Arbor Day Foundation™ | THE GIVING GROVE

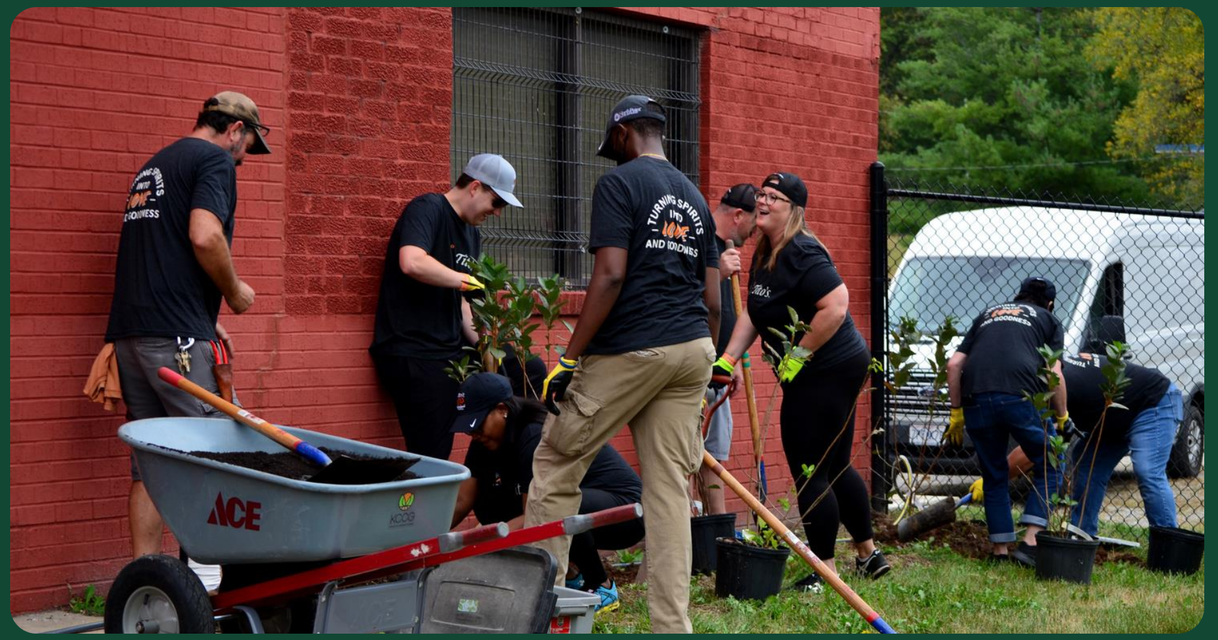
From Volunteer Days to Strategic Partnerships:

Designing Experiences That Deliver



Our Mission

The Giving Grove’s mission is to provide healthy calories, strengthen community, and improve the urban environment through a nationwide network of sustainable little orchards.







Little Orchards, Big Impact

Food Access

A single mature orchard can grow over 3,000 pounds of food each year, providing a lasting source of healthy calories close to home.

Environmental Resiliency

Our orchards expand urban tree canopy, lower air temperatures, manage stormwater, improve air quality, and create habitat for pollinators and wildlife.

Community Building

By centering local leadership and ownership, orchards become “third spaces” that foster belonging, strengthen relationships, and bring neighbors together.

What can strong corporate partnerships accomplish?

- Expand awareness and visibility for your organization
- Leverage a company's brand, resources, and influence toward your org's strategic goals
- Engage employees and communities in tangible, meaningful ways
- Build relationships that grow beyond a single event

The event is a moment in the partnership, not the partnership itself.



Pear & Share

Share a difficult volunteer experience you organized or participated in:

- What went wrong?
- What would have made it better?

Why do volunteer events unravel?



EXPECTATIONS



FUNDING



PARTICIPATION

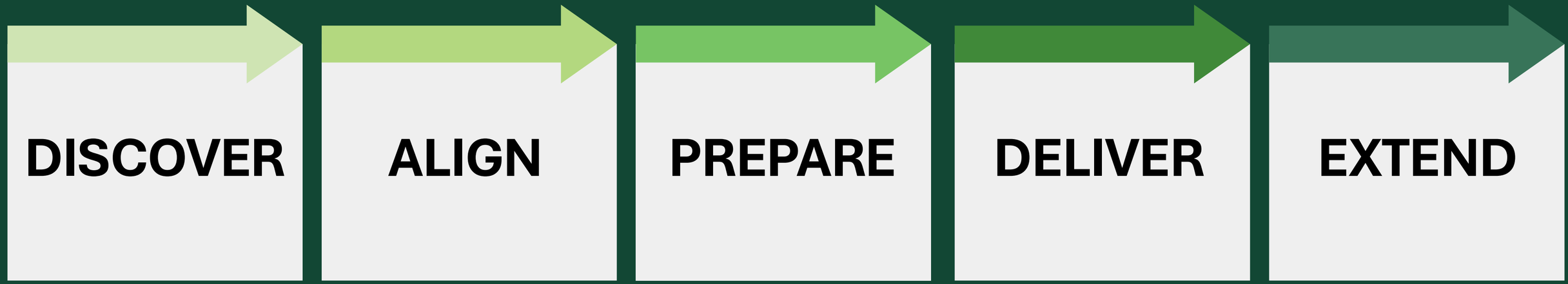


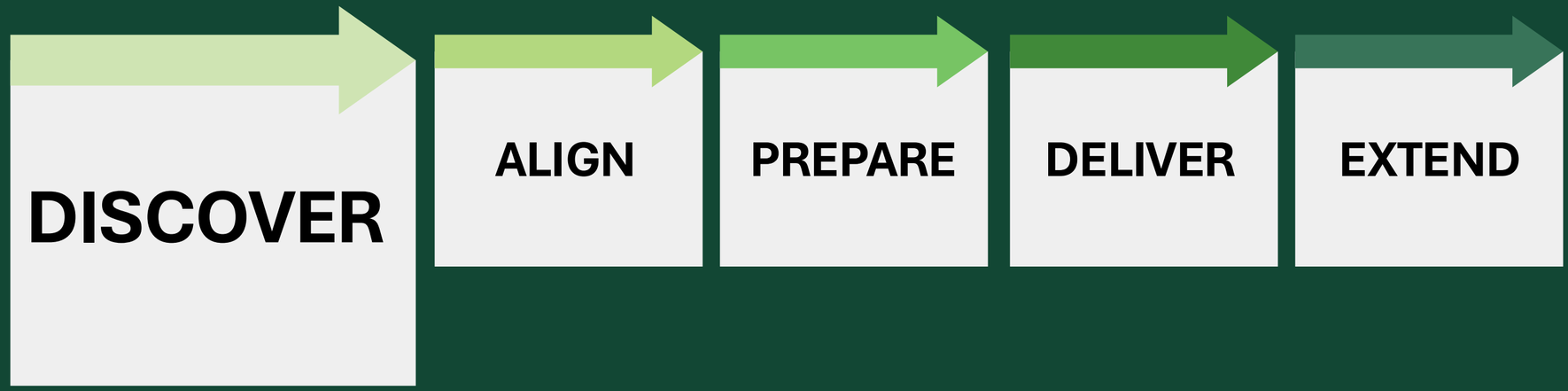
UNCLEAR OWNERSHIP



THE EVENT BUBBLE

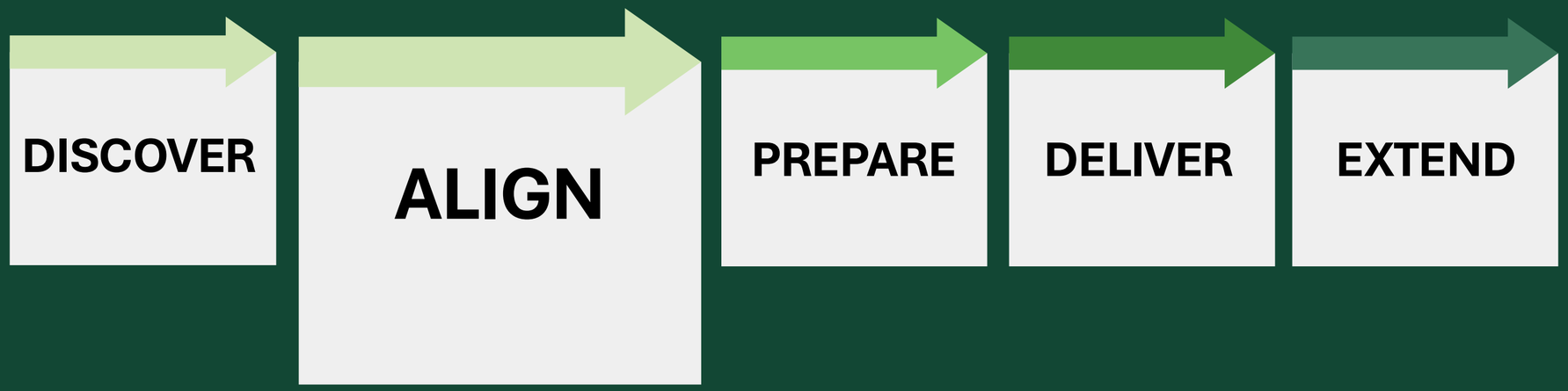
How do we effectively leverage an event?





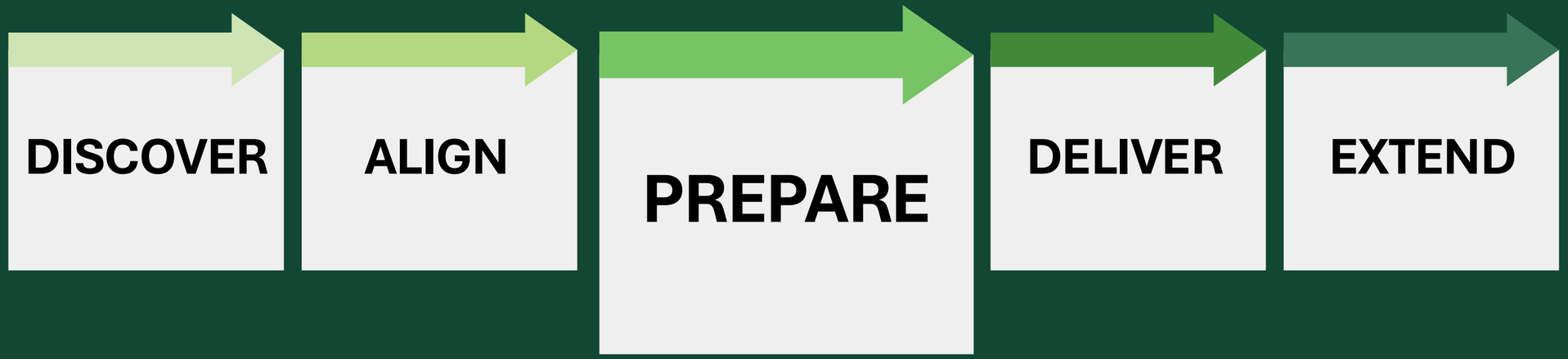
The who / what / where / when and WHY

- Use your initial call to harvest information
- Most importantly: “**Why** are you bringing people together?”
- Eliminate uncertainty & set expectations



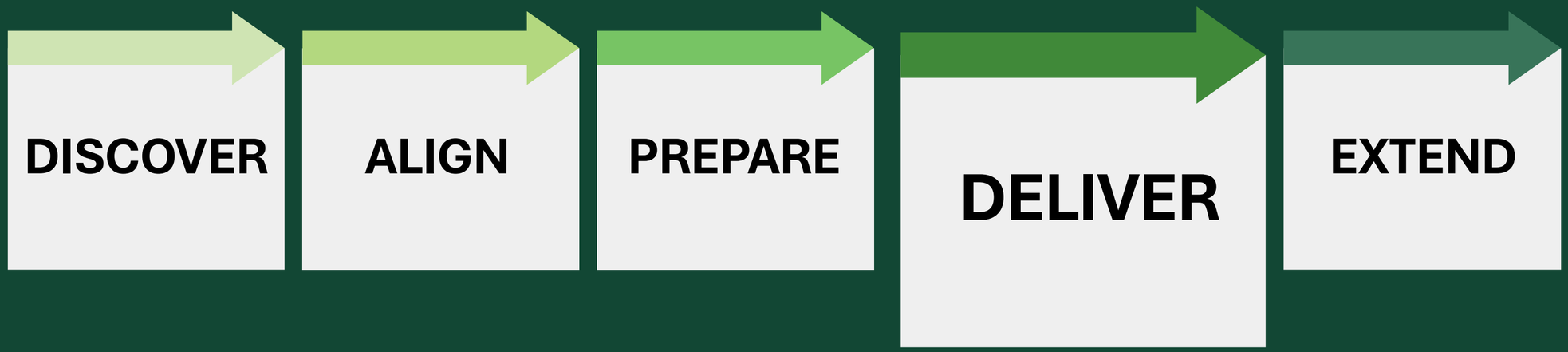
Create One Source of Truth

- Collaboratively develop a shared event brief together with business partner, local site lead, volunteer coordinator, and any other key stakeholders.
- Clearly define ownership & responsibilities



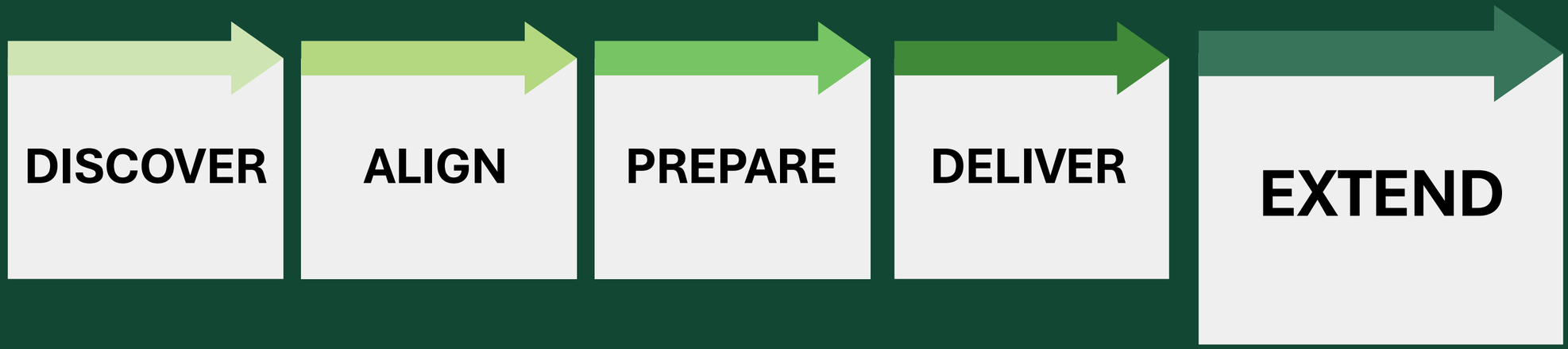
Plan for multiple scenarios

- Preparing for a small event requires the same detail as a large event
- Make registration count: Share information, collect waivers, and emergency contacts while setting the tone for the event
- Your “know-before-you-go” email is key for removing uncertainty



Make participation enjoyable & effortless

- First impressions matter
- Answer questions before they're asked: "Where do I go?," "What do I do?," or "Why am I doing this?"
- Proactively plan for photos and storytelling



Don’t let the partnership end when the shovels go away

Information Gathering → Registration → Know Before You Go → Arrival → Welcome → Experience → Closing → Photos/Social → Impact Updates → Next Collaboration

Remove Uncertainty



Partner Contact

What will this cost?
How many people can come?
What happens if it rains?
What do I need to do?
What should I tell people?



Volunteer

Where do I park?
What do I wear?
Where do I go?
How do I do this?
Why does this project matter?
How can I support?



Your Org

Who's making decisions?
Partner expectations?
What will cause changes?
Who's speaking?
Who owns photography?
What's Plan B?

Community Centered Practices

- Decision making should be vetted with those closest to the site (steward/owner/manager), who care for the space long-term
- Consider whose voice is centered, power dynamics at play, and possible cultural barriers
- How is equity and cultural competency woven into your process from “Discover”

Resources





Thank You!

THE GIVING GROVE

www.GivingGrove.org

Instagram: @givinggrove

facebook.com/communitytreegardens

linkedin.com/company/the-giving-grove