



LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS PLANNING GUIDE

A guide to developing partnerships that create impact.



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF AMERICA**

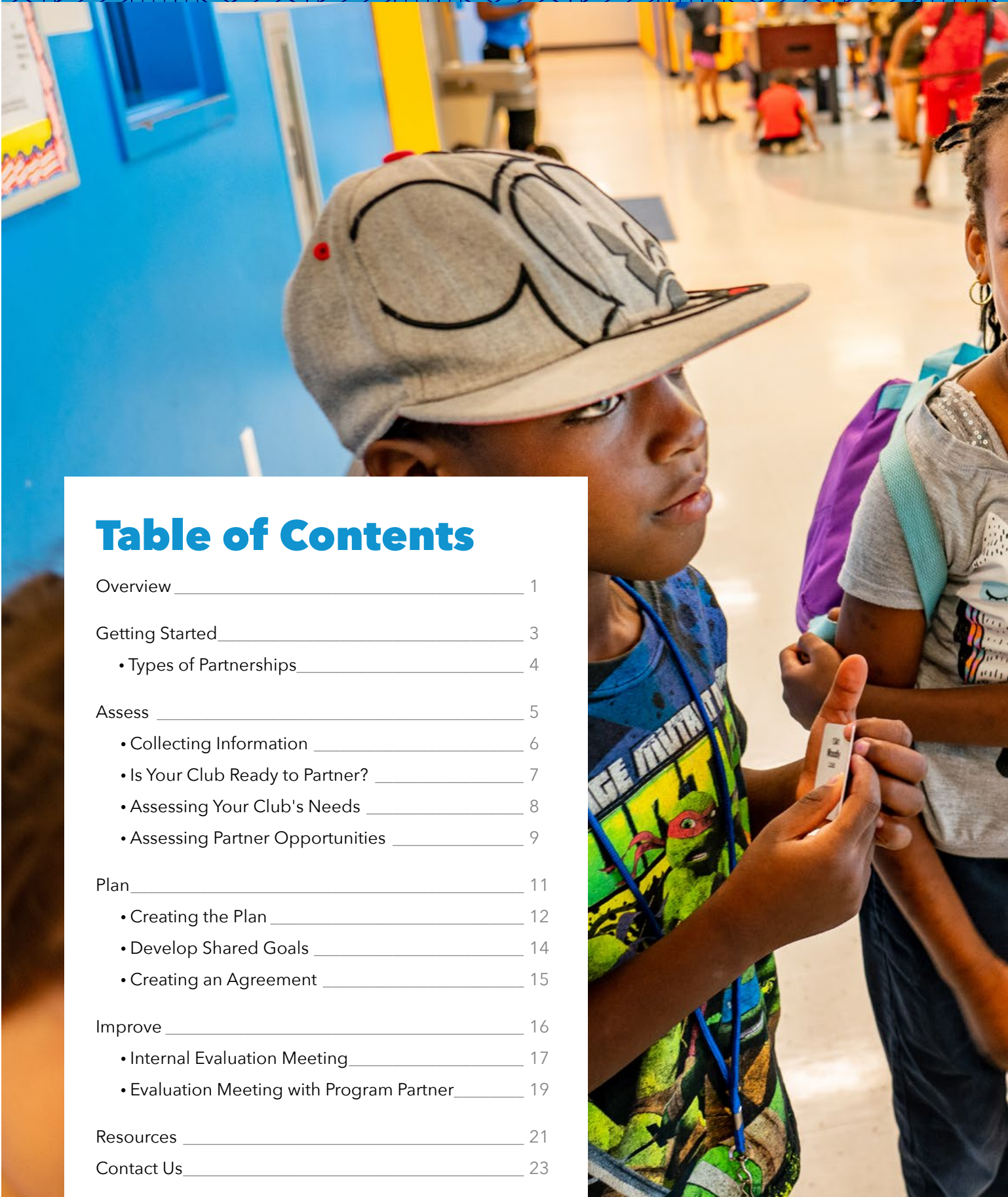


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Overview

This Program Partnership Planning Guide has been developed by BGCA's Partnerships & Growth team to establish an intentional approach for designing and securing impactful partnerships. Our objective is to support local Clubs and elevate partnership opportunities that support local organizational goals.

We work with local Clubs to create resources that enable them to not only create and deliver programs but also to develop partnerships with other community-based organizations that can enhance their offerings. Such partnerships can help increase efficiency, build capacity and extend the depth and/or scale of service with equitable access for Club members. This guide provides the necessary tools for navigating that path.

It is best practice to adopt a process to vet all external resources to ensure alignment with your commitment to quality and safety prior to being adapted, or adopted at your Club.

Partnership Marketplace

Partnerships can be developed with organizations that are unique to your community or with organizations that have an established partnership with the National Organization. The [Partnerships Marketplace](#) is the go-to location for Clubs to identify providers that have been verified by the national office as having high-quality programs and/or services.



Getting Started

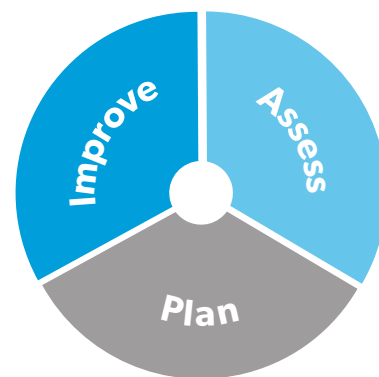
Getting Started

We know that local organizations have many established partnerships. This planning guide is to provide a support resource for further establishing and navigating mutually beneficial local partnerships. This guide can help you enhance existing partnerships or create new ones as part of a [Continuous Quality Improvement \(CQI\) process](#).

CQI is about fostering a culture of learning with the belief that we can always do better. In this guide, you will learn more about how to follow these three steps:

1. **ASSESS:** Identify specific needs and opportunities in the community
2. **PLAN:** Develop collaborative solutions based on the needs identified
3. **IMPROVE:** Engage in regular reflection to identify what's working well and what needs to change

To help drive the CQI process in your organization, each section of this guide includes:



RESOURCES

Links to additional resources



PROMISING PRACTICES:

Helpful ways to apply the suggestions in your Club

Types of Partnerships

Many types of partnerships can be established that will benefit a local Club.

PROGRAM, RESOURCE AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

A local, nonfunded partnership can be established with an organization that provides program resources, growth opportunity, training or a multitude of other benefits. At the end of this Planning guide, you can also learn more about BGCA-approved partners and providers with which your Club can collaborate. A few examples of nonfunded partnerships include:

Nonprofits

Schools

Municipalities

Health Care
Agencies

BGCA National
Partners and
Verified Providers

FUNDED PARTNERSHIPS

Funded partnerships are established with a company, organization or foundation from which your Club receives funding and in turn collaborates with the funder. The partnership may produce outcomes that enhance existing program outputs, establish entirely new programs or support the Club's mission and goals. A few examples of funded partnerships include:

Corporate

Foundations

Event Sponsorships

This guide is specifically focused on building program, resource, or community partnerships. For guidance on how to build better-funded partnerships, please visit the [Funding & Partnerships page](#) on [bgca.net](#).





Assess

Collecting Information

Regardless of whether you are reaching out to a potential partner, or an organization is wanting to partner with your Club, you will want to ensure that you have the basic information needed to communicate, schedule, and organize the partnership and the activities associated with it.

The information below is important to collect for any partnership developed. Your Club can also create a short questionnaire or survey for an organization to fill out if they are interested in partnering.

Helpful questions to include:

Organization name	Organization Point of Contact (POC)	POC Contact info (email and phone number)
Target audience (youth, tweens, teens, adults)	Geographical coverage (neighborhood/ward, city, region, state, or national)	Brief description of the organization, including types of programs, or products provided If a program, is it evidence-based?*
If applicable, cost associated with the partnership		

PROMISING PRACTICES



PARTNER INQUIRIES

Clubs often get requests from organizations to partner. Having a standard process for reviewing and vetting partnerships will ensure that your Club is engaging quality partners and also responding to inquiries in a timely and consistent manner.

- Identify a staff member to be in charge of collecting the information noted above, this may be one staff member or a group of staff members, depending on what works best for your Club. Create a system to collect information such as a "Google Form", PDF form, or other, simple way to collect basic information from interested organizations.
- Use the assessment on page 9 to determine whether you want to move forward. If you need additional information, a quick internet search or phone call to the point of contact may be helpful.

Is Your Club Ready to Create a Partnership?

Before you consider partnering with another organization, your Club will need to determine if it has the necessary capacity, readiness and interest level.

Take a moment to assess your current situation:

	YES	SOMEWHAT	NO
Have you identified why you need to establish a partnership?			
Have you created goals and outcomes based on your "why?"			
Have you identified staff to support the partnership?			
Do you have a list of potential partner possibilities?			
Does this partnership need funding?			
Does your Club have a generic agreement template that can be tailored for the partnership?			

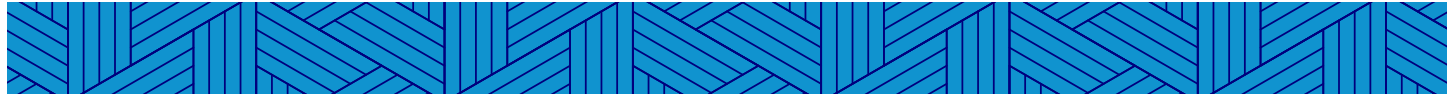
PROMISING PRACTICES



DO YOU AND YOUR CLUB HAVE THE TIME?

Investing the time to create an impactful partnership is key to your success. Consider these factors so you can build this time into your and your team's schedule.

- Create a six-month timeline for onboarding the partnership.
- Schedule monthly or quarterly check-ins at the beginning of the partnership, depending on the level of engagement required.
- Determine who from your Club will provide the "personal touch" to this relationship.



Assessing Your Club's Needs

Determine the needs of your Club so that the team can identify gaps in program services that could lead to partnership opportunities with outside organizations.

1. What are the demographics and characteristics of the Club members to whom this program would be delivered?

2. What programming, services and resources does the Club offer to address these needs?

3. What programming, services and resources do the community or schools offer to meet these needs?

4. What gaps exist? What opportunities exist to respond to these gaps?

5. How could community resources resulting from partnerships be leveraged to respond to these gaps?

Assessing Partner Opportunities

Before your Club engages with a potential partner organization, evaluate the organization using the rubric below. Ensure that the necessary Club staff are on board with the idea of engaging in this partnership. The higher your score, the more in line a potential partner is with the goals of your Club.

	0 NEGATIVE FACTOR	1 NEUTRAL FACTOR	2 POSITIVE FACTOR
Program Principles Alignment			
Grounded in evidence and meets either evidenced-based or evidence-informed criteria.			
Skills based and builds essential social-emotional skills or subject-specific skills across core areas.			
Meets Club program quality standards, including diversity, equity and inclusion standards as applicable.			
Mission Alignment			
Does the organization support closing the opportunity gap for kids and teens who need us most?			
The organization/brand serves youth OR adults who support youth.			
Alignment to Club priority outcome areas:			
Safety			
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion			
Good Character & Leadership			
Academic Success			
Healthy Lifestyles			
Life & Workforce Readiness			
Strategic Alignment			
Is there potential for alignment with your Club's strategic plan?			
Do they reach your entire city, region or market area?			
Could the organization/brand contribute authentically to preparing kids to be the problem solvers, innovators and leaders who shape our world?			
Could they contribute authentically to building strong organizations, delivering a high-quality Club experience and advocating for youth?			
Evaluate the revenue needs to make this implementation successful			
Is there short-term and long-term fundraising and/or revenue potential?			
Is the organization/brand an industry leader in an area aligned with your Club's strategic priorities or with youth development in general?			
If a nonprofit, are they open to co-fundraising?			
Is the organization connected with funders (foundations/individual/corporate) with which your Club is not connected or aspires to relate to in the future?			
Brand Enhancement Potential			
Is there potential to increase your Club's brand visibility with this organization/brand?			
Relationship Potential/Risk			
Could the organization open doors to other companies, brands, vendors or donors?			
Does the organization have a current relationship with other local Club(s)?			
Has the company had problematic media issues such as recent bad press within the last two years?			
Does the organization or company compete with a current Club partner?			
TOTAL			



PROMISING PRACTICES:

Helpful ways to apply the suggestions in your Club

Who should be involved in assessments?

When assessing your Club and other organizations, it is helpful to engage those individuals who will be most involved with the partnership. For example, if you are engaging a local partner to support a reading remediation program, make sure both your program director and education director are included. Or if you are planning to pilot a partnership in one site before expanding to others, make sure to include the unit director in your assessments. Getting input from those closest to the work will ensure you have the full picture when making decisions.





Plan

Creating the Plan

Prepare for the First Meeting

Once you've identified a potential partner opportunity, set up a meeting with the organization's leadership. Make sure the appropriate Club staff are represented at the meeting. A partnership takes time to develop so multiple meetings may be necessary to get to know each other and discuss common goals and priorities. Consider the following high-level goal recommendations for the first few meetings:

1. Introduce yourself and the Club, share data related to needs and opportunities and discuss shared goals.
2. Determine roles and responsibilities for any Club staff and partner organization staff involved.
3. Identify action steps for collaboration and resources needed for each action step.
4. Determine the meeting frequency needed to move the work forward and then schedule the meetings. You may need to meet more frequently in the beginning, when you are building relationships and establishing a partnership.
5. Check in on action steps, share successes, identify challenges and brainstorm solutions.

PROMISING PRACTICES



Make sure to establish a single relationship manager for each partner organization. While other staff can and should be engaged in the partnership, having a clear partnership "owner" will streamline communications and reduce the risk of duplicated effort.

RESOURCES



When preparing your case, ensure you can simplify it into an "elevator pitch" that succinctly advocates for your vision of the partnership. Need help in preparing? Learn more about creating an elevator pitch here: [How To Prepare The Perfect Elevator Pitch \(forbes.com\)](https://www.forbes.com)



Partner Strengths and Needs Assessment

	PROGRAMMING	SERVICES	RESOURCES
Boys & Girls Club Youth Center			
Potential Partner			

Develop Shared Goals

SHARED GOALS WORKSHEET

1. What unmet needs does the potential partner want to address?

2. What are my Club's priorities (e.g., expanding services to more youth, establishing or augmenting specific high-quality programs, supporting youth emotional wellness, engaging teens)?

3. Where is there overlap?

4. In what ways can my Club collaborate with the partner to support our shared goals?

5. How will that collaboration look different at different times of the year? For example, does collaboration look different during the summer versus during the school year? Do the organization's priorities shift accordingly?

PROMISING PRACTICES



Put yourself in the other organization's shoes and share not only how your Club will benefit but also how your partner may benefit. Be careful not to overpromise and under-deliver, as unfulfilled promises erode trust. Focus first on building a solid foundation for the relationship and proving your value as a potential partner.

Creating an Agreement

Below is a list of the types of topics that may be addressed as part of the partnership planning and documentation process or included within an official partnership agreement or memorandum of understanding (MOU).

Given that each partnering scenario is different, every partnership document will differ in what is included. This list should be viewed as a menu of potential options to consider during the process and not necessarily applicable in all cases. Clubs and/or the partnering organization may have an existing template that can be used.

- Purpose, vision, goals, for partnership and duration that the document is in effect
- Purpose, vision, goals for the partnership and timeframe during which the document will be in effect
- How goals and impact will be measured, and each party held accountable
- Expected contributions from each party; funding and sponsorship policies/protocols
- Risk management, liability and insurance responsibilities of each party
- Use of logos, marks and name, including any co-branding
- Organizational policies that will be in effect
- Staffing structure and responsibilities
- Applicable health and safety protocols or measures to be followed
- Facility usage and transportation
- Process of support and communication with schools/stakeholders/participants
- Growth and sustainability plans
- Applicable indemnification, hold harmless and/or dissolution language
- Agreed-upon communications plan
- Signatory (i.e., who from each party will sign)

PROMISING PRACTICES



For new partners, it may be helpful to create timebound agreements to limit potential risks and ensure both parties are regularly assessing the effectiveness of the partnership. For example, creating an MOU with an end date one or two years in the future will give your Club the opportunity to pilot the partnership but also provide a clear point to assess the success of the partnership and decide whether both parties want to continue it.



Improve





Continue to Improve the Partnership

It is important to engage in regular reflection to identify what is working well and what needs to improve. Evaluate your partnership annually, given that needs, priorities, resources and personnel may change.

Internal Evaluation Meeting

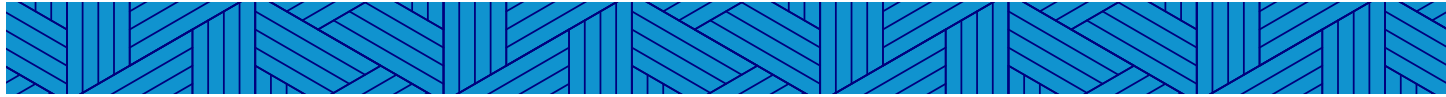
Schedule an internal meeting with relevant Club staff meeting to discuss the partnership in more detail. Use the reflection questions below to help guide your discussion and feel free to jot down your responses.

1. What shared goals and collaborative solution(s) did we propose?

2. Did we meet these goals?

**3. With whom did we engage at the organization? How did we engage with them?
For instance, did we develop a process for communicating goals?**

4. What worked well about the different engagement activities? What could be improved?



Internal Evaluation Meeting (Continued)

5. Who else could we engage?

6. How has the overall partnership addressed the identified needs and opportunities?

7. What about the partnership that works well? Where could we improve and grow?

8. Why might we potentially want to end the partnership? (Remember, some partnerships may only serve a specific purpose for a specific period of time. Deciding to end a partnership does not necessarily mean anything has gone wrong.)



Evaluation Meeting with Program Partner

After your internal meeting, schedule a meeting with your partner to discuss the relationship. Use the following questions to help guide the conversation and feel free to jot down your responses.

1. What shared goals is this partnership addressing?

2. How are we partnering to address these needs?

3. What about the partnership that has worked well?

4. What about the partnership that could be improved?

5. Are there opportunities for growing the partnership?

6. Are there any new needs or goals we should consider moving forward?

7. Are there any changes that need to be made to our ways of working together (e.g., roles and responsibilities, meeting frequency, methods of communication, etc.)?

Evaluation Meeting with Program Partner

(Continued)

PROMISING PRACTICES



Evaluating the partnership may feel uncomfortable for both parties. That is why it is important to build strong relationships and maintain effective communication throughout the partnership. When conducting both the internal and partner evaluations, it may be helpful to remind all stakeholders that the evaluation is a key aspect of the CQI model and critical to ensuring your partnership can improve.

RESOURCES



The Continuous Quality Improvement Toolkit walks you through each phase of the CQI process and includes additional resources and templates to support your efforts. Access the Continuous Quality Improvement Toolkit here: [CQI Toolkit - BGCA](#)





Resources





Resources

BGCA provides resources to support identifying local partnerships.

- **BGCA NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS FOR IMPACT:** BGCA has established national partnerships with select organizations that provide BGCA and local Clubs with the opportunity to grow and drive impact for youth across the Movement. You can find a list of these partnerships on the [Partnership Marketplace](#).
- **BGCA-VERIFIED PROVIDERS VIA THE PARTNERSHIPS MARKETPLACE:** Verified Providers are organizations and companies whose content and products have been reviewed by BGCA subject matter experts and verified as having quality content that may prove helpful to local Clubs. Verified Providers are identified on the [Partnership Marketplace](#).

Do you have a successful local partner you want to recommend to the national office?

Before you do, check to see if they qualify as a National Partner or BGCA-Verified Provider.

- ✓ Does the potential partner have the scale to reach a national audience?
- ✓ Does the potential partner have the infrastructure to support local Clubs across the country?
- ✓ Does the potential partner not require BGCA to endorse products, promote the sale of products or mandate that Clubs or members endorse, purchase or sell any product or service?

If the answer to these questions is “yes,” you can recommend that the organization fill out the [Partnership Intake Form](#).



Contact Us

If you have additional questions or need support in establishing a local partnership, please reach out to the Partnerships & Growth team at the national office.

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V2, 9.8.23