

Establishing Shared Expectations with Your Partner

This **Conversation Guide** and **Collaboration Agreement** are intended as a resource to support your partnership building. We strongly recommend you take the time to lay the groundwork of shared understandings through this conversation guide. Please read the whole document in advance of meeting with your collaborator/s.

Want help? Contact the SLS Service Learning and Partnerships Specialists: [Rebecca Watts Hull](#) and [Ruthie Yow](#)

SLS’s Partnership Principles

1. START WITH ASSETS	Recognize and start working with communities from their assets, or strengths, rather than their problems. Engage with community partners as experts who bring important knowledge and skills to the table.
2. FOCUS ON EQUITY AND JUSTICE	Keep equity and justice at the forefront of all of our work aimed at making communities more sustainable. Highlight marginalized voices and bring them to the center of the conversation.
3. CHAMPION SYSTEMS CHANGE	Address the root causes of today’s biggest challenges.
4. SUPPORT COMMUNITY INNOVATORS	Support community innovators to deepen and broaden their impact.
5. PRIORITIZE PROCESS BEFORE OUTCOMES	Establish processes for collaboration that emphasize reciprocity, co-learning, and co-creation. Remember that the journey impacts the outcome.
6. CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD	Cultivate change in our own backyard, as responsible and engaged community members. Proximity to community partners also allows for extensive and meaningful participation of faculty, staff, and students.
7. APPLY TECHNOLOGY IN SOCIAL CONTEXT	Tailor technological interventions to local conditions and possibilities, and use technology to advance the principles above.

SECTION 1: Conversation Guide

This is a relationship building process, not just paperwork—so begin with a conversation that allows you all to talk through hopes, expectations, and goals.

- Make time! At least one hour—and try to go to your partner rather than viceversa.
- Get to know each other’s goals and values by sharing experiences and relevant documents (collateral, mission statements, syllabi, etc.) with each other.
- Use the questions provided as a jumping off point to stimulate a conversation that covers communication, deliverables, and timeline and allows participants to offer insight into past partnerships and perspectives on reciprocity and mutual benefit.

CONVERSATION GUIDE

OPENING: *Let's talk about why we are here and what we hope to accomplish together.**

OBSERVE	<p>Review the project description and goals and any other materials you have shared or brought with you. Then go around the table and have each person state one thing they are interested in or excited about re: this project. <i>Where do we have common interests and overlap? What are some areas of different interests and goals? (no need to solve them – just get them on the table as observation)</i></p> <p><u>Notes:</u></p>
REFLECT	<p>Have 2-3 people share a bit about a past collaborative experience (of any kind). <i>What worked well in past collaborations? What didn't? What principles have been most central to fruitful work in past collaborations? How might we reproduce the good aspects of those relationships?</i></p> <p><u>Notes:</u></p>
INTERPRET	<p>Listening to each others' observations and reflections, consider what the goals of and expectations for the collaboration should be. <i>Why are we doing this project/working together? Specifically: What do the students need/hope to achieve? What does the partner need/hope to achieve? What specifically constitutes our shared vision for working together? What else, beyond a concrete deliverable, do we expect from this collaboration?</i></p> <p><u>Notes:</u></p>
DECIDE	<p>As a group, you will now complete the Collaboration Agreement below. <i>What are 2-3 key points from our conversation(s) so far that we want to make sure to address in that agreement? What are other specific ways for us to engage with the community represented in this project?</i></p> <p><u>Notes:</u></p>

CLOSING: *Let's take a look at the Agreement below and, using our conversation and notes, complete it to suit our collaboration. This will help us establish parameters and goals—both in terms of logistics and values—that are feasible, clear, and mutually acceptable.*

*This conversation guide is adapted from The Institute of Cultural Affairs "Guided Conversations," available online via SLS [here](#).

SECTION 2: Collaboration Agreement - An Agreement on How to Work Together

This agreement reflects our previous conversation/s and is intended to facilitate a smooth and fruitful path forward; it is in no way legally binding. It is however, a demonstration that we have listened to each other and laid a foundation for reciprocity, joint decision-making, and continuous communication.

Project Title, Course, Semester:

Project Description: Briefly describe here, in writing, the project you are working on – and ensure that everyone is comfortable with the final description. Make sure to include the most important project goal and the primary deliverable. Revise it until everyone is comfortable with it.

Work Sharing: Intellectual property is addressed below, but in any case where students develop materials that includes their names, it is important that they give consent for that work to be shared with the partner by someone other than themselves (i.e. the faculty member teaching the course). A consent form of that kind is included at the end of this document.

Communication: Who are the primary points of contact? Include name and information to get in touch (cell phone number, email, etc.).

Georgia Tech Student Team:

Primary:

Add'l Team Members:

Partner:

Primary:

Add'l Team Members:

Discuss and note down basic communication expectations. How quickly should we all be expected to respond? How early/late is it okay to call? And anything else you want to go over.

What will we do if we experience conflict? E.g., if we are not getting responses or if we are not feeling comfortable with how the project is proceeding? Discuss and note down mutually suitable parameters re: how we will address these types of conflicts if they arise.

Note that if major conflicts arise, students, faculty, and partners should all feel free to contact SLS for help with mediation (sooner rather than later, please).

Intellectual Property/Product Ownership:

What is our consensus on intellectual property (if relevant)? Place an X:

Students will cede IP to the partner.

Students will retain the IP.

We have a separate IP agreement or understanding already in place that governs our course's or department's projects (example: CS Junior Capstone).

Work Plan/Timeline: Our work together begins on _____ and extends through _____ at which point the deliverable/project will be complete. We will have _____ check-in meetings during the _____-long duration.

Upcoming Meetings:

DATE	LOCATION	PREP REQ OF STUDENTS	PREP REQ OF PARTNER

Will you check in with each other in between meetings? If so – when and how? Discuss and note here:

Staying Safe: If you will be making a site visit of any kind, review and complete the SLS Contact Information & Off-campus Safety Tips document.

Sign and Date

Everyone involved should sign and date in the space below. Then make sure that everyone receives an electronic copy of this full document.

SHARING OF STUDENT WORK CONSENT FORM

Read carefully and place your initials next to all that apply. **Please note that if you allow your instructor to share your work with the course partner during or after the semester, s/he will notify you that the work is going to be shared.**

I give my instructor, _____, permission to share copies of the work I do for this course, with the course partner.

I give my instructor, _____, permission to use copies of the work I do for this course, as examples in this and other courses, as examples in presentations, and in print and electronic publications.

I do NOT give my instructor, _____, permission to share my work with the course partner.

I do NOT give my instructor, _____, permission to use copies of the work I do for this course, as examples in this and other courses, as examples in presentations, or in print and electronic publications.

Please indicate whether you want to be acknowledged if your work is used:

Always use my name in association with my work.

You may use my work, but do NOT use my name.

If your instructor decides to use your work, s/he may wish to contact you. S/he will *only* use this information for the above-stated purpose. Thank you for providing your contact information below.

Permanent email address: _____

Print name: _____

Signature: _____ Today's Date: _____