**Quick Tips: Partnership Letters and Agreements**

Writing might not be your forte but chances are if you work as a non-profit director or program staff, you have had to overcome your aversion to the writing process.

Specifically, when dealing with partnerships and grants, the following key documents might play a central role in the success of your project.

Quick tips on partnership letters and agreements:

**Letter of Support**- These are the most simple in our list of letters and are often used to express your….yep …you got it…SUPPORT for another community partner’s project/ initiative. Typically one page or less, this letter confirms that there is a valid need and/or interest in the project and extends a statement of support. While it is helpful to outline specific contributions to the initiative such as willingness to refer clients, assist with PR, or offer a specific services, this letter is “generally specific” at best. These letters are almost always drafted to add value to a specific request for funding.

**Partnership Letter-** Typically these letters are written to satisfy requirements for a grant request and a simple statement of support is not enough. Because these letters are often created to share with a donor, they should clearly reflect commitment to work collaboratively to reach specified goals. Partnership letters should include brief statements addressing the following:

1. commitment to partnership/initiative
2. confirm the need for the project
3. history of prior successful partnership or why new partnership is a great fit
4. commitment to project as it relates to specific roles, responsibilities and resources
5. Closing assurances and contact information

**Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)/Memorandum of Understanding-** These terms can be used interchangeably and in the non-profit world reflect a strategic agreement between partner organizations. MOAs/MOUs tend to be written for the partnering organizations rather than the donor. While these agreements are most often drafted to outline partnership goals and norms, they might also be used as supporting documents in a grant proposal. Effective MOAs/MOUs should include the following:

* 1. Purpose/Goal of partnership
  2. Key players
  3. Roles and responsibilities of each partner
  4. Joint roles and responsivities
  5. Fiscal agreements/policies
  6. Leadership
  7. Communication and follow-up
  8. Partnership Norms- values, conflict resolution, sharing data/impact, PR
  9. Process for amending or canceling MOA/MOU
  10. Time frame of partnership
  11. Signatures of authorized individuals

**Sub-contract Agreement-** These formal documents may involve a community partner who has a vested interest in your project or a qualified contract professional who must be hired to provide a needed service. Sub-contract agreements are often less detailed in HOW goals will be accomplished. More focus is placed on goals, financial agreements, expected timelines, completion, and quality assurance. These documents should be drafted and signed with care since they are intended to be legally binding, and often require approval from an executive staff member or board of directors. Some organizations and grant donors might even request a notary’s signature on the agreement.