



# Equitable Research Partnerships Toolkit

## Tool 14: Research Partnership Agreement Template

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The research partnership agreement is a modifiable template for documenting intentions, processes and commitments that have been agreed upon for a research partnership. Partnership agreements developed using the template are intended to be dynamic and are not intended to be legally binding. The Research Partnership Agreement is not intended to replace agreements between partners which relate to, and may be requirements for, specific, funded research projects.

#### Why use the Research Partnership Agreement Template?

Use this tool to create a written agreement that documents the roles and responsibilities that different partners have agreed to. This tool addresses equity by:

1. Making explicit agreements and commitments between all partners and creating a record to which partners can refer.
2. Increasing transparency and accountability.

#### When to use the Research Partnership Agreement Template?

Phase	Rating	Descriptions
Planning	•••	The Sample Partnership Agreement tool is intended to be used in the <b>planning</b> stage.
Implementing	•	The tool could be adapted to focus on agreements in the <b>implementing</b> stage.
Disseminating	•	The tool could be adapted to focus on agreements in the <b>disseminating</b> stage.
Sustaining	•••	In the <b>sustaining</b> stage, an initial agreement could be examined and revised for the next partnership phase.

#### Ratings

••• Designed for this stage | •• Can be used as is in this stage | • Can be adapted for use in this stage



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How long does it take to use the Research Partnership Agreement Template?

### Rapid approach

- The quickest way to use this tool is to have a nominated person draw-up a draft agreement, using existing documentation or informal discussions, as the base for its content. The draft should then be circulated to all partners for comments and modifications. This might take the nominated person one to three hours, and each reader approximately 30 minutes.

### Intensive approach

- A more intensive approach would be to host a group meeting, and collectively develop and agree on the content for each section of the agreement. This might require a dedicated half or full-day workshop, which could be face-to-face or virtual.

What other resources do you need to use the Research Partnership Agreement Template?

- The [Research Partnership Agreement Template](#)
- For an intensive, group-based approach to implementation, a meeting space (or virtual meeting platform) and facilitator will be required.

How to use the Research Partnership Agreement Template?

These instructions are for a rapid approach. For an intensive approach, a group meeting, in which the content of the agreement was determined through deliberation, would also occur.

1. Download and read the [Research Partnership Agreement Template](#).
2. Compile and review existing agreements, discussion notes, emails, meeting minutes and other documents that might provide content for the agreement.
3. Write content (or cut and paste from existing documents) to fill each of the modifiable sections of the template (denoted <...>).



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4. Add or delete sections as required for your partnership.
5. Circulate the draft partnership agreement to key members of the partnership, requesting that they review and provide feedback.
6. Modify the draft to incorporate feedback from different partners.
7. Send the finalised agreement to the appropriate representatives of each partner organisation for sign-off.
8. Circulate the final agreement.

### Tips for using the Research Partnership Agreement Template

- The person responsible for drafting the agreement will do a lot of the work but will also hold considerable power in terms of shaping the agreement. Choosing the right person for this role is key to developing a meaningful and workable agreement.
- Research funders often have their own partnership agreements to govern partnering within funded research projects. It may be useful to check funder agreements to become familiar with the content, and generate ideas, as you develop an agreement to guide the research partnership.

### Expected outputs and outcomes from using the Research Partnership Agreement Template

#### Outputs

- A signed, written agreement detailing key aspects of the partnership's intentions, structures and processes.

#### Outcomes

- Increased mutual understanding of the roles and responsibilities each partner has agreed to.
- Enhanced ownership of the research partnership for all partners.



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### Completed example of the Research Partnership Agreement Template

Download the [Research Partnership Agreement Completed Example](#).

The completed example is based on a hypothetical partnership to study climate change impact and adaptation, between a European and a Pacific Islands University.

### References and further reading for the Research Partnership Agreement Template

This tool is modified from on the Sample Partnership Agreement in Tennyson, R. (2011). *The Partnering Toolbook*. Retrieved from <https://thepartneringinitiative.org/the-partnering-toolbook/>

For ideas about the content of [Section 4. Resource Distributions](#) see ESSENCE on Health Research. (2020). *Five keys to improving research costing and pricing in low- and middle-income countries- ESSENCE Good Practice Document*. Retrieved from [https://tdr.who.int/docs/librariesprovider10/essence/essence-fivekeys2nded2020-pdf.pdf?sfvrsn=9f37e717\\_8&download=true](https://tdr.who.int/docs/librariesprovider10/essence/essence-fivekeys2nded2020-pdf.pdf?sfvrsn=9f37e717_8&download=true).