



# Ethical Guidelines for Education– Business Partnerships.

Developing and Maintaining Ethical Partnerships Between  
K–12 Educational Institutions and Businesses



## Why Ethical Guidelines?

The Ethical Guidelines describe for current and prospective partners the key components of an ethical education–business partnership and provide them with a rational basis for addressing ethical issues that relate to the ideals, obligations, and effects of their partnerships.

**Ethical partnerships safeguard learners' interests, build trust and mutual respect, regulate themselves, and make informed decisions that benefit everyone involved.**

The Conference Board of Canada, the International Partnership Network, and the Centre for Skills and Post-Secondary Education invite and encourage educational institutions, businesses, non-profit organizations, government organizations, community groups, and others to use the Ethical Guidelines to provide a basis for ethical partnership development and operation.

# Ethical education–business partnerships are ones that:

## Strive for Ideals

- Mutually benefit all partners
- Enhance the quality and relevance of education for all— including students and other learners
- Share knowledge, ideas, and perspectives to benefit participants
- Are based on shared or aligned objectives that support the goals of the partner organizations
- Are developed and structured in consultation with all partners
- Are based on trust and openness among all partners
- Recognize and respect each partner's expertise and contributions
- Respect differences among partners

Enhance the quality and relevance of education for all.



## Education–Business Partnerships

Education–business partnerships are mutually beneficial relationships between employers and educators that are designed to enhance learning for students and other learners. They may involve other education stakeholders as partners, including students, employees, parents, communities, labour, and government organizations.

Most education–business partnerships are cooperative relationships in which partners share values, objectives, human, material or financial resources, roles and responsibilities in order to achieve desired learning outcomes.



Treat fairly and equitably all partnership participants.

### **Adhere to Obligations**

- Are consistent with the ethics and core values of all partners
- Are based on the clearly defined expectations of all partners
- Treat fairly and equitably all participants and those who are served by the partnership
- Ensure that activities comply with partners' codes of conduct and regulations
- Allocate resources to complement and not replace funding for education
- Identify and manage potential conflicts between business and education needs and objectives
- Identify and address conflicts of interest within partnership organizations and among partners



Celebrate and build on positive outcomes and progress made.

### **Manage Effects**

- Consider the effects of actions and test them against ideals and obligations
- Identify and address potentially negative impacts on non-participants
- Exercise diligence when making decisions—consider the need of all partners and stakeholders
- Are open and honest when problems occur and avoid making excuses or rationalizations
- Find common ground when challenges arise by returning to shared objectives and values
- Celebrate and build on positive outcomes and progress made

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## **Education–Business Partnership Tool Kit**

Ethical Guidelines is part of a tool kit of materials developed by The Conference Board of Canada  
See also:

*Operating Principles for Education–Business Partnerships*

*Evaluating Education–Business Partnerships: Value Assessment Process*

These tools can be found at [www.conferenceboard.ca](http://www.conferenceboard.ca).

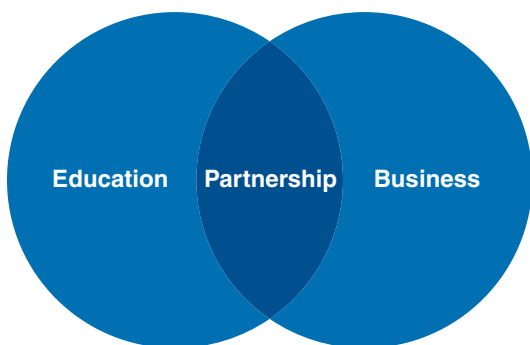
# How to Use Ethical Guidelines

Ethical Guidelines is a tool to help partners make ethical decisions. It outlines criteria for education–business partnerships that guide partners in making informed decisions.

These guidelines are not exhaustive; they stimulate dialogue. Partners discuss what the guidelines mean and analyze their appropriateness and importance to the partnership. The partners then explore how they can work collaboratively to establish a strong ethical basis for their education–business partnership.

## How Do These Guidelines Fit With Organizations' Codes of Ethics, Practice, and Conduct?

The principles listed in this document are designed to complement existing codes. They can be used by partners to address aspects of their partnership that may not be treated in their organizations' own codes.



### About The Conference Board of Canada

The Conference Board of Canada is the foremost independent, not-for-profit applied research organization in Canada. We help build leadership capacity for a better Canada by creating and sharing insights on economic trends, public policy, and organizational performance. We forge relationships and deliver knowledge through our learning events, networks, research, and customized information services.

### About the Centre for Skills and Post-Secondary Education (SPSE)

The Conference Board of Canada's SPSE is a major five-year initiative that examines the advanced skills and education challenges facing Canada today. The SPSE involves a broad collaboration of public and private sector stakeholders working together to think through the development of a national strategy.

For more information on SPSE, visit:  
[www.conferenceboard.ca/spse](http://www.conferenceboard.ca/spse).

### About the International Partnership Network (IPN)

The IPN is an independent, not-for-profit global network of education, business, and community partnerships. It encourages and facilitates partnerships both at the local level and internationally. The IPN has an internationally constructed board of directors, currently drawn from nine countries and five continents.

For more information on the IPN, visit:  
[www.iebpn.net](http://www.iebpn.net).

