



The SFP Network helps people and places to share challenges, explore practical solutions and develop best practice in all aspects of sustainable food. We welcome applications from eligible food partnerships that represent and work on behalf of a city, town, borough, county or district in the UK. The partnership must be cross-sector and have a collective vision and remit that address all [6 of SFP's key food issues](#).

Below, we lay out SFP's criteria for network membership. Based on the experience of our network, we believe that having the following in place is usually the best indication of an effective food partnership. However, if you believe your food partnership (or equivalent network) supports the same vision through collaborative action and achieves the same impact over our 6 key food issues yet with a different approach, we may still be able to consider an application. If you intend to apply for membership based on an alternative model to our criteria, please contact us at [info@sustainablefoodplaces](mailto:info@sustainablefoodplaces) for a conversation before submitting an application.

### Membership Criteria

- 1. Named lead person** for the food partnership
- 2. Terms of reference** document – including:
  - o Name of food partnership
  - o Outline of your vision (bullet point list or summary paragraph). It must be clear that you intend to work across all 6 key SFP areas.
  - o Details of agreed governance arrangements, eg, a chair, a steering group and working groups (with details of members) if applicable.
- 3. A list of members and/ or stakeholders.** This must include representatives from the public and third sectors, and from the private sector if possible (or show how you intend to engage them). We expect to see involvement of a range of organisations that demonstrate work or planned work across SFP's 6 key issues (or how you intend to engage them).
- 4. Meeting minutes** to evidence that the partnership has been actively meeting regularly for at least 6 months. We would normally expect partnerships or equivalent groups to meet at least 4 times a year. You may include details of working group meetings or engagement events to support your application.
- 5. Food Partnership Work Plan** covering next 6 months that details which people or organisations are delivering the work. This should include the relevant work of partnership members alongside those in a partnership coordination role. Please note that if you submit a longer-term work plan or strategy, this must include a work plan specifically outlining the next 6 months. (See below for further advice).
- 6. Food System Overview** covering existing food system action, opportunities, and assets in your place. This does not need to be new information or formally presented; please use documents, texts or diagrams you have already produced with your partnership if applicable. However, this overview must represent the collective views and knowledge of

your group, rather than an individual preparing this application. (See below for further advice)

## How to apply

We hold two membership application rounds per year in March and October. The next membership deadline is 17<sup>th</sup> March. To apply, please provide us with documents or other forms of evidence (eg. webpages) that show how you meet each of our criteria. Where applicable, encourage you to submit materials that already exist for your partnership (eg. governance or strategy documents) rather than creating them for this application.

Please also complete the short membership application form available at [https://www.sustainablefoodplaces.org/get\\_involved/become\\_a\\_member/](https://www.sustainablefoodplaces.org/get_involved/become_a_member/).

Please submit your application, including all documents, to [info@sustainablefoodplaces.org](mailto:info@sustainablefoodplaces.org) by the deadline above.

Once submitted, our membership panel will assess your application and be in touch within 2-3 weeks of the deadline. If you are not successful, we will provide basic advice about how you could work towards membership in the future.

## Food Partnership Work Plan

This is a work plan for the development of your food partnership; outlining the action you will take and the targets you intend to meet on your journey to creating a strong, robust food partnership.

Key questions to ask yourself at this stage:

- Who are the key stakeholders?
- How will we engage and consult with our community and stakeholders?
- How will we get senior buy in from the local authority?
- How will we ensure the local people and stakeholders feel a strong sense of ownership?
- How will we include people that don't usually get heard?
- How will we ensure that the food partnership is representative?
- What steps do we need to take to develop our action plan covering all 6 SFP areas?

We recommend that you have a look at [Developing a Partnership Work Plan](#) for guidance on preparing your workplan.

## Food System Overview

This is a basic recording of current activity / assets across the local food system. It is intended as the precursor to being able to identify future actions and the development of an action plan. It might be helpful to use the SFP 6 key areas as a framework. The overview could be achieved simply by downloading existing knowledge from key stakeholders at steering group meetings or if resources allow you might want to carry out a more extensive food mapping, residents' survey or hold focus groups.

The Food System Overview might include information on:

- Existing activity on food waste, food procurement, food poverty, community food initiatives, food and climate.

- Local policy context
- Local stakeholders
- Results of a resident's survey
- Food Web Mapping exercise

We recommend that you look at the Food System Overview section of the [SFP Toolkit](#) for more information and guidance. It includes the following guides: [Food System Mapping](#), [Food Surveys](#), [Food Policy Mapping](#).