant Collaborations

PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS AND IMPACTS DISCUSSION

Agreements

- Grantees discussed the importance of agreements so that everyone's expectations and responsibilities are clear, and it helps to manage the relationship long-term.
- Be flexible and adaptable with partnership agreements.
- One grantee shared that they do not have a formal partnership agreement; however, they have developed trust and personal relationships that allow them to communicate issues with funding or enrollment. When challenges arise, the partners are willing to help each other out because of the relationship that they have developed.
-  Formal agreements can be important when there are one-on-one relationships. When turnover occurs in one of these roles, a formal agreement can help maintain the relationship with the organization and not just the person.

Impacts

- An easy way to track the impact of a partnership is to use the QNR to “tell the story” of the partnership's evolution and show the progress that has been made over time.
- One grantee shared that for other grants they have managed, they have conducted an exit interview with their partners that consists of a survey and a face-to-face meeting. This grantee also conducts ongoing check-ins with their employer partners. Additionally, the grantee collects testimonials and shares them at conferences so that attendees can better understand the program and its impacts.