



Millersville University

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL  
PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

# INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

## GUIDE FOR MU EMPLOYEES



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

International Programs and Services Responsibilities .....	3
Partnership Advocates .....	3
International Partnership Workflow .....	4
Inquiry.....	4
Characteristics of Partnership Development .....	4
Proposal .....	7
Agreements and Contracts .....	7
From Onboarding and Implementation to Stabilization and Supports.....	8
Renewal .....	10

**NOTE:** This document is updated regularly as policies and procedures across campus offices change. Updated as of **3/1/2023**.

## MISSION, GOALS, & OUTCOMES

Millersville University has a variety of strategic partnerships across the globe. Academic departments and individual faculty and staff can collaborate with these partners to internationalize their work, service, or research and to provide opportunities for their students abroad, in their classrooms, and throughout the wider campus community. Millersville's international partnerships support student, faculty, and staff international mobility, facilitate special international student recruitment programs, and enable other opportunities for mutual collaboration.

### MISSION STATEMENT:

- Connect the campus community to a global network of partners to achieve sustainable development.

### PARTNERSHIP GOALS:

- Develop sustainable and meaningful international connections with diverse partners.
- Maintain quality assurance of partnership activities, agreements, and partnership support.
- Adhere to industry standards of good practice.

### PARTNERSHIP OUTCOMES:

- Partnerships will align with strategic goals set by each member.
- Partnerships will exhibit mutual accountability and increased transparency.
- Partnerships will use an evidence-based approach for monitoring and evaluating progress.
- Partnerships will aim to positively impact Millersville University and other IPS units.

## INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS & SERVICES RESPONSIBILITIES

International Programs & Services (IPS) is the main point of contact for all international partnerships, partnership development, and partnership-related workflows. IPS staff review initial partnership proposals, maintains agreements, and supports the development of collaborative projects and programs. Below is a simplified chart which outlines IPS' main international partnership responsibilities:

ASSET AND WORKFLOW MANAGER	FACILITATOR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manages the MU partnership proposal, agreements and contracts, onboarding and implementation, and renewal workflows.</li> <li>• Identifies, records, and tracks all partnership agreements and contracts.</li> <li>• Identifies, records, and tracks all partnership relationships (formal and informal).</li> <li>• Collects and monitors partnership/project data (outcomes).</li> <li>• Prioritizes partnership resources based on data and institutional priorities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leads MU stakeholders to set partnership priorities and strategy.</li> <li>• Makes connections between institutions or organizations and MU stakeholders.</li> <li>• Proposes new international partnerships on behalf of MU administration.</li> <li>• Proposes new partnership projects or initiatives that align with MU's strategic plan.</li> <li>• Assists MU stakeholders with existing projects or initiatives.</li> </ul>
COMMUNICATOR	EDUCATOR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents on MU's brand identity to enhance MU's image and reputation abroad.</li> <li>• Shares results of partnership development and projects or initiatives via annual and ad hoc reports.</li> <li>• Leads and/or assists Partnership Advocates with partnership annual meetings with MU and international stakeholders.</li> <li>• Collaborates with Partnership Advocates.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educates stakeholders about MU's international priorities.</li> <li>• Explains education system and credential differences, foreign legal requirements and workflows, and ethical risks.</li> <li>• Advises MU stakeholders on the benefits and liabilities of partnerships and collaborative activities.</li> </ul>

## PARTNERSHIP ADVOCATES

MU employees (faculty, staff, and administration) hold an important role in proposing new international partnerships as well as proposing new and supporting ongoing partnership projects or initiatives. IPS may recommend an MU employee, or they may self-elect, to be a partnership advocate for a proposed or existing international partnership(s).

A **partnership advocate (PA)** works closely with IPS to support the development of an international partnership(s). PAs may initiate proposals for new international partnership. They mainly serve as a facilitator of collaborative activities to maintain momentum. They assist IPS in guiding and advancing partnership development, identifying additional external and internal resources, and providing their professional expertise. They are expected to regularly communicate with the international partner and submit important records or milestones to IPS.

## INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS WORKFLOW

The International Partnerships Workflow provides a structure for understanding the lifecycle of an international partnership and the various stages it takes to fully realize a new partnership.



**Inquiry:** In this stage, MU employees may inquire about formalizing relationships with international entities and international institutions may reach out to gauge interest in collaborations.

**Proposal:** After initial conversations, stakeholders may complete International Partnership and Activity Proposals for institutional review.

**Agreements & Contracts:** For proposals that are approved, IPS will initiate negotiations and draft the agreements and/or contracts. IPS works with MU Legal Counsel or the Procurement Office to obtain approvals and signatures.

**Onboarding & Implementation:** In this stage, stakeholders begin to develop and implement the initiatives identified on the International Partnership and Activity Proposals.

**Stabilization & Support:** This stage focuses on ensuring the sustainability of the partnership and supporting the day-to-day operations of the implemented initiatives.

**Renewal:** For partnerships that are nearing the end of their agreement and/or contract, IPS will complete an audit of the partnership according to the Partnership Rubric and collect major accomplishments and outcomes. This information is used to determine partnership renewal. For renewals that are approved, IPS will recomplete the Agreement & Contracts stage.

## INQUIRY

**STEP 1: CONSIDER CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:** Millersville University has four key characteristics when developing new and renewing existing partnerships:

Strategic Partnerships: Shift from ad hoc friendship agreements to ones aligned with institutional strategic goals.

Quality vs. Quantity: Selectivity is a key characteristic to ensure existing financial and human resources can be appropriately allocated and the development goals are reached.

Diversity of Partnerships: New and renewing partnerships must contribute to the MU internationalization portfolio in a comprehensive (many activities or initiatives) or unique way.

New and Emerging Markets: MU is committed to developing partnerships in non-saturated markets, locations where there are no existing partnerships, as well as those in developing nations.



Additional areas of consideration are described below:

Background and Goals for the Partnership:

- Partnership proposals will need to include a description of the proposed partnership, identify specific activities or programs, requested resources, and obligations.
- Does the partnership align with Millersville's strategic goals?
- The breadth of collaboration (potential university is interested in multiple ways of partnerships).
- Review of current mobility partnerships through third party providers in the intended location.
- Evidence for student or faculty interest in location (target numbers, student inquiries for location, etc.).
- Academic opportunities available to MU students at partner institution that may not be available to students at MU (research and study opportunities, internships, or service-learning options, etc.).
- What are the expected outcomes of the proposed relationship and how do they benefit various stakeholders?

Commitment/Sustainability:

- Potential quality and sustainability of the partnership and the benefits to both institutions.
- Is this a university-wide partnership, or is it limited to a particular school/college?
- Successful partnerships typically involve multiple champions outside of the IPS office. Who are the individuals taking primary responsibility for the partnership?
- In what ways are the faculty members, departments, and/or colleges committed to a sustained partnership?
- What are the ongoing academic and human resources needed to sustain the partnership?

Financial Commitment/Resources/Staffing Needs:

- What are the financial implications of the proposed partnership?
- What university resources are being committed?
- Does grant or contract funding support any activities to be conducted as part of this agreement?
- What are the comprehensive costs, available scholarships, and what is the financial structure of the partnership?

#### Accreditation, Legal Status, and Accountability of Proposed Partner:

- What is the accreditation or legal status of the proposed partner(s) within its own country? Within the US? Who is the accrediting body?
- Does the university hold any regional or national rankings?
- Does the potential partner have established governance and accountability practices that adhere to local, regional, and/or national legal requirements in their country?
- Does the partner have the necessary administrative infrastructure, resources, and personnel within the organization to support the proposed program?
- Does the institution have financial practices that are accountable, transparent, and independently audited?

#### Adequacy of Health, Safety Precautions and Research Regulations:

- Are there any safety concerns related to student, faculty, or staff mobility? (High risk-locations, State Department travel advisories, etc.)
- What resources are available to MU students or MU faculty at partner institution (on-campus support, physical and mental health resources, orientation programs, arrival services etc.)
- What is the geographical location and campus access to nearby cities or towns (size of city, public transportation options, housing options and safety of location etc.)

#### Ethical Considerations:

- Does the proposed program comply with all university policies, procedures, and ethical standards?
- Note: No international program will be initiated or continued if it requires Millersville University, its staff or faculty, to violate the laws and regulations of the US, the policies of the university, or those of the host government.

### **STEP 2: DETERMINE IF AN AGREEMENT IS NEEDED**

Faculty, staff, and administrators typically initiate contact with colleagues from institutions and organizations abroad. This contact may include informal discussions about interests and potential activities or may include historical collaborations completed without a formal agreement.

An agreement will be required if any of the following apply: *The partnership...*

- Includes outbound and/or inbound student, faculty, or staff mobility programs.
- Includes research that involves the sharing of technologies, contracts, or grants, the development of intellectual property, or has potential to require an export control license.
- Includes receiving Millersville University funds or a commitment of funds or resources.
- Requires administrative management, or review from legal counsel or the Procurement Office.
- Includes identified activities on the list of [Types of International Partnerships](#).

Some projects and initiatives do not fit within any of the listed categories and may or may not require an agreement to meet the objectives of the relationship or collaborative activity. Consult the Office of International Programs & Services (IPS) for guidance if you are unsure how to proceed.

### **STEP 3: CONSULT YOUR SUPERVISOR AND RECEIVE *INFORMAL* ENDORSEMENT TO PROCEED**

In the process of initiating a partnership you should consult with your department chair, dean, or your supervisor. Share your interests and insights about the institution/organization, as well as what you believe may be the potential benefits and expected commitments from Millersville University. While they are likely not a part of the formal approval process, your reporting line should be made aware of new partnership activities that may be related to their department, college, or office.

## PROPOSAL

Note: Form templates can be found on the [International Partnerships Webpage](#).  
Email forms to [International.Partnerships@millersville.edu](mailto:International.Partnerships@millersville.edu).

### STEP 1: COMPLETE AN INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP PROPOSAL FORM

The International Partnership Proposal Form allows IPS to collect basic information on the proposed partner, their contact details, early stakeholders, as well as information about proposed activities.

### STEP 2: COMPLETE A PARTNER ACTIVITY PROPOSAL

The Partner Activity Proposal is a living document that records various details about new and ongoing activities and projects. There may be several Activity Proposals for a single partnership. It is recommended to submit at least one Initial Activity Proposal with the International Partnership Proposal Form as it provides additional support or justification for the partnership. These documents should be updated as new information is learned, new projects are proposed, etc. IPS may request an updated Activity Proposal 1-2 times a year.

### STEP 3: IPS CONDUCTS AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSAL FORM(S)

IPS conducts an initial assessment of the proposed partner, checks institutional accreditation, determines the level of need based on their regional location, type of collaborative activities, and faculty and/or student interest. Proposals with IPS feedback are provided to the Associate Provost for Academic Administration for Approval. This process can take between 2 and 4 weeks. International Partnership Proposals will either receive institutional approval to move forward, be waitlisted for future discussions or development, or rejected. Rejected proposals can be resubmitted and reassessed after one year.

## AGREEMENTS AND CONTRACTS

### STEP 1: IPS INITIATES DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONTRACT OR AGREEMENT

At this stage, IPS staff will determine the type of legal document(s) to draft and negotiate the terms on behalf of MU stakeholders. This process may take anywhere between 4 weeks and 6 months depending on the following factors:

- If the partner is able to use our template agreements, if we need to use their templates, or if a new draft agreement is necessary.
- The amount of redlining of a contract or agreement by MU or the partner.
- MU's Procurement Office and legal counsel's review of a contract or agreement as well as the partner's institutional legal review process.

### STEP 2: PREPARING THE AGREEMENTS FOR SIGNATURES

IPS will prepare physical and/or electronic copies of the agreements and contracts for signing and send them to the appropriate parties for signatures. Signed official copies will be mailed or provided to the partner as well as stored and filed for MU's records. MU stakeholders will be provided an electronic copy.



## FROM ONBOARDING & IMPLEMENTATION TO STABILIZATION & SUPPORT

The checklist outlined below is directly tied to the partnership assessment for renewal towards the end of an agreement or contract period. It should be used as a guide for the first year(s) of development and for partnership maintenance beyond the initial implementation to establish partnership sustainability.

**Note:** These steps do NOT need to be completed in a certain order. Some may need to be completed simultaneously with other steps.

### COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

#### SHARED VISION AND MISSION

- ☐ Identify each other's resources, challenges, and needs.
- ☐ Create a mission and vision statement for the partnership.
- ☐ Identify an activity or activities to pursue.
- ☐ Identify goals and objectives for the activity/activities.
- ☐ Create a plan on how to realize the mission and vision. The plan should include:
  - How the mission and vision are communicated and implemented.
  - How often the partnership stakeholders meet to review and adjust the mission and vision.
- ☐ Complete and maintain an updated [Activity Proposal Form\(s\)](#) with IPS.

#### STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

- ☐ Identify all stakeholders at MU (Ex. approvers, funders, supporters, participants).
- ☐ Identify all stakeholders at Partner (Ex. approvers, funders, supporters, participants).
- ☐ Categorize MU and Partner main stakeholders (daily/weekly/monthly work).
- ☐ Categorize MU and Partner ad-hoc stakeholders (certain processes or involved at specific times).
- ☐ Create a plan on how/how often to engage existing and new stakeholders. The plan should include:
  - How/how often to confirm stakeholders are contributing to their assigned roles and responsibilities.
  - How new or ad-hoc stakeholders can be involved to gain institutional support for resources (Ex. Grant applications).

#### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- ☐ Assign a Partnership Advocate at MU.
- ☐ Determine the existing and needed stakeholder expertise at MU.
- ☐ Determine the existing and needed stakeholder expertise at Partner.
- ☐ Identify the division of roles and responsibilities between MU and Partner for each activity.
- ☐ Ensure stakeholders are formalized in an agreement, amendment, or other shared official documentation.
- ☐ Create a communication plan for stakeholder turnover. The plan should include how/how often to inform stakeholders of turnover.

#### RECIPROCITY

- ☐ Determine if the goals and objectives for the activity are agreed upon by MU and Partner.
- ☐ Determine if the mission and vision statement are agreed upon by MU and Partner.
- ☐ Create a plan to ensure mutual benefit for MU and Partner. The plan should be formalized in an agreement, amendment, or other shared official documentation. It should include how/how often official documentation should be reviewed to ensure reciprocity is maintained.

## **IMPROVEMENT OF PARTNERSHIP PRACTICE**

### **COMMUNICATION**

- ☐ Create a formal partnership communication plan. The plan should include:
  - How/how often MU stakeholders should meet or communicate.
  - How/how often MU and Partner stakeholders should meet (virtually or in-person) or communicate.
  - How to ensure important events, documents, and data, are recorded, shared, and archived.
- ☐ Maintain ongoing documentation of partnership activities and partnership meeting minutes.
- ☐ Identify ways to inform campus community of the partnership, partnership activities, 'wins and successes', and related stories. (Ex. Website, promotional materials, social media, newsletters, meetings, or presentations).

### **ASSESSMENT & METRICS**

- ☐ Identify goals and objectives for the activity/activities.
- ☐ If applicable, identify measurable criteria, learning outcomes, assessments, and evaluation tools.
- ☐ Create a data-driven assessment plan to evaluate success in meeting stated goals and objectives.
 

The plan should be formalized in an agreement, amendment, or other shared official documentation, and should include:

  - How the goals and objectives are communicated, implemented, and evaluated.
  - How often the partnership stakeholders meet to review and adjust the goals and objectives.

### **CRITICAL REFLECTION**

- ☐ Create a schedule for MU to critically reflect on all official partnership documentation and procedural plans.
- ☐ Create a schedule for MU and Partner to critically reflect together on all official partnership documentation and procedural plans.
- ☐ Determine how to address areas of improvement and how to implement feedback.
- ☐ Formalize the schedule in an agreement, amendment, or other shared official documentation.

### **SUSTAINABILITY**

- ☐ Collaborate with the Partner to create a sustainability plan for the partnership and/or partnership activities. The plan should include:
  - Projects for human and financial resources for the lifetime of the agreement (3-5 years).
  - How to maintain participant numbers or other metrics (if applicable).
  - A succession/transition plan for stakeholder turnover.
  - How/how often the plan should be reviewed.

## RENEWAL

IPS monitors the expiration of all contracts and agreements and will initiate the formal renewal process 6 months prior to the expiration date. Partnership Advocates will be consulted during the renewal.

IPS completes a Renewal Report which includes:

- A list of concrete outcomes produced or accomplished.
- Current concerns involving the partnership or activities.
- Potential for future activities.
- An inventory of the major development milestones accomplished based on the International Partnership Renewal Rubric.
  - The rubric will categorize the partnership as an Emerging, a Developing, or an Established/Transformative Partnership.
- The Office of International Programs and Services' recommendation to terminate, renew, or renew with conditions.
- The Associate Provost of Academic Affairs' recommendation to terminate, renew, or renew with conditions.
- The Procurement Office's or Accounting and Budget Office's recommendation to terminate, renew, or renew with conditions (if applicable).

When the recommendations have been assessed, IPS will begin the steps to renew the agreement or will notify the partner of non-renewal.