



## **STEP 1: PARTNERSHIP ESTABLISHMENT**

Establishing Partnerships with OneLink and Overseas Partners

### **OneLink & Stateside Partner**

The first step in the OneLink Project Cycle is to confirm a partnership between your ministry and OneLink International for this coming season/school year. To do so, simply contact OneLink at the beginning of the school year and let us know of your desire to partner with us. Please also let us know if you or someone else will be the primary point person for handling team logistics.

### **Stateside Partner & Overseas Partner**

The second part of partnership establishment is to begin (or continue) a partnership with an overseas partner (missionary), which is vital to a successful project. There are different ways to connect with overseas partners. You may already have a person or team in mind you would like to work with, or you may ask OneLink to help connect you with a new partner. We have many overseas partners, already known and trusted, who have requested OneLink student teams. See below for a detailed guide to forming new partnerships.

## **Partnership On-Ramp: 4 Next Steps**

1. Inform **OneLink** who will be your point person for team logistics
2. Inform **OneLink** who your Overseas Partners will be for this season OR ask **OneLink** for recommendations & introductions
3. Ask Overseas Partners (if with the IMB) to submit/create a "trip request"
4. Read or review the **OneLink** Partnership Agreement

# FORMING OVERSEAS PARTNERSHIPS

## A Detailed Guide to Vetting and Forming Overseas Partnerships

### 1: Finding the Right Overseas Partner

It takes God's leading and wisdom as well as intentionality to determine the kind of partner that you want to work with.

Finding a good partner overseas is like hiring a new staff person. This individual will have access to your students so it is important that they are the kind of partner you would be eager to hire for your stateside staff. As we have developed partnerships through the years, our commitment has been to developing a relationship with a person and not a place. When deciding on a new overseas partner it is desirable to make a visit to see if this is the kind of person you want to work with. Here are a few practical guidelines that we have found to be helpful as we have visited potential partners overseas.

#### **General Insight:**

1. Look for those who share your vision for ministry and your values.
2. Find an advocate in your ministry who will be able to give leadership to the partnership.
3. Make a list of the kinds of things you are looking for in a partnership.
4. Be willing and ready to share with the field person things about yourself and ministry.

#### **Field team leadership:**

1. Would this partner personally be a good example for your ministry?
  - a. Character
  - b. Competence
  - c. Commitment
2. Is the team leader balanced in his leadership?
3. Are you in agreement with the team leader's theology?
4. Does the leader give preferential treatment to any of his team members?

#### **Field team emotional/spiritual health:**

1. What is the makeup of the team?
2. How do they define team?
3. Are they grateful?
4. Are there "mavericks" on the team?
5. Are there broken relationships among team members?

6. Does the team have clear direction with expectations for all team members clearly defined? This may be spelled out in a team covenant.
7. Is the team likable? Is the team leader teachable?
8. Can your impressions of the field partner be confirmed by other sources who work with them?

### **Strategy:**

1. Is the strategy clear and written out?
2. Is the strategy something that you can embrace?
3. Are short-term teams part of their strategy?

### **Miscellaneous:**

1. Is the field partner both available and accessible?
2. Is there a sense of shared passion and energy in each other's work?
3. Working together to create a partnership covenant may save a lot of misunderstanding in the future.
4. Do not make a decision about partnership until you return home and have had time to process your trip.
5. It is always good to have multiple sets of eyes and ears in a conversation.
6. It is good to get a woman's perspective whenever possible. Be intentional to converse with wives and women in the team you are considering partnering with if the Team Leader is a man.
7. Finally and the most subjective suggestion that we would make: Is there a sense that you would be a great fit for each other?

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## 2: Detailed Partnership Vetting Questions:

### **Team Health**

1. Are you in agreement with the team's theology to the point that you can work together enthusiastically?
2. Are you in agreement with the team's philosophy of ministry to the point that you can work together enthusiastically?
3. Are you in agreement with the team's vision to the point that you can work together enthusiastically?
4. Is there a sense that you would be a great fit for each other? Is there a sense of shared passion and energy in each other's work? (This may help the Campus Director want to send the "best" students to serve and the M to give his "best" to the students... this could take time.)
5. What is the makeup of the team? Is there a clear leader who has the respect of his followers? Spend time with team members in casual settings and listen to the conversations - is there grumbling and complaining about the task or leadership? Do they speak well of their leader?

6. How do they define “team”? Is the team all in the same city working together toward a common goal or is it a group of individuals who are working at doing their own thing and meeting together for worship?
7. Gratitude – is the team appreciative of your time with them? Look for ways to serve the team while you are there.
  - a. If you are in their home: help with dishes after the meal; play with the children, etc.
  - b. Find out whom you will visit before the trip. Check with them to see if there is anything you can bring when you come.
8. Are there “mavericks” on the team?
9. Are there broken relationships among team members? (Determining this will require careful listening – you may or may not be able to just ask.)
10. Does the team have clear direction with expectations for all team members clearly defined?
11. Find out how conflicts are resolved. Are conflicts avoided or dealt with in a biblical way.
12. Are there favorites who get preferred treatment?
13. Likeability
  - a. Do people like the leader?
  - b. Do you like the leader? How much? Would you be friends outside this setting?
14. Do the leader the team respect you and your people as in, are they willing to listen and learn from you and from others? Or not so much? Are they looking for what you can give them or are they looking to build a professional and personal relationship with you and your organization?
15. Can your impressions of the partner be confirmed by other sources who, work with them? Some of those sources are: children, wives, neighbors, colleagues, teammates, people from their past, etc.
16. Be a learner.
  - a. Observe quietly (avoid the tendency to talk too much or to prove yourself verbally) and evaluate as you listen.
  - b. Ask questions that provide answers to questions you are not verbalizing. Ex. The question, “What things do you and your wife do here for fun?” can help you find out what kind of relationship they have, how they spend their time or money and much more.
  - c. Ask many questions.

## **Personal health**

1. Are there health concerns within the family that will send the partner home soon?
2. Is the team leader balanced?
  - a. Does he lead his family well? Are children well behaved? Does he treat his wife with love and honor?
  - b. Does he have the respect of his team?
  - c. Is the vision for the team clearly defined?
  - d. Is he a leader or a tyrant?
  - e. Is he open and honest or reserved? Do you trust him / her?
  - f. Does he love Jesus?

- g. What is his walk with God like?
  - h. Does he love people?
  - i. Have he and his family embraced the culture or are they still mentally living in the States?
    - i. How do they talk about the culture?
  - j. What does he say about others
    - i. Those over him
    - ii. Those under his authority
    - iii. His peers
    - iv. The national Church/believers, and those of other faiths
    - v. His neighbors
  - k. Do you want the above modeled for your students over the years?
3. Know a bit about their heart. What led them to move overseas? As individuals and as a family? Listen for any major hurdles they have encountered and how they overcame them.
  4. How do they talk about nationals/people group? Is there unnatural tiredness or shortness with the culture?

### **Strategy**

1. Is their strategy clear and written out?
  - a. How do they define success? For their own team and for a short-term team.
2. Is the strategy something that you can embrace? It is not our job or place to set strategy.
3. Will this strategy be around for a long time or not?
4. Does the M host any other short-term teams? What has been the experience with them?
  - a. How much does he include the team with the family/overall team? Is there a sense of commitment to the short-term teams?

### **Self-Revelation**

1. Reveal as much as appropriate about yourself, your ministry, vision, and goals so the partner can make a decision and ask questions of you.
  - a. Does your vision line up with his / the field's vision?
  - b. Could the two line up with slight adjustments?
2. As appropriate, mention where God seems to be leading as your conversations progress.
3. As appropriate, mention where you have pause, hesitations, or apprehensions as your conversations progress.
4. Do not make or announce a decision until you have left the area and had sufficient time to debrief with others and seek God's leading.

### **Miscellaneous**

1. Make a list of the kinds of things you are looking for in a partnership. This should include non-negotiables, as well as things that you desire but could do without.
2. Is there a desire for a real partnership? Are you a resource to meet their needs (people, money, prayer), or is there a desire for working together to reach the

unreached where you share in strategy, planning, personnel, prayer, decision-making, etc. Both are okay as long as expectations are clear.

3. Facts reach the head – stories of people’s lives reach hearts. If you are going to begin work from scratch where there is not a team on the ground it is imperative to build your team. This will take information and inspiration. Need cannot just be shared with numbers – there must be stories of real people. During your trip, watch for those stories that can be shared that will touch both the heads and hearts of those people at home. Be careful that you do not come home with stories of bad, difficult food to eat or dirty bathrooms. Bring back the stories of what God did in your heart and life.
  4. If you are looking to start a new work in a place where there is not one – where do you see God at work so that you may join Him?
    - a. Ask God to show you this clearly.
    - b. Remember, need does not determine call – there is need all around us.
  5. It will be imperative that you have someone who can be a champion for the place or people that you decide to work with.
    - a. The Leader of your ministry must be an advocate but they will not have the time to be the primary advocate.
    - b. The champion must be someone who is proven to be trusted by the ministry. They should be an able communicator, have some administrative skill and the time and willing to take the responsibility.
  6. Would this partner be a good example of M work for your students... for many students, their time with the M will/can shape their view of M work.
  7. Does the M’s availability AND accessibility fit what you need in a working relationship? Are you both comfortable here? Will you be communicating through their wife or other staff and are you OK with that? Will your side be one of your staff communicating with them and are they OK with you doing that?
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### 3: Vision Trips

Meet potential partners on the field. This gives you the ability to see them in their everyday and meet the rest of their team. Remember, you are partnering with people not locations. You are looking for folks with whom you will commit to be part of their work by sending students. Going gives you the ability to see where your students will be serving and living. This will help you speak to parents about the security situation of where their child will be. Finally, trips like these help recast vision for the nation for your life.

#### **The Cost of Vision Trips:**

1. Time: 7-14 days
2. Cost: Trips run about \$2500 for about 10 days to visit 2-3 cities.
3. Energy: Trips of this nature can be exhausting, in part due to extensive travel condensed in a short amount of time.

#### **Planning:**

1. Find a team and pray
2. Make connections with potential OSPs (Overseas Partners)

3. Target cities
4. Logistics
  - a. Airfare
  - b. Visas
  - c. In-country Travel
  - d. Lodging
5. Meetings - meals, visits, campus tours, city tours

### **On the Trip/In the Field**

1. Post-Meeting debriefs
2. Serve those you meet
  - a. Pay for meals
  - b. Take gifts or offer to bring items

### **Post Vision Trip**

1. Rest/reflect
  2. Debrief
    - a. People / Locations / Strategy
  3. Follow-up
  4. OneLink Connection
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