



Civic Strength Partners Press Kit

Background

About Us: Civic Strength Partners helps social change organizations plan strategically for organizational succession, mergers and partnerships, and protection of assets. We preserve the lessons, tools, and relationships that drive the mission and impact of development organizations globally.

When civil society organizations face complex transitions – a merger, strategic partnership, or wind-down – we work closely with leadership to navigate change with clarity and care. We offer trusted guidance, tailored advice, and access to the people and infrastructure that preserve what matters most, protect legacy, and position the organization for what's next. Over time, this strengthens a resilient, community-led ecosystem that supports the whole sector.

Our Story: Over half of the respondents to a February 2025 survey we carried out with partners reported that their organizations were considering restructuring, merging, or closing in the next 3-6 months, largely in response to the unexpected stop work orders (SWOs) announced by the US government. While this exact challenge is new, it is part of a broader trend of disruptions to non-profit work that has occurred in recent years, from the COVID-19 pandemic to reductions in bilateral assistance from many European donors, to strategic pivots of philanthropic funders.

Since March, we've heard from 150+ organizations interested in mergers, strategic partnerships, or other transformations. Yet currently, there is no international, shared, Global South-facing facility to support mergers, partnerships, sunsets, project handoffs, and other organizational alignment processes.

That is why Accountability Lab, Development Gateway: An IREX Venture, and Digital Public have joined forces to create Civic Strength Partners, a partnership matching service and support network for organizations navigating moments of change.

Our Impact:

We have created a shared fund, with the support of six donors, of approximately \$1,200,000 to support organizational partnerships.

We have a pooled fund of expertise to provide technical support across contexts and jurisdictions (legal, human resources, organizational change management, etc.) and a

dedicated team to triage, match-make, and accompany these processes.

At the moment, more than pairs of organizations are working towards solutions, with another 15 pairs in the pipeline, and receive 2-5 new requests for support every day.

Our services include archiving or legacy plans for data and knowledge products, succession and sustainability strategies, and tactical, legal, and digital resilience measures. CSP believes that in all cases, the process can be done with care, integrity, and responsibility — ensuring that knowledge, people, and communities are not left behind.

Further Information:

- CSP Launch [Press Release](#)
- Website: <https://civicstrengthpartners.org/>
- CSP Overview Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hTjnMI9b3BY>

Contact:

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Social media:

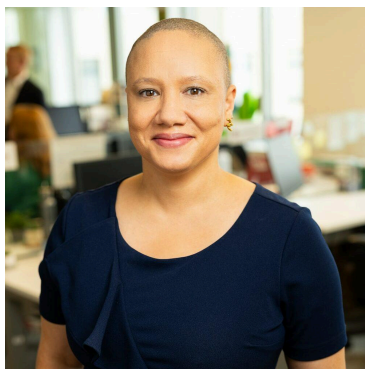
[LinkedIn](#)
[BlueSky](#)

Leadership:



Josh Powell

Josh leads Development Gateway's efforts on strategy, partnerships, and engagement as CEO. He has expertise in the application of open data standards in both country and global contexts, coordinating enterprise software development and system integration, guiding applied research and adaptive program management, and building partnerships and nascent concepts into concrete programs and impact.



Cheri-Leigh Erasmus

Cheri-Leigh is a global expert on governance and anti-corruption, dedicated to leveraging emerging technologies and data to enhance transparency, strengthen civic participation, and promote the inclusion of traditionally marginalized groups. As Co-CEO of Accountability Lab, she supports innovative efforts to hold governments accountable across 12 countries in Africa, South Asia, and Latin America.



Blair Glencorse

Blair is considered one of the world's most influential thinkers on issues of governance and citizen engagement. He is a seasoned international development professional and social innovator, with significant experience across issues of accountability, institutional reform and political-economy transitions. He is founder and Co-CEO of Accountability Lab.



Sean McDonald

Sean builds governance for technology and technology for governance. Sean is the co-founder of Digital Public, where he focuses on data governance design. He is a lawyer and the former CEO of FrontlineSMS, an award-winning public interest technology company. Sean is a Senior Fellow at the Center for International Governance Innovation.



Jean Scrimgeour

Jean is a governance specialist with 15 years of experience and established skills in non-profit management, organizational accountability and business development in South Africa, the United Kingdom, and the United States. A former co-chair of the TAP Steering Committee, and co-chair of C20 Anti-Corruption Working Groups, Jean is also Co-CEO at Accountability Lab.



Deborah Ingersoll

As a trusted advisor, coach, and skilled facilitator, Deb creates the space and structure for breakthroughs to emerge. She helps clients chart a path forward with clarity and care, grounded in reality, shaped for sustainability, and aligned with your values. With an approach rooted in a people- and planet-first mindset, Deb blends systems thinking,

human-centered design, and creative problem-solving to support meaningful transformation — helping individuals, teams, and organizations navigate complexity with courage, connection, and compassion.

About Our Partners:

Since 2000, **Development Gateway: An IREX Venture (DG)** has built tools, systems, and dashboards that make development data easier to gather, use, and understand. They enhance transparency and efficiency in agriculture, health, education, extractives, information management, and cross-cutting global policy fields. DG's partnerships with governments, institutions, and communities help ensure they have the information needed to make evidence-based decisions.

Accountability Lab was founded in early 2012 as an effort to work with young people to develop new ideas for accountability, transparency and open government. It has evolved into a global network of local Accountability Labs that are finding new ways to shift societal norms, solve intractable challenges and build “unlikely networks” for change. Our global translocal network includes Accountable Now.

Digital Public started in 2016, with a focus on designing, developing, and implementing infrastructure to enable communities to govern the technologies shaping their lives. Today, it designs and supports public participation in governing digital transformation, helping communities, governments, non-profits, and technology companies engaged in digital transformation to design contextual, legal, digital infrastructure for participation and governance.