

QRIS Management and Partners

The implementation of quality rating and improvement systems (QRISs) is complex and often requires the involvement of multiple organization and agencies. The different components of QRISs necessitate different organizational capacities and activities—conducting rating assessments, maintaining data systems, supporting continuous improvement through professional learning, and technical assistance—which is why many QRISs collaborate across several entities to implement their systems. This fact sheet describes the numbers and types of QRIS management organizations and partners as well as their responsibilities and types of agreements in 2017.

This fact sheet is one of a series about the state of QRISs in the United States. As of 2017, there are 44 fully operational QRISs in the United States.¹ Data are from the [Quality Compendium](#), a catalog of the QRISs operating in the United States as of December 31, 2017.

Management Organizations

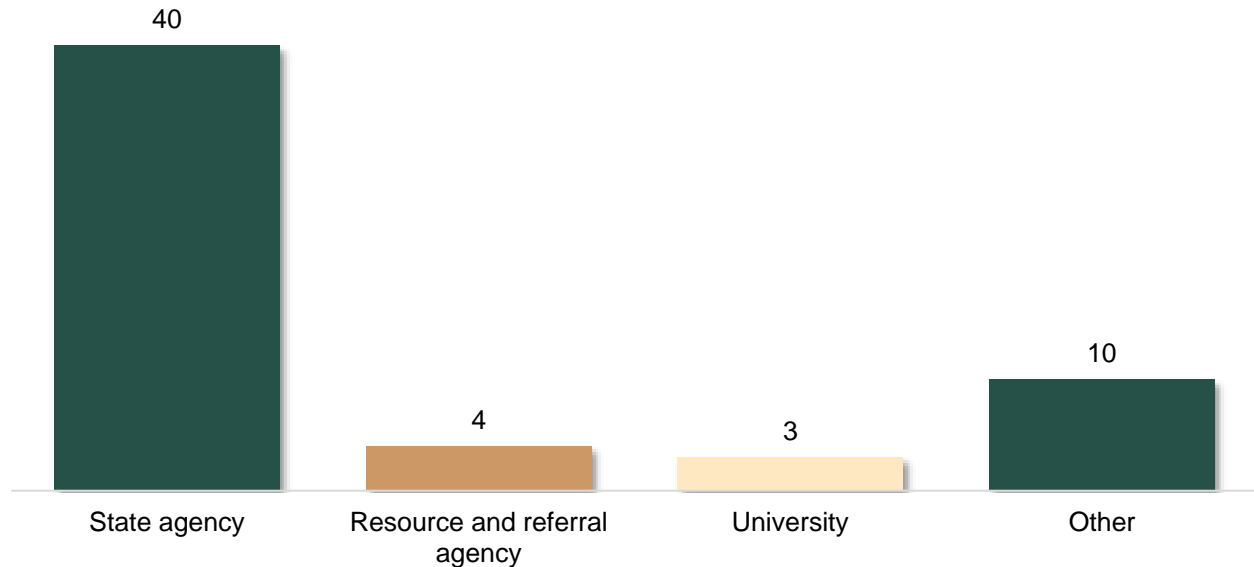
Management organizations are responsible for the administration and management of a QRIS. Of the 44 QRISs in the Quality Compendium in 2017, all 44 (100 percent) reported information about their management organizations. Among these, 11 QRISs (25 percent) have more than one management organization. Illinois's QRIS reported the most management organizations (4). Ten QRISs (Florida—Miami Dade, Idaho, Maryland, Michigan, North Dakota, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Utah, and Vermont) reported having two management organizations.²

Among the 44 QRISs, state agencies are by far the most common type of management organization (40 QRISs; 70 percent). Child care resource and referral agencies (4 QRISs; 7 percent) and universities (3 QRISs; 5 percent) are less common types of management organizations. As shown in figure 1, of the 10 management organizations categorized as “other,” 6 are nonprofit agencies, 3 are public-private partners, and 1 is a team of state and local representatives.

¹ States with a QRIS: AK, AR, AZ, CA, CO, DC, DE, FL (three localities), GA, IA, ID, IL, IN, KY, LA, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MT, NC, ND, NE, NH, NJ, NM, NV, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, SC, TN, TX, UT, VA, VT, WA, and WI. While most QRISs operate at the state level, three represent separate counties in Florida (Duval, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach). The California QRIS, while represented in the Quality Compendium as one system, is implemented at the county level and does not include all counties in the state.

²Data about how QRISs with multiple management organizations divide and share roles are not collected in the Quality Compendium.

Figure 1. Management Organization Type Across 44 QRISs, 2017



Source: Analysis of data retrieved from BUILD Initiative. (2017). Quality compendium [Online tool]. Retrieved from <https://qualitycompendium.org>

Note: N = 44 QRISs reporting 57 management organizations in total.

Partners

Management organizations often partner with other organizations to oversee a variety of responsibilities. Of the 44 QRISs, 42 (95 percent) reported having between 1 and 12 partners. A total of 166 partners across all QRISs were reported in 2017. The median is three partners per QRIS. QRISs in Minnesota and South Carolina reported the most partners (12 and 11, respectively).

QRISs also reported on types of partners. Of the 166 total partners reported in 2017, the largest number (62 partners; 37 percent) are described as “other” and were not categorized as state agencies, universities, child care resource and referral (CCR&R) agencies, or community colleges. Of the partners categorized as “other,” the majority (37 partners; 61 percent) are nonprofit organizations, and some are for-profit companies or consultants (5 partners; 8 percent). State agencies make up about a quarter of partners across all QRISs (43 partners; 26 percent), followed by universities (33 partners; 20 percent), and child care resource and referral agencies (26 partners; 16 percent), as shown in table 1.

Table 1. Number and Percent of Partner Types Across QRISs, 2017

Partner Type	Number	Percent
Other partner type	62	37%
■ Nonprofit	37	61%
■ For-profit	5	8%
State agencies	43	26%
Universities	33	20%
CCR&Rs	26	16%
Community colleges	2	1%
Total	166	100%

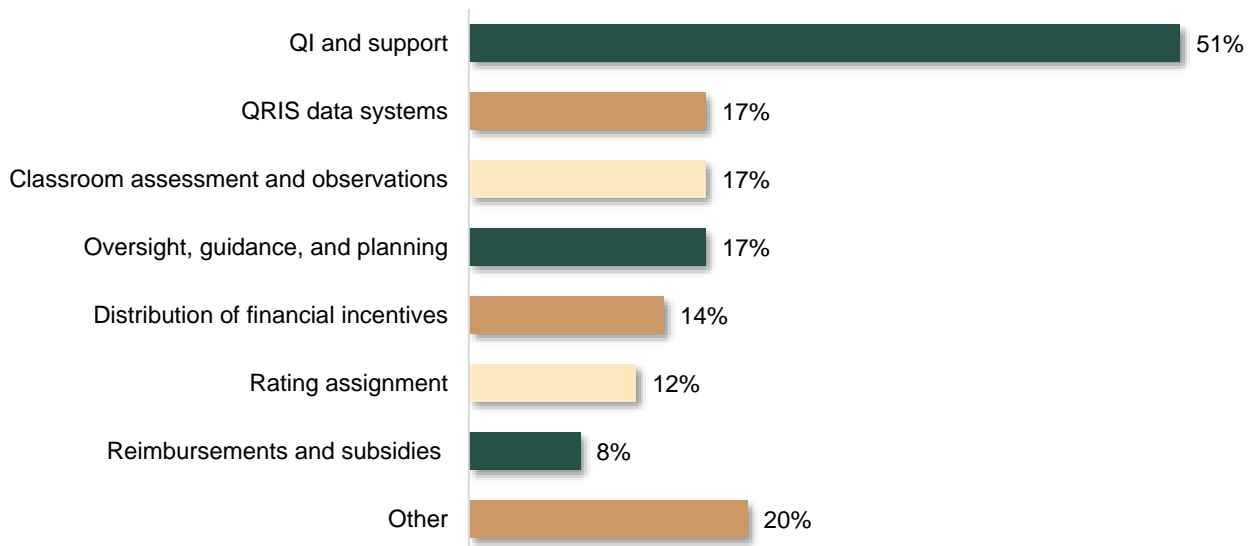
Source: Analysis of data retrieved from BUILD Initiative. (2017). Quality compendium [Online tool]. Retrieved from <https://qualitycompendium.org>

Note: N = 166 partners across 42 QRISs.

Responsibilities

QRIS partners can have a variety of responsibilities. Figure 2 shows that across all 166 partners, the most common responsibility is quality improvement (QI) and support³ (85 partners; 51 percent). The least common responsibility is providing reimbursements and subsidies (14 partners; 8 percent).

Figure 2. Percent of Partners by Responsibility Across QRISs, 2017



Source: Analysis of data retrieved from BUILD Initiative. (2017). Quality compendium [Online tool]. Retrieved from <https://qualitycompendium.org>

Note: N = 166 partners across 42 QRISs.

³ This responsibility was defined broadly and was not prescribed further for respondents in the Quality Compendium.

Table 2 shows the types of partners that most frequently oversee a given responsibility. CCR&Rs and state agencies are the partners that most frequently reported to oversee quality improvement and support, representing 27 and 22 percent, respectively, of all partners offering quality improvement and support. Universities and state agencies are the most likely partners to oversee QRIS data systems (28 and 24 percent, respectively) and complete classroom assessments and observations (50 and 14 percent, respectively).

Table 2. Top Partners by Responsibility, 2017

Responsibility	Top Partner	Percent	Second Top Partner	Percent
Quality improvement and support (<i>n</i> = 85)	CCR&R	27%	State agency and nonprofit	22%
QRIS data systems (<i>n</i> = 29)	University	28%	State agency	24%
Classroom assessment and observation (<i>n</i> = 28)	University	50%	State agency	14%
Oversight, guidance, and planning (<i>n</i> = 28)	State agency	43%	University	25%
Distribution of financial incentives (<i>n</i> = 24)	State agency and nonprofit	29%	University	13%
Rating assignment (<i>n</i> = 20)	University	45%	State agency	20%
Tiered reimbursement and subsidy (<i>n</i> = 14)	State agency	71%	Nonprofit	21%
Other (<i>n</i> = 33)	State agency	33%	Nonprofit	30%

Source: Analysis of data retrieved from BUILD Initiative. (2017). Quality compendium [Online tool]. Retrieved from <https://qualitycompendium.org>

Note: *N* = 261 responsibilities across 166 partners among 42 QRISs. The number of responsibilities per partner across QRISs ranges from one to seven. The median number of responsibilities is two per partner.

Agreement Types

QRISs reported several different partner agreement types.⁴ Competitive contracts account for 40 percent of agreement types. The least common agreement type is an amendment to current scope of work (9 percent), as shown in table 3.

Table 3. Percent of Partner Agreement Types Across QRISs, 2017

Partner Agreement Type	Percent
Competitive contract (<i>n</i> = 65)	40%
Sole-source contract (<i>n</i> = 28)	17%
Memorandum of agreement (MOA) and memorandum of understanding (MOU) (<i>n</i> = 16)	10%
Amendment to current scope of work (<i>n</i> = 14)	9%
Other (<i>n</i> = 40)	25%
Total	100%

Source: Analysis of data retrieved from BUILD Initiative. (2017). Quality compendium [Online tool]. Retrieved from <https://qualitycompendium.org>

Note: *N* = 42 QRISs.

⁴ Partner agreement types were defined in the Quality Compendium as follows:

Competitive contract: multiple organizations placed bids on services needed.

Sole-source contract: only one organization can bid on and provide the contractual services needed.

MOA and MOU: memorandum of agreement (MOA) and memorandum of understanding (MOU) are written agreements or understandings between parties to work together.

While the most common agreement type is a competitive contract, certain types of partners tend to use particular agreement types. For instance, table 4 shows that universities, nonprofits, and CCR&Rs are most likely to use competitive contracts (39 percent, 49 percent, and 58 percent, respectively), while for-profit companies are most likely to use sole-source contracts (60 percent).

Table 4. Agreement Types by Partner, 2017

Partner	Competitive Contract	Amendment to Current Scope of Work	Sole-Source Contract	MOA and MOU	Other
State agency (n = 43)	16%	2%	7%	16%	58%
University (n = 33)	39%	6%	18%	18%	18%
Nonprofit (n = 37)	49%	14%	22%	5%	11%
CCR&R (n = 26)	58%	19%	19%	0%	4%
For-profit (n = 5)	20%	0%	60%	0%	20%

Source: Analysis of data retrieved from BUILD Initiative. (2017). Quality compendium [Online tool]. Retrieved from <https://qualitycompendium.org>

Note: N = 42 QRISs.

The National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance (ECQA Center) supports state and community leaders and their partners in the planning and implementation of rigorous approaches to quality in all early care and education settings for children from birth to school age. The ECQA Center is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families.

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