

Frequently Asked Questions: The Partnership Approach

1. Why does Link need partners? *i.e. what are the benefits to Link?*

Link is an umbrella organisation but not every organisation we work with is eligible for membership. We are keen to engage with those organisations that are unable to join but with whom it would be mutually beneficial to work together on specific areas of policy or campaigns. Through partnerships, Link can strengthen its single voice to effect the policy change it wants to see happen.

2. Why does a partner need Link? *i.e. what are the benefits to the partner?*

Link maximises the efficiency and effectiveness of the environmental voluntary sector through collaboration. We provide a forum to develop consensus on issues affecting the environment and develop collective positions to influence policy and legislation. Through partnerships, non-member organisations can succeed in achieving their own aims by working together to secure the wider collective aims of Link.

3. Who can become a partner?

Any organisation that can demonstrate how its involvement will further the work of Link. The aims of the partner organisation should not preclude the protection of wildlife, landscape and the quiet enjoyment and appreciation of the countryside. However, if an organisation is eligible to apply for associate or full membership of Link, it will not be considered for partnership status unless it has ceased to be an associate member within 12 months of application.

4. Does the partnership approach affect Link's current membership arrangements?

No – The terms of eligibility for either full or associate membership will not change, nor will the level of service which Link provides to all its members. However, as associate membership is strictly time-limited to two years, with a three year cooling off period on annulment, formation of a partnership will allow Link to continue working with an organisation on a project where consensus on an issue has been achieved but we have yet to achieve our collective goals.

5. How long will the partnership last?

One year - or for the duration of the project or campaign that Link would like the partner to become involved with. Link's Management Committee has the ultimate authority to decide on the duration of the partnership and the terms of notification are specified in the partnership agreement.

6. Is the partnership supported by a signed agreement?

Yes – the partner will be invited to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Link, and like Link Members, will be subject to a confidentiality notice as set out in the agreement. All partners and members are expected to respect Link's processes and protocols, which will be explained as part of the partnership negotiation and will be made available on application to become a partner.

7. How much will it cost Link members?

In 2007, 60% of Link's core income was provided by its members through subscriptions and donations, with 95% of our expenditure spent on facilitation, co-ordination, and information services. In fiscal terms this means that, as a whole, the Link membership gave approximately £150 per year towards the cost of supporting each of the 584 individuals supported by the Secretariat. Therefore, if the suggested maximum of 3 staff from the partner organisation became regularly involved in Link activities, it would cost Link members approximately £450 a year to support them.

8. How much will it cost the partner organisation?

There is no fee to become a partner. A partnership agreement does not constitute membership of Link and therefore no subscription can be levied on the partner organisation. However, acceptance of offers of donations to Link or gifts of in-kind services will be accepted at the discretion of Link's Management Committee.

9. What does 'in-kind services' mean?

As a coalition, Link partners are encouraged to assist in collective endeavours such as the publication of campaign related documentation or the organisation of events. These 'in-kind services' may include any support mechanisms from providing a room for a meeting or promoting coalition publications to in-house design services or providing speakers for coalition events.

10. Does Link already have partners?

Yes – Waterwise is currently a partner of the Blueprint for Water campaign.

11. How do I become a partner?

If you are interested in becoming a partner of Link or have any questions, please contact Link's Director Jodie Bettis on 020 7820 8600 to discuss how to get involved.