



SBDC Tips for Successfully Working with Partners and Affiliates

When SBDCs work together with partners and affiliates, it helps to build our brand and deliver new clients to our program. The bullets below provide some tips on how to successfully leverage our partners' strength and support.

- Being located on a university campus allows for an exchange of resources, networking, and marketing opportunities for both parties. Consider partnering and fostering relationships with departments/centers that are focused in entrepreneurship and innovation, i.e. engineering, business, tech-focused, career center or research.
- Host SBDC advocacy meet and greet events and invite high-level university administrators. Engaging the higher-ups in advocacy builds support for the program.
- Engage one university program advocate in all statewide events and opportunities. For example, CTSBDC's office is located in the UConn School of Business. We engage and invite Dean John Elliott to all of our events across the state. Often, he is a speaker.
- Form a strong relationship with the university-wide communications department. Have a discussion with this team on how to incorporate their brand with SDDC's brand needs. One solution for business cards is printing a 2-sided version—SBDC on one side, university host brand on the other.
- Research and take advantage of the marketing opportunities on and around campus—remember, a college campus is a community of more than just students; there are faculty, staff, parents, professors, research departments, businesses and community members. Some marketing outlets include digital boards, daily campus-wide emails, event calendars, student union interaction, newspapers, or bus wraps. Outreach to these groups can help to identify new clients and promote brand recognition.
- Don't forget to forge connections with the student population as well, which can be done through internship programs, student-targeted entrepreneurial events, and outreach to student organizations (these students could be future (or present) entrepreneurs!).
- Contact all local television programs. Most cable networks have a need to educate their community on programs designed to promote small business growth and will interview someone from your program. Many of these programs will tape and air on cable and online.
- Schedule speaking engagements for your SBA regional administrator (one of your best advocates!) any time you can—chamber events, campus events, business expos, etc.
- Co-sponsor the annual SBA small business awards ceremony and present a few selected SBDC clients with appropriate awards.
- Co-host business-building workshops for entrepreneurs with partners.
- Like and follow all of your partners, affiliates and state organizations on all social media platforms.
- Feature all partner logos with a quick write-up on your website, and link to theirs.

- Have a guest blog or article posted on your website and included in your newsletter.
- Send a quarterly newsletter to your affiliate partners touting your success stories, introducing software tools available to entrepreneurs, upcoming events/event recaps, and include photos from past outings.

