Affiliate Network

Why we’re building a Network
We built Downtown Streets Team (DST) to respond to citizens’ top concerns in a small community in Northern California in 2005. Since then, we have found that DST can serve every kind of community, big and small, urban and rural. Alongside this discovery, we have seen first hand that DST works to improve outcomes for our neighbors who have experienced homelessness and for the entire public. Despite this success, homelessness continues to grow and affect Americans all over the country; we just can’t keep up with the demand. In order for us to end homelessness in our lifetime, we need to put DST in the hands of local community leaders, so we’re launching the Affiliate Network to empower YOU to start your own Streets Team.

What’s an Affiliate?
Affiliates are a new kind of arrangement between Downtown Streets Team and partner agencies – partner agencies can be for-profit or non-profit entities that care about providing a solution to homelessness in their communities and have fundraised a budget to bring DST into their own infrastructure. When a new affiliate joins the DST Network, a trained Project Manager (PM) from DST Headquarters will live and work in the affiliate’s community for one year to launch the program alongside rigorous on-site training from additional Headquarters leadership. This embedded PM will work with headquarters staff on a regular basis to ensure a successful launch and then transition ongoing management of the Team to the affiliate.

Over time, each DST Affiliate will manage its own program budget and implementation, and will contribute an Affiliate membership to remain a part of the DST Network.
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What’s the Network part?
Over time, the DST Network will become a national group of diverse agencies using the DST model to restore hope, dignity, motivation, and end homelessness one person at a time. DST Headquarters will manage the Network and continue to provide backend services, best practices and thought leadership, intensive training and program innovation.

Affiliate vs. franchise
When DST began our goal was to figure out the model and open source what we learned to any community who wanted it. Four communities in California and Florida adopted the model, program documents and even the name. Unfortunately, they were not successful. They did not have the corporate culture or learned experience to succeed like the wholly managed Teams. Most importantly, they strayed from the core components of the model.

After working with Stanford ACT, DST began launching Teams itself and has expanded to five counties in Northern California. Although these Teams showed the hallmarks and impact metrics that define DST, it took a long time to build up local relationships, knowledge and trust. We realized that if we wanted to achieve our dream of ending homelessness with the DST model, a different approach was needed.

In 2016 DST partnered with the International Centre for Social Franchising, the leading expansion experts for impact organizations across the globe, to develop a unique scale strategy. Read more about the design here. [LINK to full PDF]

Why should my organization become an Affiliate?
If your organization or company is looking for an answer to homelessness in your community, the good news is DST has the answers. We know that this issue requires a timely, comprehensive response that can be adapted for local realities. With this kind of urgency, your organization does not have the time to invent a new solution, and DST does not have the time to open a new office in your city. Instead, let’s Team up and run a Streets Team through your infrastructure, connections, and know-how.

Each affiliate will receive the following upon entering into a Network Affiliate Agreement:

✓ Embedded staff to launch program for the first year
✓ Launch support
✓ Expertise and Model Elements
  o Operations manual
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- Fundraising toolkit including pitch materials, budget builder, and financial reporting templates
- All program documents including orientation packet, legal agreements to protect affiliates from litigation, stipend materials
- Impact Data System

- Administrative resources
  - HUD program compliance procedures
  - HR policies
  - Accounting practices
- On-site program launch support including 90 day checklist
- Ongoing support
  - Troubleshooting
  - Professional development
- Regular check-ins
- Annual conference
- DST Digital Network access
- Marketing Assets and Opportunities
  - Press kit
  - Branding guidelines
  - Cross-promotion opportunities on website and social media
- Affiliation with the Downtown Streets Team model/brand and opportunities associated with implementing a growing best practice

Affiliate Network Advantage

DST leadership chose to utilize the Affiliate Network scaling model because it empowers local organizations to adapt DST to their community and leverage their local knowledge and connections. The affiliates will then iterate upon the core elements and teach best practices to each other, fostering a network-wide increase in impact, efficiency and innovation. Furthermore, this model allows for a fast pace of growth throughout the country while still providing an individualized path out of homelessness for each Team Member. Lastly, this model minimizes risks from both external and internal threats compared to other scaling models.

In this setup, we utilize the value of Headquarters and the affiliate like so:
Affiliate Network

- Expertise, best practices
- Training and ongoing support
- Legal, HR, Fundraising support
- Network-wide opportunities and innovation

- Leverage local connections, knowledge and social capital
- Flexible enough to address specific community needs and challenges

Annual Conference

The Downtown Streets Team Annual conference occurs every year and will allow for staff across multiple affiliates to share best practices, successful innovations and lessons learned. Moreover, the conference will help build culture across the network and re-enforce the digital network as the platform throughout the year. Excitingly, we’ll be asking affiliates to do more than learn from headquarters. Our plan is to have affiliates run many of the sessions and eventually help plan the conference agenda and theme.

Organizational Requirements and Commitments

The Downtown Streets Team model can be managed by any non profit, business association or private company so long as they meet the basic criteria. They vary slightly for each type of affiliate, but in general, eligibility for affiliates is as follows:

1. Has shared values
2. Has the ability to support or fundraise for the Team for at least one year
3. Has decision makers in-house
4. Has a high reputation within industry and local partners
5. Has infrastructure and technology (ex: phones and laptops) to support long-term operations
   
   And most importantly...

6. Is dedicated to implementing the Downtown Streets Team model
Next Steps-

With the International Centre for Social Franchising, DST staff completed the design phase in July 2017 and are working to complete the systemize phase by January 2018. In 2018 we will be looking to pilot with 3-5 affiliates based anywhere in the US.

If you think your community would benefit from a Team, know an interested funder and/or are associated with an organization that might consider becoming an affiliate, please contact us: Chris Richardson • 650.804.6701• chris@streetsteam.org