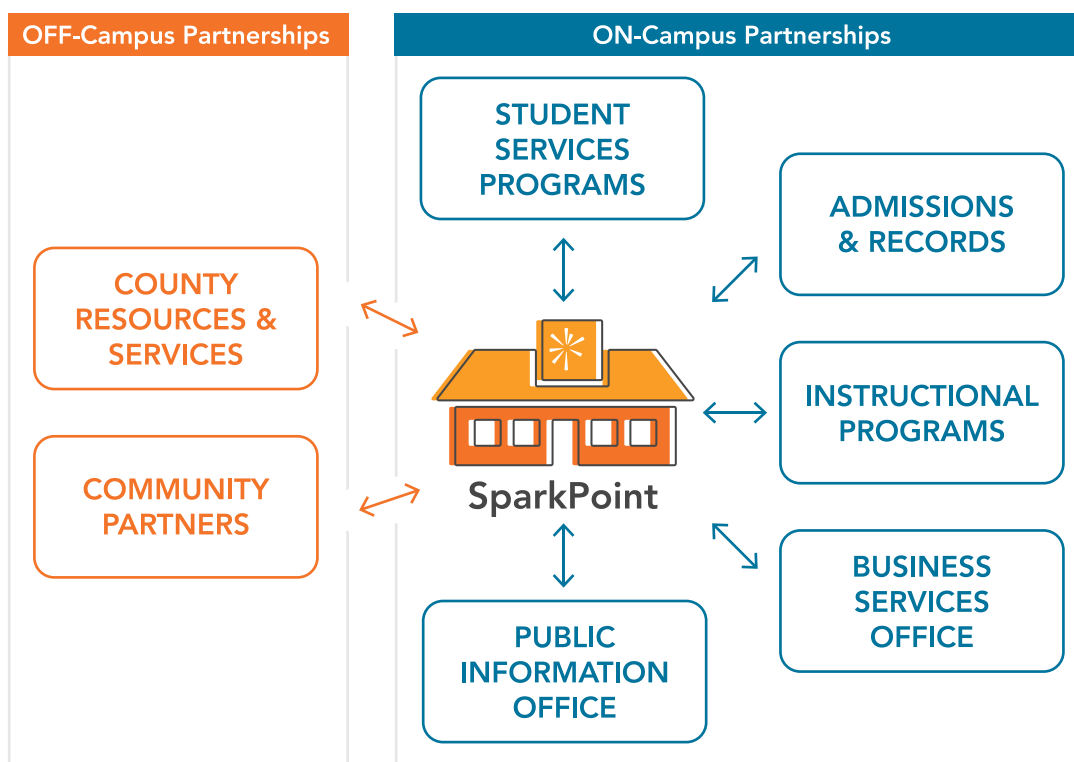# PARTNERSHIPS

Goals for this section:
- Understand the impact of both on-campus and off-campus partnerships
- Identify existing partners to participate in the planning and implementation of SparkPoint
- Connect with potential partners
- Develop clarity on the role of partners and the benefits of the partnership
- Secure agreements

ON-CAMPUS AND OFF-CAMPUS PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships can be either internal or external. SparkPoint is built on leveraging both internal and external partnerships, which work together in an integrated service delivery model. In both internal and external partnerships, it is important to align with agencies and departments that have shared goals and values. SparkPoint acts as a hub by providing services and referrals to partners, and partners reciprocate by providing service referrals to SparkPoint.

On-Campus (Internal) Partnerships with College Departments

Internal partnerships are between programs within an institution designed to support students. Use the SparkPoint Guiding Principles, your vision statement, services, and target audience to determine which departments to partner with.

On-Campus or internal partnerships can include departments such as:

- TRIO Student Support Services
- Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS)
- CalWorks
- Equity Office
- Financial Aid
- Student Services
- Instruction
- Student Leadership
- Associated Students
- Advocacy Office
- Psychology Services
- Career Center
- Tutoring Programs
- Programs for Working Adults
- Disability Resource Center
- Counseling
- CARE Program
- Foster Youth Services
- Health and Wellness Center
- International Students
- Learning Center and Library
- Transfer Center
- Veterans Services
- Student Affinity Groups (e.g., Black Student Union)
- Race-Based Initiatives
- Dream Center
- Promise Scholars
- Public Information Office

Off-Campus (External) Community Partnerships

External partnerships are community partnerships designed to fill the gap in services unavailable through internal partnerships. Use the SparkPoint Guiding Principles, your vision statement, services, target audience and your needs assessment to fill in the gap of SparkPoint programming when determining external partnerships.

Off-Campus or external partnerships include organizations, departments, and agencies such as:

- Community-based organizations providing basic needs (food banks, Catholic Charities, YWCA, housing and shelter agencies)
- Credit unions and banking institutions
- Employment Development Department and workforce development
- Financial resource agencies (credit counseling agencies, savings programs, financial coaching agencies)
- District leadership
- Goodwill
- Chambers of commerce
- Re-entry centers
- Legal aid organizations
- Educational Institutions (K-12 and postsecondary)
- Adult Education
- Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)
- Business Development Agencies
- Government Agencies (Department of Social Services, Housing Authority, Health and Human Services, Aging & Adult Services)
- Elected Officials

DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING PARTNERSHIPS

Successful SparkPoint partnerships are strategic alliances between cross-sector entities intended to achieve greater impact than any organization could generate on its own. These kinds of partnerships are integral to the SparkPoint model. SparkPoint partners are education, non-profit, private, and government agencies invested in the success of students through a shared vision. They align resources and collaborate to develop and implement center-specific programming. It is important to note that partnerships and the services offered through them could influence who is included in your target audience. Though some partnerships are born organically and do not need strong formalization, the following outlines a five-part process for developing and maintaining successful SparkPoint partnerships:

1 — DEFINE BENEFITS OF PARTNERSHIPS

- Outline the benefits of partnering with SparkPoint. These can include:
  – SparkPoint provides financial literacy and coaching, while the college does not
  – Services are on campus and accessible
  – The ability to better serve priority students
  – Proven model to build success, persistence and retention

2 — IDENTIFY EXISTING PARTNERS

- Utilize asset map to identify partners
- Partner with agencies like UW or funders that have relationships with community based orgs.
- Identify champions that can bring other leaders to participate
- Leverage existing partnerships designed to meet needs of similar populations

3 — CONNECT WITH POTENTIAL PARTNERS

- Engage leadership of potential partners
  – On-Campus: Department heads and Deans
  – Off-Campus: CBO leadership, Governmnent leads
- Discuss Alignment
  – Understand college outcomes and priorities.
  – Align SparkPoint with equity work, persistence, etc.
  – Align SparkPoint with Community partner outcomes

4 — DEFINE ROLES

- Identify a decision- maker and staff from each core partner. Streamline the decisionmaking process and ensure consistent communication at all levels from each organizations.
- Types of Partnerships include:
  – **Core Direct Service partners:** (funded) partner delivering services in 1 or more outcome areas (income, credit, debt, savings, basic needs)
  – **Core Referral partners**: have a focus on capacity to serve identified target communities. They can provide off site services aligned with outcome areas.
  – **Advisory/ Strategic partners**: meet regularly to coordinate policies, advocacy & operations establishing a baseline of best practices.
- Get clear and specific about mutual expectations

5 — SECURE AGREEMENTS

- Create working partnership agreements where partners are committed to core values of SparkPoint programming. These can include:
  – Agency or Department descriptions
  – Services and/or staffing to be provided
  – Marketing plans
  – Systems for referrals
  – If they are funded/non-Funded partnerships
  – Keep in mind some relationships are formed organically and don't need strong formalization

Guiding Questions:
- What departments and community agencies can be effective in bringing about change?
- How can partners be involved in the planning activities?
- Are partners diverse? Do they reflect the target populations?
- What are the strengths of these partners?
- What are potential barriers to recruiting partners?

- What strategies can be used to minimize or remove those barriers?
- How do these partners align with the outcomes of SparkPoint?
- How can partners integrate services into existing institution systems?
- Will funds be exchanged?

PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

Partnerships should develop organically according to local community needs and assets; however, for effective partnerships, they should share a commitment to the core concepts of SparkPoint and an adherence to certain agreements as partners.

Partner agreements can include:
- Providing a decision maker from the organization who consistently attends planning meetings to help shape the direction of the SparkPoint center and transitions onto the Advisory or Steering Committee once the center is established
- Contributing existing agency resources to the SparkPoint center (in the form of staff time, coordination efforts, etc.)
- Cross-training staff to communicate and promote partner services

- Adhering to and signing the MOU or Partner Agreement
- Jointly developing resources (fundraising) to sustain the SparkPoint center
- Promoting the SparkPoint brand in addition to individual program or organizational identity when communicating about the SparkPoint center
- Agreeing to be held accountable for participation, services, and outcomes by other SparkPoint partners
- Tracking common metrics, sharing data, and evaluating results
- Participating in peer learning within the Center and across the region
- Utilizing the shared database that allows SparkPoint partners to jointly track and manage their shared clients
- Committing to sustain this effort over a time period of at least one to three years

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PARTNERSHIP TYPES

All partner types work together in different ways to achieve center outcomes. The sample graphic below outlines the partner types (identified in the five-part process of developing and maintaining partnerships) and how they work together.

CORE DIRECT:
Share data and information about programs and services to build understanding; modify activities and services to meet the needs of students; share resources, responsibility and accountability.
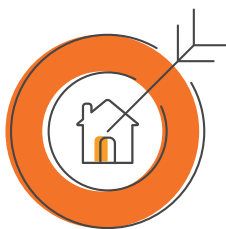
CORE REFERRAL:
Share information about programs and services to build understanding; make referrals and support the delivery of each other's programs and services.

ADVISORY/STRATEGIC:
Share information about programs and services to support and enhance efforts.