

YOUTHBUILD CONSTRUCTION PLUS GUIDE

01

What is Construction Plus (C+)?

PAGE 04

02

What Makes C+ Work?

PAGE 06

03

The Framework

PAGE 09

04

The 50/40/10 Program Schedule

PAGE 11

05

Connecting Your Pathways to Registered Apprenticeships (RA)

PAGE 14

06

C+ Examples

PAGE 16

07

C+ Planning Template

PAGE 19

08

Resources

PAGE 23

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction



UNDERSTANDING CONSTRUCTION PLUS

YouthBuild programs offer young people opportunities to discover their strengths, build real world career/work readiness skills, and pursue meaningful career pathways. The Construction Plus (C+) component of the DOL YouthBuild program expands those career options by opening doors to additional industries where participants can gain credentials, hands-on experiences, and viable paths to apprenticeship or employment.

This guide is designed for both DOL YouthBuild programs planning or implementing their first C+ pathway, and programs considering offering C+ when they apply for future grants. It is intended to help you explore and make informed decisions about implementing a C+ pathway that aligns with your participants' interests, offers a stackable and portable industry-recognized credential, and positions participants for long-term career success.

This overview covers the essential elements of the C+ framework, lessons learned, and promising practices for designing and implementing a successful pathway. You will also understand how the C+ pre-apprenticeship track can lead to a registered apprenticeship. As you walk through this resource, we encourage you to assess your program's capacity, engage partners, and determine how a C+ pathway can strengthen outcomes for the young people you serve.

01

What is Construction Plus (C+)?

Construction Plus (C+) is a pre-apprenticeship pathway that takes place during the active programming phase of the DOL grant. In designing and implementing a C+ pathway, one should mirror the traditional construction pre-apprenticeship track (e.g., hands-on training at a work site, connections with classroom instruction, etc.).

The Executive Order (EO) Preparing Americans for High-Paying Skilled Trade Jobs of the Future, issued on April 23, 2025, emphasizes the need to “create strategies to identify alternative credentials and assessments to the 4-year college degree that can be mapped to the specific skill needs of prospective employers.” The EO aims to expand the number and diversity of “registered apprenticeships to new industries and occupations, including

high-growth and emerging sectors.” This goal directly aligns with the YouthBuild model, which provides training that offers knowledge, skills, experience, and credentials, preparing participants to enter registered apprenticeships or secure employment in new and emerging industries.

Since the inception of C+, DOL YouthBuild programs have developed and implemented C+ pathways in traditional industries such as healthcare, technology, culinary arts, manufacturing, and logistics. Even in these traditional fields, new and emerging jobs are presenting opportunities for the participants you serve.

See Attachment A for examples of current and emerging C+ pathways.



02

What Makes C+ Work?

What Makes C+ Work?

C+ pathways require time, resources, and strategic partnerships to effectively prepare participants to be career-ready for placement in a registered apprenticeship, employment, or postsecondary education.

Here are some things programs should consider to successfully implement a C+ pathway:

CHOOSING THE INDUSTRY PATHWAY

Key Considerations:

1. What initial skills and credentials must be completed during active programming time? Have you included credential instruction, any related testing, and hands-on work experience? Be cautious about choosing a credential that will take longer for your participants to attain than the duration of your active programming period.
2. What data will you use to help determine the industry pathway? Have you included data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and local Workforce Development Board to identify emerging needs for new workers? Ensure that the pathway is of interest to participants, with sufficient education and career exposure. See [Using Labor Market Data to Design Career Pathways](#).
3. Have you established that the chosen pathway has entry-level opportunities or testing/certification at the appropriate reading or math levels for participants to achieve during active programming time?

STAFFING

Key Considerations:

1. What skills does an instructor need to teach the curriculum? Do they require the same skills for supervising work experience?
2. Do you have someone on staff who can fill this role? Do you hire? Or do you contract this out to a partner organization? If you choose to contract out, does the instructor have the experience to teach your YouthBuild participants? If you choose to contract out, what is the cost, and does it fit in your budget?
3. What is your backup plan if the internal staffing or partner falls through?

C+ SCHEDULE

Key Considerations:

1. How does the C+ pathway training time fit into your 50/40/10 split?
2. If your chosen credential training does not require at least 40% of program time, how will you augment it with complementary skill development activities?
3. Are all your young people going through construction first, or will you have a cohort in construction and a separate cohort in C+?

PARTNERSHIPS

Key Considerations:

1. If you have a C+ partner, how do you both develop a schedule that supports both the training and the program?

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Key Considerations:

1. Are you recruiting specifically for the C+ pathway? If so, does marketing need to look different?
2. How might the program's training design affect your recruitment strategies? Will your program space accommodate the number of participants you want to enroll?
3. What are the requirements of attaining the credential? Do participants need to attain an HSD/HSE by the time they are tested or placed? Do they need to have certain math or reading levels?
4. By the time Q2 employment/education placement occurs, do participants need to be substance-free? Have a driver's license? Be of a certain age?
5. Do participants need to provide their own transportation to the training, work experience, or employment partner?
6. Do participants have any previous work experience? Or will the C+ pathway be their first job experience?

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Key Considerations:

1. Do you have a plan to regularly assess your credentials, your partners, the overall labor market, and the needs and interests of your participants?
2. What tools will you use to make these assessments?
3. At what point in your grant cycle would you consider changing a partner, your credentials, or the overall pathway for future grant application?
4. When participants are not interested in the selected C+ pathway, how will your program weigh labor market demand alongside participant interests to determine whether to adapt the pathway, strengthen engagement strategies, or select an alternative option?

03

The Framework

The Construction Plus Framework

The construction track in a YouthBuild program provides a blueprint for designing and implementing the components of the C+ track. The pre-apprenticeship model, as stated in 20 CFR § 681.480, outlines five (5) framework components for construction and C+:

- 1** Approved training and curriculum that aligns with the skill needs of employers in the economy of the region;
- 2** Access to educational and career counseling and other supportive services, directly or indirectly;
- 3** Hands-on, meaningful learning and work experiences that are connected to education and training activities, such as exploring career options, and understanding how the skills acquired through coursework can be applied toward a future career;
- 4** Opportunities to attain at least one industry-recognized credential; and
- 5** Partnership with one or more registered apprenticeship programs that assist in placing individuals who complete the pre-apprenticeship program into a registered apprenticeship program.



**THE DOL
YOUTHBUILD
MODEL**

04

**The 50/40/10
Program Schedule**

Adhering to the 50/40/10 Program Schedule

Another requirement for implementing a C+ track is ensuring adherence to the 50/40/10 active program schedule. At a minimum, active programming consists of 50% academic and educational programming, 40% occupational skills training (construction/C+), and up to 10% dedicated to leadership development, community service, and other related activities.



Academics + Education

Including High School Diploma or Equivalent prep, testing skills, and post-secondary education prep

At least 50%



Occupational Skills: Construction, C+

Including credential training and hands-on work experience

At least 40%



Leadership + Community Service

Including leadership development skills, community service/leadership opportunities

Up to 10%



This illustrates how the core components of the pre-apprenticeship model and YouthBuild model are exemplified in the construction and C+ pathways.

PRE-APPRENTICESHIP MODEL

Approved training and curriculum

Access to educational or career counseling and other supportive services

Hands-on, meaningful learning and work experiences

Opportunities to attain at least one industry-recognized credential

Partnership with one or more registered apprenticeship programs

CONSTRUCTION PRE-APPRENTICESHIP

NCCER curriculum and training

Opportunities in electrical, plumbing, and HVAC; purchasing tools and boots

Building or renovating a unit of housing

NCCER with stackable certificates in OSHA10/30

Local Carpenters Union

C+ PRE-APPRENTICESHIP (EX. HEALTHCARE)

CNA curriculum and training

Exposure via healthcare facility tours and medical speakers; access to childcare and transportation assistance

Direct patient care during training and future internships

Certified Nursing Assistant with stackable certificates in CPR, First Aid, blood borne pathogens

Local hospital providing a RA path

Leadership Development

Supportive Services

Education & Academic Pathways

Career & Technical Training

Follow-Up

DOL YOUTHBUILD MODEL

05

**Connecting Your
Pathways to Registered
Apprenticeships (RA)**

Connecting Your C+ Pathway to Registered Apprenticeships (RA)

Because YouthBuild programs are recognized as pre-apprenticeships for both construction and C+ pathways, grantees are responsible for providing the required skill development, proficiency, and hands-on work experience that program participants need to be career-ready for apprenticeship opportunities.

Apprentices experience a work-learn-and-earn model with on-the-job training, acquiring additional skills and knowledge valued by employers, all while earning a living wage. YouthBuild programs are well-positioned to develop and expand partnerships with apprenticeship sponsors to benefit their youth participants. These partners include educators and training providers, intermediaries, and employer sponsors, etc.

There are two entities responsible for registering and overseeing registered apprenticeships: the U.S. DOL Office of Apprenticeship (OA) and recognized State Apprenticeship Agencies (SAA). An important first step for any YouthBuild program is to determine whether your state is part of the federal or state office. The Apprenticeship System website will provide you with the necessary information and contact details for your respective designation. Additionally, you can use the “Letter to Apprenticeship Representative” for outreach and talking points when contacting your OA or SAA representative.

“The role of the Federal and State Offices of Apprenticeship is to assist employers in designing work-based learning opportunities to develop a talent pool of workers, provide information to potential employees about apprenticeship and other work-based learning opportunities, identify apprenticeship sponsors, and support the apprenticeship registration process. In this capacity, OAs can connect local YouthBuild grant programs to apprenticeship sponsors seeking qualified candidates. Because staff members who work at OAs engage regularly with employers, business associations, labor management organizations, and community colleges, they can present YouthBuild as a potential talent pool for these partners.”

**LEVERAGING RELATIONSHIPS WITH OFFICES OF
APPRENTICESHIPS TO PROMOTE PARTNERSHIPS
AND PATHWAYS**

06

C+ Examples

Current C+ Industries and Credentials

This list is not exhaustive, and the examples provided only represent a portion of the credentials and credentialing bodies used across DOL YouthBuild programs. It is best to conduct your own local research to determine which credentials are recognized by employers and feasible for participants to complete during the C+ active programming period across industries.



Healthcare

Example Credentialing Body

Varies by State (State Board of Nursing, State Department of Health/Public Health)

Credential Example

Certified Nursing Assistant



Manufacturing

Example Credentialing Body

Manufacturing Skill Standards Council (MSSC)

Credential Example

Certified Production Technician



Logistics

Example Credentialing Body

Manufacturing Skill Standards Council (MSSC)

Credential Example

Certified Logistics Technician



Culinary

Example Credentialing Body

National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation (NRAEF)

Credential Example

NRAEF Pro Start, Restaurant Ready



Hospitality

Example Credentialing Body

American Hotel and Lodging Educational Institute (AHLEI)

Credential Example

AHLEI (START) Skills, Tasks, and Results Training ®



Customer Service

Example Credentialing Body

National Retail Federation (NRF) Foundation

Credential Example

NRF RISE Up Retail Training and Credentials



Information Technology

Example Credentialing Body

Computer Technology Industry Association (CompTIA)

Credential Example

CompTIA A+ Certification

Emerging C+ Industries and Credentials

Welding

Example Credentialing Body
American Welding Society

Example Credential
Arc Welding Certification

Drone Flying

Example Credentialing Body
Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)

Example Credential
Remote Pilot Certificate

Landscape

Example Credentialing Body
National Association of Landscape Professionals

Example Credential
Landscape Technician

Child Care + Youth Development

Example Credentialing Body
Varies by State
EX: NECPA Commission, Inc.
Council for Professional Recognition

Example Credential
Child Development Associate (CDA)

07

C+ Planning Template

INSERT PROGRAM NAME HERE

Construction Plus Planning

Industry

Industry Name: _____

Occupation: _____ O*Net Code: _____

Describe why this sector of work is a good fit for your program.

Reviewing the Long-Term Occupational Projections, what is the 10-year outlook in your state for this occupation?

Supporting Data

What data supports choosing this pathway? Discuss the data source and why.

Curriculum & Credentials

Name of Industry-Recognized Credential:

Name of Industry-Recognized Curriculum:

☐ Number of Instructional Hours:



What is the duration of program participation? If this is the sole occupational training for a participant, does it count as at least 40% of active programming time?

Testing

☐ What type of testing is required? (e.g., local or state level)

☐ What cost is associated with the curriculum material and test? Does your budget align?

Hands-On Work Experience (WEX)

What will the hands-on work experience look like? (e.g., # of hours, skills developed, etc.)

Who will provide the work experience? Is the WEX provided in-house or by a partner?

Where will the work experience take place? Are there transportation barriers?

Do you need specialized training equipment? _____

Does your budget support purchasing equipment? Is there other funding that can support this?

Participants

What specific knowledge or skills do participants need to understand the curriculum, pass the testing successfully, and attain employment in this sector ? (e.g., minimum reading or math level)



Is there a need for additional coursework?
(e.g., enhanced vocabulary, tool proficiency,
high-level math skills)

What additional requirements do participants need to attain to get employment in this sector?



Do participants need a driver's license?
Is there a minimum age requirement?

YouthBuild Program Alignment

How does the pathway align with your YouthBuild program, partners, schedule, etc.?



If you decide to partner out, will you have multiple
potential partners if one falls through?

Does the partner's schedule align with the overall
program schedule?

Are partners a part of your program's staff meetings?

Recruitment

What is the recruitment plan for this path?

Program Schedule At what point of active programming will participants be in the C+ component?



Does it provide enough time to
obtain the credential before the
end of active programming?

Curriculum

Is the curriculum provided by the YB staff or the partner? _____

Partners

Discuss the qualifications of the instructor and the partner.



If you use a partner, where will instruction occur?
If training is off-site, how will participants be
transported? Are YB staff required to be on-site?

Is there an Memorandum of Understanding
(MOU) in place? What policies and procedures
need to be developed and agreed upon?



Q2/Q4 Employment and Education Placement

What other employment placement options are there?



Have you connected with the AJC's Business Services?

Do you have partners who can provide a "first job" for participants to gain more work experience?

Who is responsible for this research?

What other education placement options are there?



Are there partners (e.g., community college, tech school) who offer additional training/education?

Registered Apprenticeship Alignment

What is the RA for this pathway? _____

See [apprenticeship occupation finder](#) for more information.

Are there any additional skills or requirements needed for a participant to be RA-ready?

Who are the RA partners?



Who are the union or non-union primary contacts?

Are there MOUs in place with each RA partner?

Who is responsible for building and maintaining this relationship?

☐ Has the pre-apprenticeship program been registered with the state to facilitate direct entry opportunities?

☐ Have you reached out to the state apprenticeship office contact?

Who is responsible for connecting the participant to the RA?



Is this a role for the Job Developer? Partner? Other?



08

Resources

DOL Guidance Resources



TEGL 07-14 Change 1: Updated Guidance for Implementing the "Construction Plus" Component of the YouthBuild Program

Provides resources for researching Labor Market data to determine local in-demand fields; The attachment, Considerations Guide for Credential Attainment provides information to determine which Construction Plus fields to offer



TEGL 10-16 Change 3: Performance Accountability Guidance for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Core Programs

Defines credentials for C+ and performance outcomes



TEN 25-19: Understanding Postsecondary Credentials in the Public Workforce System

Clarifies the key elements of credentials



Apprenticeship.gov

- Explore Pre-Apprenticeship
- Apprenticeship Job Finder
- Partner Finder
- Apprenticeship Occupation Finder
- Apprenticeship State Offices

Other Resources



WorkforceGPS - Main Library Apprenticeship Results



WorkforceGPS - Main Library Construction Plus Results



Using Local Labor Market Data to Design Career Pathways



Local Labor Market Data Workbook



DOL YouthBuild The website includes summaries of approved C+ programs.



Competency Model Clearing House The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and industry partners collaborate to develop and maintain dynamic models of the foundation and technical competencies that are needed in economically vital industries and sectors of the American economy.



Apprenticeship Resource Collection



Construction Plus Resource Collection



O*NET



Healthcare Catalog



Construction Plus Industry Spotlights



Bureau of Labor Statistics – Occupational Outlook Handbook

YouthBuild Global

Contractor for U.S. Department of Labor YouthBuild

This project has been funded, either wholly or in part, with Federal funds from the Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration under Contract Number 1605C2-21-C-0011. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of Labor, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement of same by the U.S. Government.

YOUTHBUILD.ORG