



This guide is intended to assist a partnership initiator through the partnership development process.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The Office of International Programs and Services (IPS) will serve as the main contact and lead, throughout the process. For any questions regarding international partnerships, please contact:

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GETTING STARTED

STEP 1: Determine if an agreement is needed.

Faculty, staff, and administration typically make the initial contact with colleagues from institutions and organizations abroad. This contact may include an informal discussion about interests and potential activities, as well as sharing of general information about the institution. An agreement will be required if any of the following apply:

- The partnership requires administrative management and review, or review from legal counsel;
- The agreement includes student, faculty or staff mobility programs (outgoing or incoming), such as study abroad programs, hosting visiting scholars, or faculty exchanges;
- The partnership includes research that involves the sharing of technologies, contracts, or grants, or the development of intellectual property;
- The partnership includes a commitment to spend university funds or resources, or to receive funds from an entity abroad;
- If any of the intended activities fall on the list of [Types of International Partnerships](#), published on Millersville University website.

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. Please consult the Office of International Programs & Services for guidance on how to proceed.

STEP 2: Consult your supervisor and receive endorsement to proceed.

In the process of establishing a formal agreement, you should first consult with your department chair, dean, or other campus officials as appropriate. Share your interests and insights about the institution abroad, as well as what you believe may be the potential benefits and expected commitments from Millersville University.

(Optional): Meet with the Office of International Programs and Services

Once per semester the IPS Office will host a CAE Presentation about International Partnerships. The presentation provides an overview of the process and key aspects that are reviewed when a proposal is submitted. This presentation is optional. Alternatively, you may schedule an individual meeting with the IPS Office to review the same material.

PARTNERSHIP APPROVAL

Prior to signing any agreements for an international partnership, the Office of International Programs and Services, under the guidance of the Associate Provost, will thoroughly evaluate and assess a partnership, being sure that it is beneficial to both MU and the international partner.

Note: Depending on the partnership type and depth of collaboration, this process may take up to one year or longer from the time of the program proposal to student/faculty mobility.

STEP 1: Initiator submits a [Partnership Proposal Form](#) to the IPS Office.

Faculty, staff, department chairs, college deans, campus organizations, and other stakeholders may submit a request to develop a new international partnership or study abroad program by submitting a Proposal Form. It is recommended to first have some preliminary information gathering meetings with the proposed partner. If a partner is proposed by University Administration, the IPS Office will act as initiator.

STEP 2: Initiator engages the IPS Office in collaborative research and pre-agreement planning.

The IPS Office, under the guidance of the Associate Provost and in collaboration with various constituents on campus, will begin researching the potential partner and gathering the necessary data to make an informed decision. This process may involve several meetings, international site visits, or virtual meetings and calls with the initiator and/or the proposed partner.

STEP 3: The IPS Office submits a completed Partnership Assessment Form to the Associate Provost for approval.

After researching the partner institution, IPS and the Associate Provost, will make a decision regarding the proposed partnership.

Factors that will be considered include:

Strategic Partnerships: Does the partnership align with any strategic goals at MU, college, department, or office?

Quality Vs. Quantity: Do any current existing partnerships meet your needs?

Diversity of Partnerships: Is the partnership comprehensive, consisting of multiple areas of collaboration? Does it provide something unique to the programming options at MU?

Partnerships in New and Emerging Markets: Is the partnership in a new market where MU does not currently have a partnership?

EVALUATING NEW INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS**Background and Goals for the partnership:**

- Partnership proposals must include a description of the proposed partnership, identify specific activities or programs, desired resources, and obligations provided by each partner institution.
- 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, 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?
- 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 4: The IPS Office will inform the partnership initiator of the outcome of the decision.

- **Recommended:** If MU decides that the partnership is strategic and necessary for both institutions, then IPS will implement the next steps in establishing an international agreement.
- **Waitlisted:** If MU determines that the institution or the proposed partner is not yet ready to move forward with development, the proposal will be waitlisted. The initiator may be asked to submit additional information or the partnership will be deferred for future development
- **Not Recommended:** If MU determines that the partnership does not benefit the students and faculty at the University, the partnership will not be pursued and IPS will work with the initiator to begin researching alternative international opportunities.

PARTNERSHIP IMPLEMENTATION

After receiving formal approval, the Office of International Programs and Services, in collaboration with various constituents on campus, will work towards developing and implementing the partnership. The process for each partnership is different and may involve many additional sub-steps.

STEP 1: Initiator assists in implementing the partnership.

The IPS Office will confirm details for full implementation of the program. This includes determining the following:

- Review key goals of the partnerships.
- Who are the stakeholders at MU and at the partner university that need to be involved?
- What are the responsibilities and expectations of each stakeholder? Who will be responsible for key aspects of the implementation?
- What are the steps and timeframe for implementation? (Broken down into phases).
- What resources will be required?
- Determining the success metrics for future program review.

STEP 2: The IPS Office will coordinate with the partner to prepare and sign the agreement.

The IPS Office will prepare the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Millersville University and the new partner. This process may involve detailed negotiations among the partner, IPS, academic departments or offices, and PASSHE Legal Counsel. Once the MOUs are drafted, reviewed, and signed, copies will be shared with the necessary stakeholders at MU and with the partner. The original documents will be retained in a central location at the Office of International Programs and Services on behalf of Millersville University.

STEP 3: Partnership Implementation

Once the MOUs and any important amendments have been signed, the stakeholders may begin the partnership implementation plan.

Note: Depending on the partnership type and depth of collaboration, this process may take up to one year or longer from the time of the program proposal to student/faculty mobility.

PARTNERSHIP RENEWAL

In order to continue the development of strong and sustainable partnerships, the IPS Office will routinely evaluate and assess all international partnerships. This process may consist of an on-site evaluation, student and/or faculty feedback, and consistent communication between MU and the partner.

At the end of a new partnership's initial year, the IPS Office will complete a Partnership Renewal Form and share with various stakeholders.

New partnerships will be assessed after the initial year to measure progress towards full implementation and progress towards achieving the objectives of the original agreement.

STEP 1: Every 3-5 years in the partnership's renewal year, the IPS Office will submit a Partnership Renewal Form to the Associate Provost for review.

Agreement renewals should be initiated at least six (6) months prior to expiration of a current agreement. This will allow sufficient time for both institutions to negotiate and complete the renewal process. When considering renewal of an agreement, the IPS Office, in collaboration with various constituents on campus, will assess effectiveness and progress towards achieving the objectives of the original agreement.

The partnership will be reviewed with the [Partnership Rubric](#) which places it into one of three categories:

- **An emerging partnership:** Little has been discussed, completed, or confirmed.
- **A developing partnership:** Some progress has been made but there are areas that need development.
- **An established partnership** (Working towards transformative): This is an ideal partnership or collaboration.

The following areas are assessed in order to categorize the partnership:

COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIP:

- Shared Vision & Mission
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Stakeholder Involvement
- Reciprocity & Mutual Benefit

IMPROVEMENT OF PARTNERSHIP PRACTICE:

- Critical Reflection
- Communication
- Assessment & Metrics
- Sustainability

STEP 2: The IPS Office will inform the partnership stakeholders of the outcome of the renewal decision.

- **Recommend to Renew:** A renewal is likely if the partnership has shown measured progress, major changes or additions are introduced to the scope of the existing program, and there are multiple amendments with substantive changes.
- **Not Recommended to Renew:** A renewal is unlikely if the partnership has not shown measured progress or if there has been a lack of communication. The partnership will continue through until the end of the listed dates on the original agreement.
- **Recommend for Termination:** A recommendation for termination is likely if there has been a breach of the agreement, fraud, criminal or unethical behavior, or a sudden lack of financial resources or personnel which make the partnership objectives no longer possible.

STEP 3: The IPS Office will coordinate with the partner to prepare and sign the updated agreement.

The IPS Office will prepare the updated Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Millersville University and the partner. This process may involve detailed negotiations among the partner, IPS, academic departments or offices, and PASSHE Legal Counsel. Once the MOUs are drafted, reviewed, and signed, copies will be shared with the necessary stakeholders at MU and with the partner. The original documents will be retained in a central location at the Office of International Programs and Services on behalf of Millersville University.