

Roles of the State Partner Team

The Stronger Economies Together program includes the development of a State Partner Team (SPT) to oversee the program and serve a number of vital roles in SET's success in the selected regions. While the list below is not exhaustive, it outlines points where the team's contributions will be needed:

Launching SET: (16-40 hours)

- Distribute application form to interested communities, counties, and regions
- Launch communication campaign
- Host webinars/conferences for potential applicants
- Select 3+ persons to serve on State Training Team
- Participate in the monthly teleconferences organized at the national level
- Review applications
 - Conduct site visit of top applicant sites (if needed)
 - Submit in priority ranking the top four applications to the USDA RD national office

Supporting SET regional training: (5 – 35 hours)

- Assist in training on the SET curriculum, where appropriate
- Provide additional subject matter experts from their staff or associate organizations to leverage or add value to the curriculum
- Provide logistical support to the training effort in material ways, for example:
 - Offer meeting space for the training sessions
 - Provide support materials, flip charts, refreshments, or equipment for use during training
- Attend at least two training sessions in each region to better understand the training and to meet the region's participants

Helping regional teams prepare for action: (5 – 15 hours)

- Serve as an evaluation panel as regions make oral presentations at key points of the curriculum:
 - Module Four: Regional vision statements and initial goals
 - Module Eight: Action plan, including finalized goals and objectives
- Assist regional teams in identifying appropriate resources and/or partnerships to help promote success toward reaching their goals
- Identify resource people within or outside your agency/organization who can help meet the technical assistance needs of the regional teams

Finding resources to complete activities in regional plans – post training: (5-10 hours)

- Help organize a meeting of public, private, and philanthropic agencies/organizations that may have resources to support the implementation of the regional teams' strategic plans
- Communicate information to the regional teams regarding grant opportunities that might exist to further advance the work of the regional teams

Evaluating: (5-10 hours)

- Coordinate with the external evaluation team as appropriate

Roles of the State Training Team

The SET State Training Team has the specific responsibility of guiding the selected regional teams through the SET training modules. Specifically, the Training Team will be responsible for:

Coordinating:

- Participate in monthly State Training Team calls with the national training team
- Work with the regional team to establish a timeline that allows ample time for “roll up your sleeves” discussion and work during the training and work between training sessions

Training:

- Ensure that each module has at least one team member who is comfortable with and has a good command of the content
- Prepare thoroughly for the module(s) you facilitate
- Prepare all materials (handouts, PowerPoint, etc.) for each session
- Communicate specific data requests that are needed as part of various SET modules to the Southern Rural Development Center and/or the other Regional Rural Development Centers in a timely manner

Coaching:

- Coach regional teams through completion of all deliverables embedded into each of the SET modules (The point of SET is not just to get through the Modules, but rather to use the training to accomplish specific tasks during each session that will lead toward the development of a strong and thoughtful regional plan.)
- Assess the quality of products being produced as part of various modules and ensure that they are completed in a high quality manner
- Work with the regional team to identify any plan weaknesses and to upgrade the products to address those weaknesses
- Review the final plan of work and related goals to ensure that they meet the prescribed standards

Evaluating:

- Complete all documentation needed to meet Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements; ensure the IRB materials align with the overall evaluation protocol for the SET initiative
- Administer all evaluation documents including the pre- and post-surveys, pre/post partnership matrix, and specific module evaluations
- Submit Training Team Summaries, participant evaluations, and attendance records following each session
- Coordinate with the external evaluation team as appropriate

Technical Assistance:

- Respond to the technical assistance needs of the regional teams if the expertise exists within the State Training or Partner Team, USDA RD, and/or the state’s land-grant university system
- Work with the State Partner Team and members of the State Training Team to identify external individuals, organizations and/or agencies that might be able to help address the technical assistance needs of the regional teams. As appropriate, consult with the SRDC and/or the other RRDCs on how best to address the technical assistance needs identified.