





# The Network Strategy Development Worksheet

How to Use This Worksheet: First, ask all of your network members to circle the choice within each row that describes your network as it is today, and then star the choice they think is the ideal choice for the network. Then, compile your answers and use them to guide your strategy development.

You can also use the PARTNER Network Strategy Survey to do this online. Email [partner@visiblenetworklabs.com](mailto:partner@visiblenetworklabs.com) for access.

Dimension of Network Strategy	Questions to Consider	Choices for Networks (You can pick multiple for each dimension)								
<b>Network Type</b>	What type of network is it?	<b>Social Impact Network</b> A highly-connected, tightly-aligned set of individuals and/or organizations that works together, adapts over time, and generates a sustained flow of activities and outputs to solve a defined social problem. A platform for multiple, ongoing impacts (over a single outcome).	<b>Cohort Network</b> An often short-term model in which associates, colleagues, peers, or other groups participate together in activities, particularly exchange & learning.	<b>Community of Practice</b> Groups of interacting people who share a discipline, concern, set of problems, or passion about a specific topic. Loosely coordinate and episodically collaborate to deepen knowledge and expertise by focusing on particular challenges or opportunities; no participant commitments to each other beyond specific work.	<b>Association Organization</b> A set of individuals or entities that formally join an entity, meeting eligibility and participation standards, pool resources, obtain services from staff, and shape the entity's activities. More staff-driven, less member-to-member relationship-driven (focus is on serving members).	<b>Alliance/Coalition</b> A temporary alignment of individuals, organizations, parties, or states focused entirely on a specific desired result that is often narrow in purpose/scope; usually disbands when the effort has been completed.	<b>Regenerative Network</b> Not merely interactive; also purposeful in regard to adding value to the larger system it serves and developmental, i.e., evolves its value-generating capabilities—those of the practitioners and of the network as a whole.			
<b>Network Purpose</b>	What is the primary purpose of the network?	<b>Share</b> Dissemination of content, tools, practices.	<b>Discover</b> Developing an understanding of a problem.	<b>Develop</b> Research and development of solutions to a defined problem.	<b>Deliver</b> Support adoption and implementation of new solutions.	<b>Scale</b> Expansion of proven solutions to more people and places.				
<b>Network Members</b>	Who are the members of the network?	National Organizations	Government Entities	Community Nonprofits	Universities & Research Groups	School Districts	Foundations & Funders	Private Businesses	Private Individuals	
	What is the level of turnover?	<b>Low Turnover</b> Mostly the original organizations			<b>Moderate Turnover</b> Some new and some original members			<b>High Turnover</b> Mostly new organizations		
	What is expected regarding member participation?	<b>Attendance at monthly meetings</b>		<b>Attendance at annual meeting</b>		<b>Participate in cross-organization projects</b>		<b>Participate in cross-organization training</b>		<b>Volunteer time and/or resources</b>
	How is membership decided?	<b>Open Membership</b> Anyone can join the network.		<b>Member Invite</b> You must be invited to join.		<b>Non-Member Invite</b> You must be invited by a non-member.		<b>Defined by Network Type</b> You are a cohort or association.		<b>Mandated by Entity</b> A third-party group invites members.
	What roles are members expected to play?	<b>Subgroup Leader</b>	<b>Decision Maker</b>	<b>Facilitator/Convener</b>	<b>Meeting Contributor</b>	<b>Decision Implementer</b>	<b>Content Expert</b>	<b>Peer Consultant</b>		
	What resources will members contribute?	<b>Expertise</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Work Between Meetings</b>		<b>Connections to Others</b>		<b>Services</b>	<b>Power/Influence</b>	
<b>Network Outcomes</b>	What outcomes are the network working towards?	<b>Improved Communication Among Members of the Sector</b>		<b>Improved Resource Sharing</b>	<b>Improved Population Outcomes</b>	<b>Policy, law, and/or regulatory change</b>	<b>Increased Knowledge Sharing</b>	<b>New Data Sources</b>	<b>Strengthening the network of partners</b>	
	How successful is the network?	<b>Not Successful</b>	<b>Somewhat Successful</b>		<b>Successful</b>	<b>Very Successful</b>		<b>Completely Successful</b>		<b>Unsure</b>
	What contributes to network success?	<b>Bringing together diverse stakeholders</b>		<b>Collective decision-making and action</b>		<b>Exchanging Knowledge</b>	<b>Having a shared mission &amp; goals</b>	<b>New Informal Relationships</b>	<b>Meeting Regularly</b>	<b>Sharing Resources</b>
<b>Network Governance</b>	Who decides what the network will do?	<b>Backbone Organization</b>		<b>Lead Network Organization</b>	<b>Network Board</b>	<b>Network Members</b>	<b>External Stakeholders</b>		<b>Network Funders</b>	
	How do they decide?	<b>Consent-based Decision-making</b>			<b>Majority Vote of Members</b>		<b>Decisions Made Externally</b>		<b>Lead Organization Decides</b>	

<b>Network Stage</b>	What stage of development is the network in currently?	<b>Catalyzing</b> Potential organizers and/or members of the network explore their capabilities and expectations for working together.	<b>Launching</b> Organizers and/or members identify the network's initial vision and purpose and develop an initial plan. Initial network membership is recruited and connections are cultivated.	<b>Organizing</b> The network has secured resources and is piloting strategies and beginning to adapt these based on feedback.	<b>Performing</b> The network is fully operational with key activities under way. Goals, strategies, and membership often diversify as members find different kinds of value from the network.	<b>Transitioning</b> The network is effective and sustainable, or the network has lost momentum. The network as originally conceived changes or capacities are redeployed.	<b>Ending</b> The network has met its goal and/or resources are no longer available.		
<b>Network Lifecycle</b>	What is the timeline for this network?	<b>Perpetual</b> Without an end in mind.	<b>Time Limited</b> Based on a specific timeline.	<b>Outcome Based</b> Based on successful outcomes.	<b>Temporary</b> Not a permanent Network	<b>Undetermined</b> Develops naturally based on members.			
<b>Network Management</b>	How is the network facilitated?	Hired Facilitator	Members Rotate Facilitator Roles	Leadership Team	Shared/ Distributed	Backbone Org Facilitates	Not Determined		
	What is the communication structure/flow?	Top-Down One organization filters communication.		Emails Among Members Members freely email without a stated communication structure.		Intentional Structure Using listserv, slack channels and other tools and systems.		Social Network Group Using facebook or other social media tools and groups.	
	How is conflict managed?	Formal Process		Informal Process		Ad Hoc System		Not Sure	
	How are challenges and opportunities managed in the network?	Strategic decision-making process/plan		Presented to the Network		Prioritized, then brought to the network		Managed by a sub-group of the network	Managed by a lead organization
<b>Structure &amp; Quality of Connections</b>	What is the structure of the network?	 Core Group With Potential to Add New Members	 Everyone Knows Everyone	 Hub-and-Spoke Network Structure	 Sub-Groups with Members as Brokers				
	How frequent are network meetings?	<b>Frequent Interaction</b> Frequent meetings and communications fosters strong ties and keeps everyone informed		<b>Strategic Interaction</b> Meeting intermittent, and any additional are only held when necessary and communications are provided regularly to keep everyone in the know.		<b>Infrequent Interaction</b> Members of the network are pretty familiar with each other at this point and really only need to be convened when there is a specific need/request/ask.			
	What type of interactions?	Client Referrals	Conduct Research/ Share Data	Develop Shared Guidelines/Standards	Develop New Technologies	Provide Education Programs/Training	Provide Education Programs/Training	Service Delivery	Technical Assistance
	What is the quality of interactions among members?	<b>Outcomes</b> Led to exchange of info/ resources, increase of capacity and development, etc.		<b>Value Measures</b> Value measures include power/influence, level of involvement, and resource contribution. Overall Value is calculated based on those measures.			<b>Trust Measures</b> Trust measures include reliability, in support of mission, and open to discussion. Overall Trust is calculated based on those measures.		
	What is the strategy for relationship building?	Build new relationships within the network		Strengthen existing relationships		Focus on strategic interactions among existing members			Not Sure
<b>Diversity, Equity &amp; Inclusion</b>	Does your network have a clear definition for these terms?	NOTE: Intentionally left open-ended to allow you to put this in your own words.							
	Are there systems in place to address these concerns in the network?	NOTE: Intentionally left open-ended to allow you to put this in your own words.							
<b>Assessment, Evaluation and Learning</b>	What are the outcomes upon which the network is measuring its impact? How is it being tracked?	Client/Population Outcomes	Process Outcomes	A Strong Effective Network	More integration & coordination	Policy Change	Not Sure		

Learn more about creating a network strategy at [www.visiblenetworklabs.com](http://www.visiblenetworklabs.com)

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