

EDL FEST Community Partnership Proposal

A community-first festival platform connecting local creative culture, higher education, civic resources, employment pathways, and small-business participation.

ORGANIZATION	ROLE	PARTNER FOCUS	SOURCE PERIOD
Culture Enterprises / Everyday Dope Life	Founder + Lead Event Producer	Norfolk State University + City of Norfolk	2017-2021 results; 2022 proposal

EXECUTIVE BRIEF

After building EDL FEST as a homegrown cultural property, I developed a partnership proposition that could connect the festival's audience and operating model to institutional priorities. The proposal translated proven attendance, local-vendor participation, live programming, and regional identity into a platform for education, civic access, employment pathways, and sustained community investment.

4 FLAGSHIP PRODUCTIONS	730+ DOCUMENTED 2021 GUESTS	600+ DOCUMENTED 2018 GUESTS	2 STAGES AT PEAK SCALE
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PARTNERSHIP PROPOSITION

TURN CULTURAL REACH INTO COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

EDL FEST could give institutions a credible way to meet students, creatives, families, and small businesses inside an experience the community already recognized as its own.

EXPANSION PRIORITIES

EMPLOYMENT ACCESS Invite employers to create internship, job-placement, workshop, and breakout opportunities for college students.	CIVIC PARTICIPATION Integrate voter registration, public-resource education, and accessible information into the guest experience.
ENTREPRENEURSHIP Pair creative-industry programming with practical business and entrepreneurship conversations.	COMMUNITY ACTIVATION Give youth and neighborhood organizations a defined, guest-facing role in the festival.
HIGHER EDUCATION Build collaborative pathways with Norfolk State University and Old Dominion University.	LONG-TERM LEGACY Explore a scholarship platform designed to extend the event's value beyond one festival day.

A partnership case grounded in operating history

The original proposal used prior festival performance to demonstrate that the platform could attract audiences, support local commerce, and scale responsibly. Figures below reflect contemporaneous internal partnership materials.

PRODUCTION	DOCUMENTED AUDIENCE	OPERATING EVIDENCE	PARTNERSHIP SIGNAL
EDL FEST 2017	350+ guests	First-year community festival at O'Connor Brewing Co.	Established demand for a locally rooted creative platform.
EDL FEST 2018	600+ guests	12 vendors; national headliner; reported 87% lift in normal brewery sales.	Demonstrated audience growth and local economic value.
DOPEAFFAIR 2019	265 guests	Rebuilt and promoted in 30 days; reported 77% lift in normal Sunday venue sales.	Showed recovery, adaptability, and year-round programming potential.
EDL FEST 2021	730+ guests	National headliner; indoor and outdoor programming; two-stage operating plan.	Created a stronger base for institutional and civic partnership.

WHY THE MODEL MATTERED

LOCAL ECONOMIC CIRCULATION Retail vendors, food businesses, artists, photographers, videographers, and production partners participated in the event economy.	REGIONAL IDENTITY National talent expanded the draw while local programming kept the experience rooted in Hampton Roads.
FAMILY-FRIENDLY ACCESS The format combined music, art, education, food, games, and community participation in a shared environment.	INSTITUTIONAL RELEVANCE The audience overlapped with student engagement, workforce development, entrepreneurship, and civic-resource priorities.

Convert alignment into an executable partnership

The proposal becomes operational when each partner has a defined audience contribution, benefit, owner, approval path, and measurable outcome.

01	ALIGN Confirm shared objectives, community priorities, decision-makers, budget boundaries, and non-negotiables.
02	DESIGN Map each partner to programming, activation space, communications, student or community access, and guest flow.
03	RESOURCE Confirm venue, permits, vendors, talent, production support, institutional services, and accessibility requirements.
04	PROMOTE Build a coordinated message calendar across EDL, institutional, community, radio, and digital channels.
05	EXECUTE Integrate partner deliverables into the master production schedule, staff briefings, signage, and show-day controls.
06	REPORT Close with attendance, participation, vendor, content, media, and partner-deliverable reporting.

RECOMMENDED MEASUREMENT SET
Guest attendance • student participation • employer or resource engagements • vendor participation • programming reach • content performance • partner deliverable completion • qualitative community feedback

PORTFOLIO NOTE / Reconstructed from the original NSU x EDL FEST proposal and historical production records. Forward-looking 2022 partnership concepts are presented as proposals, not completed commitments. Delivered-event claims reflect completed productions only.