

COMMUNITY PARTNER HANDBOOK



WELCOME

Welcome to the Utah State University Community Bridge Initiative (CBI) partnership program, where we work to bridge campus and community! The Community Bridge Initiative, offered by the USU Center for Community Engagement (CCE), is a place-based Community Engaged Learning model that enables students to utilize knowledge obtained in the classroom to tackle real-world problems identified by the community. Community partners, such as yourself, can propose projects based on your priority needs to be matched with USU courses. . Students work with community leaders to define meaningful solutions, develop action plans, and implement projects directly relevant to their course curriculum. As a result, students gain deeper understanding of course content and come away with the experience of addressing locally relevant issues. Through this new partnership model, we hope to bridge the gap between campus and community to create a healthier, safer, and more sustainable future for us all. We value each of our community partners and are excited to have you onboard!

PROGRAM CLASSIFICATIONS

Through the CBI Partnership Program, community agencies have the opportunity to sign up for two distinct partnership classifications – each with their own benefits and qualifications. A full list of Partnership Requirements & Benefits for 2016 can be found in Appendix A.

BENEFITS

All partners regardless of tier level are awarded certain benefits, including the use of the AggieSync, Val R. Christensen Service Center's website, Facebook, monthly newsletter, and general volunteer contact list, to promote partner events and volunteer opportunities. Additionally, all partners will be invited to annual events hosted by CCE and the Service Center such as AggieSync portal set up, volunteer recruitment events, and trainings. Additional benefits depend on your tier level, with the greatest difference being the opportunity to partner with Community Engaged Learning (CEL) classes.

In CEL classes, students gain practical experience applying classroom material through the completion of projects with community partners. CEL projects are agreed upon by community partners and faculty prior

to the start of the semester, and community partners act as **co-educators**. Students benefit by deepening their knowledge and understanding through hands-on experience, and community partners benefit by obtaining capacity to complete high-priority projects.

BASIC PARTNERSHIP

Agencies who sign up for the Partnership level within the CBI Partnership Program will be eligible for support from students interested in volunteering with local community agencies. These partners will be assigned an AggieSync portal where they can post their volunteer needs and opportunities, have access to students who are interested in one-time or on-going volunteer opportunities, and track student engagement with their agency. Often this level is ideal for agencies that have not partnered with the University in the past or do not have the capacity to work with a class over a 12-week semester. Basic Partners who are interested in increasing their involvement at a later time can always change their partnership level to Bridge Builder.

BRIDGE BUILDER

Bridge Builder Partners are those who are interested in working with a CEL class or classes to complete community projects. Partners who sign up at this level are eligible to submit project proposals at any time, and we encourage partners to request project suggestions from their employees. The Executive Director (or equivalent) of the community partner will collect the project applications from their staff, and determine highest priority needs. Once high need project proposals are submitted to the CCE program, we will work to match projects with faculty and classes on campus. **Although CCE cannot guarantee there will always be a classroom match for all projects proposed, we will do our best to match university resources to projects defined by the community.**

Bridge Builder Partners will have access to faculty with expertise in their field, support from students with skills and knowledge directly related to the agency's work, and the opportunity to host student internships. Like Partnership level partners, Bridge Builders will also be given an AggieSync portal on which they can match with students, faculty, or courses, publicize upcoming events or service needs, and track involvement and impact of student engagement.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

To protect community partners, students, and faculty, **all community partners are required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the University**. This document, also signed by a USU representative, provides legal protection for faculty and students while they are on-site completing service activities, while also outlining the benefits/expectations of being a CBI community partner. Specifically, the MOU states that the **community partner is responsible for background checks necessary for students to participate at their sites**. Community partners can determine what level (if any) of background checks are necessary and will work with students and faculty to ensure that background checks are completed prior to the start of service. The MOU also states that the University must be listed as an additional insured on the organization's policy.

MOU's must be completed prior to any student or faculty arriving on site to work with a partner and must be renewed annually.

COMMUNITY ENGAGED LEARNING

Community Engaged Learning (CEL) is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. Through CEL, students have the opportunity for practical application of course material and development of professional skills, while addressing a defined community need. Participating community organizations gain a fresh perspective on a project or issue and added capacity to serve their community better. CEL aims for reciprocity, ensuring all parties are benefiting from the partnership to improving learning experiences, prompting meaningful classroom reflection and discussion, and providing assistance to local governments, non profits, and the common good.

COMMUNITY ENGAGED LEARNING PROCESS

1. **Memorandum of Understanding** - Complete MOU with USU and CCE, indicating that you are interested in the Bridge Builder Partnership level and working with classes.
2. **CBI Application** (completed online at cel.usu.edu and found in Appendix B) – This is an opportunity for you, as an agency, to come up with projects that you would like CEL courses to tackle. The short project application is to be distributed to community partner staff/employees so that they can brainstorm and propose potential Community Engaged Learning projects. The administration of the organization will then prioritize projects prior to submitting the final list of projects to CCE and the Community Engaged Learning program.
3. **Course Matching** – Once your organization submits a project list, CCE and the Community Engaged Learning program will match your potential projects with courses being taught on campus. Although we do our best to meet community need, there is not always a match each semester, and some community agencies might have to wait until the following semester.
4. **Scope of Work** (Appendix C) – Prior to the start of the semester, community partners and faculty will meet to complete the Scope of Work (SOW), outlining goals of the project, roles and responsibilities, and deliverables to be completed by the end of the semester. Both parties will be involved in the completion of this document and will sign it.
5. **Orientation** – At the beginning of the semester, the community partner should schedule time to provide an orientation to students who will be involved in the CEL project—either during class time or on-site. Orientation should include a discussion of the issue in the community, background of the agency, and overview and goal of the project.
6. **Mid-Semester Check In** – A mid-semester meeting provides time for faculty and community partners to assess the progress of the project, determine if any changes are necessary in the Scope of Work or project deliverables, and address any challenges or concerns.
7. **Assessments** – After the completion of the semester and the project, Community Partners complete a short survey assessing their experience of working with USU and the students, identifying ways to improve the CEL program, and sharing their accomplishments.

EXAMPLE PROJECTS

CEL projects can be as diverse as the needs in the community or courses offered on a campus. Each semester it is important for faculty to find a project that will provide students with the opportunity to gain valuable experience and awareness working in the community on a project relevant to the coursework.

What this project exactly looks like, though, depends on the needs defined by our Community Partners and the projects they have proposed. When completing the CBI Application as an agency, be creative with the projects proposed, but also keep in mind that these typically need to be completed within a semester and by students who may not have as deep or technical of understanding or skills as you. Projects should be engaging and offer them a chance to learn new skills, while also helping you to serve your community.

Project Ideas might include:

- *Music*: Students join with a local elementary school to provide music instruction.
- *Art*: Learners in an art course partner with an agency for individuals with disabilities to help create a mural representing the agency and its clients.
- *Photography*: Students in a photography course partner with a local nonprofit to help the agency tell its story visually; recording of performances or creation of promotional videos
- *Computer Science*: Students in a computer science course help an organization to build a website or develop a specialized app.
- *Justice Studies*: Students partner with local agencies to implement victim/offender mediation programs; volunteers might help refugees study for citizenship tests.
- *Communication*: Learners partner with local neighborhood groups to collect oral histories; students might help train seniors to produce their own newsletter for local retirement center.
- *Nursing*: Students help with local health screenings.
- *Sociology*: Students work together to mediate community-based social problems; Courses might conduct research requested by community agencies
- *Business*: Participants work with partners to develop marketing plans, business strategies, and sustainability plans.
- *Environment/Natural Resources*: USU students conduct a cost-benefit analysis of current recycling routs in town and provide recommendations for expansion; Student conduct studies on ways to reduce air pollution in Logan City, with awareness campaigns implemented throughout the semester.

AGGIESYNC

AggieSync is a new community engagement USU has rolled out to better track student engagement, share events and volunteer opportunities, link interested individuals across campus, and publicize our community partners. Once any partner – Partnership and Bridge Builder levels – completes an MOU, they will be given an AggieSync Portal to maintain and use to recruit students. Maintaining your portal is quick and easy and provides you with many benefits from advertising your events to be able to track how many students volunteered with you and for how long to use on grants and reports.

We are happy to schedule a time to meet one-on-one with you to build out your portal. We have already entered some basic information based off your website, but we encourage you to update that information, provide further details and start to post volunteer opportunities and events. If you'd like to start the process yourself, you can follow these simple steps:

1. Contact Kristin or Nelda to notify us who should have administrative access to your Portal. Once admin access has been granted that employee will receive an email giving them log in information and inviting them to build out their portal.
2. You can log into the system at aggiesync.usu.edu. Once logged in you should be taken straight to your portal. You can start to build it out by:
 - a. Click on the wrench icon for 'Settings' on the right. Select 'Organizational Settings' from the dropdown list.
 - i. Update and Renew your Profile. You can do this by clicking on the green button which will then prompt you to complete a short survey entering information about your agency. Once you're finished and submit the survey it will come to us to be approved and your portal will reflect this new information.
 - ii. Change your background photo by selecting 'Cover Photo' from the list on the left bar. Cover photos must be 2000 by 320 pixels.
 - iii. Add a welcome message. You can welcome students to your portal by adding a short message – if you want all students to see this first, click the 'show welcome message by default' button before submitting it.
 - b. Build out news, events, and volunteer opportunities by clicking the section in the topbar of your portal. To create a new news post or event, just click on the green button on the top right within that page.
 - i. Newspost – click on 'News' on the top bar, and then select the green button 'create a newspost'. From here you can title your post, add the text and picture, and decide who should see it. If you only want it to be shown in your portal, select the portal name. If you'd like all of USU to have access to it, you can select Utah State. Make sure to scroll all the way down and click the green 'Post' button to send out your news.
 - ii. Events – There are two types of events you can submit, regular social, informational, or community events, or volunteer opportunities. If you are posting an event you **do not** need volunteers for, click on the events topbar and then 'Create an Event'. Like the News post, from here you can add a name, description, date, location, and an optional picture. In the participant section, you can decide if only a limited amount of people are welcome at this event, and if you will make RSVP's necessary and public. Finally you choose who will be able to see this event – if you want all of USU to have access to it, make sure you click 'Utah State', and also click on the portal sharing option of 'Request inclusion on Center for Community Engagement events list to reach more people'. This will make sure the event is posted on the main USU calendar.

If you instead are requesting volunteers, you will click on 'Create an Opportunity'. This form will look very similar to the other form, but will allow students to understand this is a volunteer opportunity, not just an informational event. Again, if you'd like all USU students to see it, make sure to request inclusion on the Center for Community Engagement event lists and service opportunities, in the portal sharing section.

With these simple tools you'll be able to build out your portal with important agency information, share recent news, and post events and volunteer opportunities. Students will sign up for volunteer times or RSVP for events, which you can track when you log in, and even message volunteers and event attendees to provide instructions, more information, or have them fill out follow up information. This can be an amazing tool for those partners who to use AggieSync regularly, and as you increase your use, we can increase your portal options so you'll have new ways to connect with students to make a difference in our community.

APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY BRIDGE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

Partnership Requirements & Benefits 2016	Partner Level	Bridge Builder Level
Qualifications		
Renew MOU on annual basis	X	X
Have general liability insurance (covers at least \$1,000,000/occurrence with a \$2,000,000 policy aggregate) and add Utah State University as "additional insured" to organization's policy	X	X
Participate in annual CCE survey	X	X
Maintain current information on AggieSync	X	X
Complete the new partner online orientation	X	X
Provide a description of volunteer orientation and training that potential volunteers would receive	X	X
Ensure that student volunteers are kept in line of sight of a supervisor at all times unless they have been satisfactorily background checked to your standards	X	X
Have been a successful Partner Level organization for one full calendar year		X
Submit a list of organization's high priority lists on an annual basis		X
Host or attend meetings with Community Engaged Learning faculty/staff when requested		X
Partner with at least one Community Engaged Learning faculty member during the year		X
Assume a co-educator role in student education		X
Meet with Community Engaged Learning faculty/staff to complete a Scope of Work (SOW) for each Community Engaged Learning project/course		X
Participate in student impact assessment after every project		X
Benefits		
Promotion of volunteer opportunities on AggieSync Val R. Christensen Service Center's website, Facebook page, monthly newCELetter, general volunteer contact list	X	X
AggieSync Portal you can build out to promote events, track involvement	X	X
Invitation to annual volunteer recruitment events	X	X
Invitation to Volunteer Management Training	X	X
Distribution of pre-approved posters and flyers on campus	X	X
Access to faculty with expertise in your field		X
Access to students with skills and knowledge directly related to your organization's work		X
Opportunity to serve as a co-educator to future leaders in your field		X
Invitation to Speed Networking and partner recognition events		X
Apply to host student internships		X



APPENDIX B: CBI APPLICATION



The Utah State University (USU) Community Bridge Initiative (CBI) is a place-based Community Engaged Learning program that enables students to utilize knowledge obtained in the classroom to tackle real-world problems identified by the community. CBI matches a multidisciplinary set of courses to a community-identified set of projects. Students work with community leaders to define meaningful solutions, develop action plans, and implement projects directly relevant to their course curriculum. As a result, students are given greater depth to their course content and come away with the experience of addressing locally relevant issues.

CBI is dedicated to providing the highest quality service through the committed efforts of USU faculty, staff, and students. This application will help to determine project suitability and prioritization.

1. Non-Profit/Government Agency Name: _____

2. Project Contact Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

3. Project Title: _____

4. Project Location & Transportation: _____

a. Location of project work site: _____

b. Distance from USU: _____

c. Does partner have funds to cover travel costs? _____

d. Do faculty and students need to provide their own transportation? _____

5. Number of 12-week semesters needed to complete the project: _____

6. Prerequisite (required) skills/courses needed to complete the project: _____

7. Project Description (attach sheet):

- a. Discuss the specific community need this project will address.
- b. Outline your expectations of faculty, staff, and students.
- c. Will this be a new project or an expansion of an existing project?
- d. How many hours per week will this project demand?
- e. List anticipated tools/materials/supplies necessary to complete this project.
- f. Can CBI partner provide orientation and training?
- g. Can CBI parent provide supervision after training?
If so, what percentage of total period of performance can be supervised?
- h. How many students will be needed?

8. Can CBI partner provide in-kind contributions? Please provide list and estimated value of each. For example, office space, internet, training, certification program, transportation, materials/supplies, etc.

Contact Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return this form to your supervisor (i.e., executive director, school principal, mayor) who will select and submit projects from your non-profit organization, school, or government to be matched with CBI courses.

For more information, contact:

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APPENDIX C: SCOPE OF WORK

Project Title: _____

Date: _____

USU Courses Represented: _____

USU Faculty Contacts (name, title, email, phone): _____

CBI Partner Contacts (name, title, email, phone): _____

Project Goals/Objectives:

Timeline/Major Milestones or Tasks:

Final Deliverables:

Partner Responsibilities:

USU Responsibilities:

Approved by (CBI Coordinator): _____

CBI Partner: _____

USU Faculty: _____