



IAS Guidelines for Partnerships

(Version November 2022)

1. Overview

1.1 Scope of guidelines

These guidelines define the principles and procedures for the establishment of partnerships across all sectors (public, non-profit, private sector) by the International AIDS Society (IAS). They are intended to ensure that IAS partnerships are mutually beneficial relationships built on trust and that potential conflicts of interest are transparently addressed. The guidelines clarify opportunities and limitations within partnership arrangements across the organization.

1.2 IAS mission, vision, and values

IAS – the International AIDS Society – convenes, educates and advocates for a world in which HIV no longer presents a threat to public health and individual well-being. To work towards its vision of ending the global HIV epidemic, the IAS relies on collaboration with partners. As expressed in the new IAS values - Put people first; Build bridges and collaborate; Be evidence-based and open-minded - the IAS seeks partnerships and facilitates collaboration, bringing together people and organizations from all fields and all levels to drive progress.

All IAS partnerships must be aligned with the mission, vision, values and strategy of the organization.

1.3 Partnership definition

A partnership is a formal relationship between the IAS and at least one other organization.

The parties agree to work together and share resources, skills, and experience in the pursuit of common goals. They sign an agreement that commits each organization to defined principles, and to a set of responsibilities for a specified period of time.

The IAS strives for partnership exchanges that are equitable, meaningful and beneficial to both parties.

1.4 Partner definition

A partner is any organization, institution or corporation with whom the IAS establishes a formal partnership (as defined in Article 1.3 above). Partners include, but are not limited to, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, foundations, networks, associations, and private sector corporations.

The IAS can establish multiple partnerships with the same partner. These partnerships can recur



over a number of years or be active at the same time. Each agreement specifies timeframe, subject, and activities.

1.5 Strategic partner definition

IAS strategic partners are those who:

- Are essential to the achievement of the IAS's goals as defined in its [organizational strategy](#). With these strategic partners the IAS collaborates extensively across multiple activity areas of the organization; or
- Are key to the substantial development or advancement of specific IAS programmes or activities. Their contribution to the respective project or programme is unique or challenging to replace.

Strategic partners are identified on an ongoing basis. The collaboration with strategic partners focuses on outcomes and impact rather than outputs (as can be the case with other partners). With strategic partners, the IAS has a strong, preferably long-term, relationship that translates into recurrent agreements or multiple agreements active at the same time.

The IAS nourishes collaborations with strategic partners by investing resources and time in maintaining the relationship productive and dynamic. In particular, the IAS engages these partners in regular partnership reviews (in-person or virtual meetings) to assess progress and identify future areas of collaboration.

2. Guiding principles

The IAS believes in the benefit of a coherent and principled approach while engaging with partners. The IAS's selection criteria for engaging with partners derive from the following guiding principles:

2.1 IAS vision, mission and organizational values

As a matter of principle, the IAS will never enter into a partnership which would undermine or conflict with the IAS vision, mission and organizational values. The IAS will never collaborate with partners who have or promote policies, undertake activities and/or public positioning negatively impacting people living with or affected by HIV as well as key populations.

2.2 Added benefit

In a partnership, the value of what the entities create together is higher than what they would do separately. In particular, the partnership is expected to increase the relevance of the IAS's work and to amplify its reach.

2.3 Low risk



The IAS will enter only into partnerships that it considers to carry low reputational or financial risk.

2.4 Conflict of interest

In all partnerships, the IAS will carefully consider the potential for conflicts of interest at both the institutional and individual staff member levels, and put appropriate mitigation measures in place.

2.5 Transparency

The IAS is committed to the principle of transparency of partnership processes and related decision making.

The IAS discloses the names of partners and the nature and scope of the partnership in relevant sections on its website, in printed materials and other documents.

2.6 Human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption

The IAS aligns to the [Ten Principles of the United Nations Global Compact](#) that describe responsible business practices based on universal principles of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. The IAS will engage in partnerships with organizations from the public, non-profit and private sector that commit to adhering to these principles.

2.7 No discrimination

The IAS works only with partners that do not actively or implicitly support negative discriminatory workplace practices that include, but are not limited to, real or perceived HIV status, sexual orientation, gender identity, mental or physical disability, age, race/ethnicity, marital status, family or care giver's responsibilities, pregnancy, and religion.

2.8 No exclusivity

The IAS does not grant exclusive partnerships to one organization, institution or corporation in any project or programme. Every activity for which cooperation is invited will be open to multiple partners.

2.9 Endorsement

In principle, the IAS does not endorse any particular private sector entity, its products or services. However, if the IAS determines that a specific product, item or service can carry an important public health benefit, it may decide to publically endorse it. Such endorsement will always be based on an independent, appropriately published scientific assessment.

2.10 Independence

The IAS's private sector partners will not have the opportunity to exert influence over the IAS's strategic direction or programmatic priorities, including the structure and content of its conferences and other convenings, or its advocacy positions.



3. Additional considerations for partnerships with private sector companies

The IAS will not engage in a partnership, with a private sector company or otherwise, if such partnership would undermine the above guiding principles. As a global health organization the IAS places utmost importance on a private sector company's contribution to the HIV response as well as its impact on public health more broadly.

Decisions to engage or not engage with a private sector partner are taken by carefully weighing a company's track record and potential future role in the HIV response, in HIV workplace and community policies and health promotion in general against potential negative factors such as environmental footprint. The IAS may also engage with a company to help it strengthen its role in the HIV response.

Considering its (their) deleterious health impact, the IAS will not partner with the tobacco industry.

Additionally, the IAS is committed to peaceful conflict resolution and therefore does not partner with companies manufacturing or selling arms and weapons.

4. Partnership activities

4.1 In-kind exchange

An in-kind exchange of goods or services does not entail payments or financial contributions, as any fee usually required is waived through the partnership.

In-kind exchange includes the organization of joint activities: in this case, the IAS works with at least one partner to shape and deliver an event or activity, and no transfer of funds takes place. In this collaboration, the partnership agreement specifies the commitments and responsibilities of each partner.

4.2 Mutual promotion

The promotion of events, activities or organizations can be included in partnership agreements as long as the promotion is reciprocal. Mutual promotion includes partnerships established with media organizations.

4.3 Grant

Partners (donors) award grants in cash to the IAS based on a proposal or request developed by the IAS. Grants are usually restricted to a specific programme or project. The objectives and implementation approach of each project are defined by the IAS. Once a grant has been approved, the IAS will implement the project or programme based on the scope, workplan and timeline agreed with the donor. The partner will be duly acknowledged as a donor.



Should the grant be made by a private sector entity, grantor representatives will not have decision-making authority with regard to specifics of project/programme implementation other than adjustments the IAS proposes to make to the original scope, workplan and timeline of the grant-funded project.

In some instances, the IAS may be the grantor and award sub-grants to partners. In this case, the partnership focuses on technical support or a division of labor in the context of a larger project or programme activity. A sub-grant agreement specifies deliverables and payment schedules.

4.4 Sponsorship

The IAS offers sponsorship opportunities related to some of its activities, in particular but not limited to the International AIDS Conferences, the IAS Conferences on HIV Science, and the HIV Research for Prevention Conferences. In return for a defined, non-earmarked contribution to the activity the partner (sponsor) receives visibility, branding opportunities and commercial benefits such as complimentary conference registrations or exhibition space. The sponsor has no decision-making authority over the structure, objectives and implementation of the activity.

5. Partnership process

The Development and Partnerships team coordinates with other IAS departments to assess, establish and implement partnerships across the organization.

Standard process to establish a partnership includes initial assessment and a comprehensive due diligence process to establish the relevance of the partnership and compliance with the guiding principles and additional considerations detailed in section 2 and 3 of the present guidelines, and identify any potential risk for the IAS, subject to a decision making process detailed in Annex 1 to pursue or not the partnership opportunity.

Partnerships are reviewed and re-assessed on a regular basis.