

SOP Template: Vendor and External Partner Coordination

This SOP establishes guidelines for **vendor and external partner coordination**, including communication protocols, contract management, performance monitoring, issue resolution, compliance requirements, and collaborative workflow processes. The aim is to ensure effective partnership management, timely delivery of goods and services, and alignment with organizational goals through structured coordination and continuous engagement.

1. Purpose

To outline the standardized procedures for managing interactions, contracts, and performance with vendors and external partners in alignment with organizational objectives.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all staff involved in the selection, engagement, and management of vendors and external partners.

3. Definitions

Term	Definition
Vendor	An external entity supplying goods or services to the organization.
External Partner	Any third-party agency or organization engaged for collaboration beyond transactional transactions.
Contract Owner	Internal staff responsible for the vendor/partner relationship and contract management.

4. Roles & Responsibilities

- **Procurement Department:** Manages vendor selection and contractual agreements.
- **Contract Owners:** Oversees performance, communications, and compliance with vendors/partners.
- **Finance Department:** Processes payments and financial compliance checks.
- **Legal Department:** Reviews contracts for legal adherence.

5. Procedure

5.1 Vendor/Partner Selection

- Identify requirements and conduct due diligence.
- Issue RFP/RFQ when necessary.
- Evaluate submissions based on predefined criteria.
- Document selection process and justification.

5.2 Communication Protocols

- Designate primary points of contact.
- Establish regular communication channels (email, meetings, calls).
- Set response time expectations and escalation paths.

5.3 Contract Management

- Maintain signed agreements in a central repository.
- Define deliverables, timelines, and KPIs in contracts.
- Ensure regular contract reviews and renewals.

5.4 Performance Monitoring

- Monitor vendor/partner performance against KPIs.
- Document issues and successes in regular performance reports.
- Conduct periodic reviews with vendors/partners.

5.5 Issue Resolution

- Establish protocol for reporting and escalating issues.
- Log all issues and steps taken for resolution.
- Document outcomes and improvement actions.

5.6 Compliance Requirements

- Ensure all vendors/partners adhere to organizational policies, legal, and regulatory standards.
- Conduct compliance audits as needed.

5.7 Collaborative Workflow

- Define joint processes for shared deliverables.
- Utilize shared project management tools where necessary.
- Document and communicate workflow changes.

6. Recordkeeping

- All contracts, communications, and performance reports shall be stored securely for a minimum of 5 years.
- Records should be easily accessible for audits and reference.

7. Continuous Improvement

- Solicit regular feedback from both internal stakeholders and external partners.
- Incorporate lessons learned into SOP revisions.

8. Revision & Approval

- This SOP is subject to annual review and update as necessary.
- Revisions must be approved by the relevant department heads and documented in the revisions log.

9. Appendix

- Sample RFP Template
- Contract Checklist
- Performance Evaluation Form
- Issue Log Template