

How to Identify Potential Research Partners

- Is there a university, or research center, or state or local agency that has staff that have experience studying sociology, criminology, public policy, or urban affairs? If so, it may be worth reaching out to them discuss the initiative.
- Check with the American Society of Criminology (www.asc41.com). The members of this professional organization are sorted by state. You might consider contacting a researcher who lives nearby. www.asc41.com/director/frame.htm
- Check with the Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) in your state. SACs are units or agencies at the state government level that use information from all components of the criminal justice system to conduct objective analyses of statewide policy issues. www.jrsa.org/sac/index.html
- Carefully review the research partner's resume to determine if she/ he has experience serving as a research partner and/or conducting evaluations of programs similar to yours.
- Be sure that references include directors of programs that the researcher has worked with in the past, and ask those individuals about their experiences with the researcher, including how well the researcher worked collaboratively with the program managers and staff.
- Arrange an interview between the team/task force and potential research partner(s) to determine if this is a person with whom you would be comfortable working.
- Ask potential research partners to discuss:
 - How they might contribute to the team/task force
 - What experience has prepared them to work on this project
 - Have them provide some ideas about what the potential problem involves and how it might be further explored; and
 - Determine what type of commitment they are willing to invest in the initiative
- Ask for samples of a potential research partner's work, including reports
 - Review the materials to be sure they are written clearly, without a great deal of jargon, and in a way that would be understandable to you and to those with whom you would like to share the findings