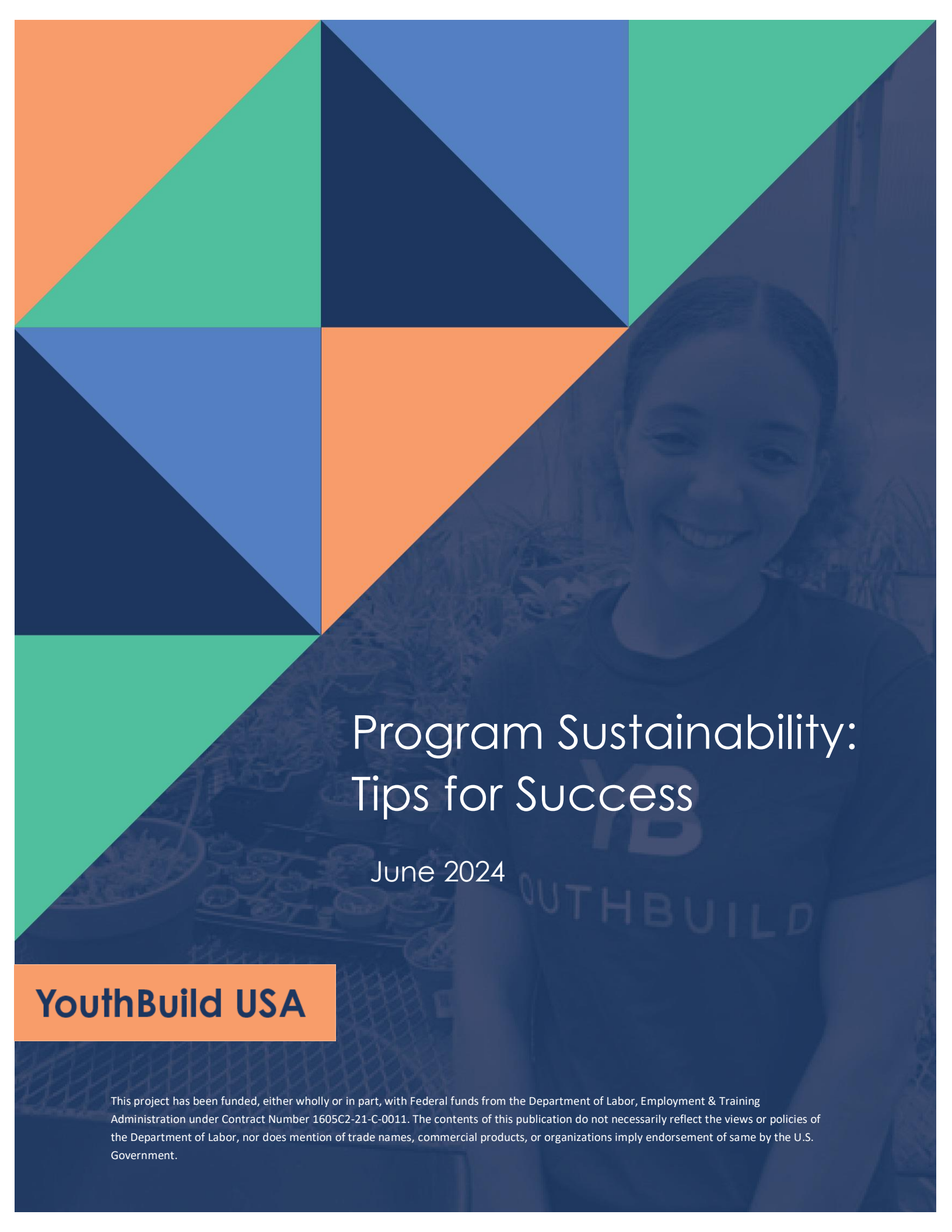




# Program Sustainability: Tips for Success

June 2024

**YouthBuild USA**

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.



# Table of Contents

|                                                    |    |
|----------------------------------------------------|----|
| INTRODUCTION                                       | 3  |
| EXPLORING SUSTAINABLE FUNDING SOURCES              | 4  |
| WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA)    | 6  |
| FEDERAL, STATE, AND REGIONAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES | 8  |
| SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY RESOURCES                  | 10 |



## INTRODUCTION

Sustainability is a cornerstone of any organization or institution. In the context of YouthBuild programs, sustainability is creating an organizational plan that prioritizes long-term fiscal and programmatic health to ensure the ability to implement programming over time.

Planning for sustainability means being proactive, creative, innovative, and adaptable when considering your program partners and funding streams, even when your program is financially stable (Utilizing Partnerships and Diversifying Funds to Achieve Sustainability). This approach ensures that the Department of Labor (DOL) funding for active grantees becomes one of many resources for your program, not the sole source. Maintaining a diversified funding base ensures that YouthBuild programs can provide consistent and reliable programming for young people.

This tipsheet offers strategies for finding various funding streams and building and maintaining your program's sustainability.

## IN THIS TIPSHEET



### Exploring Sustainable Funding Sources



### Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)



### Federal, State, and Regional Funding Opportunities

- YouthBuild coalitions
- Community development block grants
- Criminal justice initiatives
- State lotteries
- Other state workforce funding
- Federal/state earmarks



### Sustainability Strategy Resources (including government funding resources)



## EXPLORING SUSTAINABLE FUNDING SOURCES

Securing sustainable funding requires innovative and creative use of diverse financial support sources.

### Questions to Consider When Exploring Creative Fund Usage

- Are you looking at additional wraparound services?
- Are you looking at purchasing another piece of equipment?
- Are you looking at specific career pathways, such as manufacturing and green jobs?
- Can you look at your model and seek funding for specific components or staffing?  
(e.g., find funding to support your education component)

## Tips for Researching Sustainable Funding

### Strategically seek funding opportunities that:

- Align with your YouthBuild program goals and mission (i.e., offering occupational skills training and supportive services).
- Have a specific purpose that fulfills programmatic and youth needs (e.g., tools for each youth to use on work site).
- Help layer services or provide resources beyond what the DOL grant covers (e.g., food for milestone celebrations, additional stipends for youth necessities, and recognition of accomplishments).
- Support capacity building.
- Meet partner needs (e.g., funding to support a registered apprenticeship).

## When Researching Funding Opportunities...

- Determine who is eligible to apply. Is it limited to cities/towns, police departments, nonprofits, or colleges?
  - Assess whether the funding aligns with your programmatic mission and model.
  - Identify partners who might be better aligned for future funding.
  - Connect with programs or organizations that have previously received a funding opportunity you're looking at.
  - Clarify all aspects of the funding, including programmatic and fiscal considerations: Is the funding cost reimbursement? Is there a match requirement? Do you currently work with the population? Is the number of anticipated participants served realistic for your program?
  - Check for any restrictions with population counts for more than one funding effort (e.g., can they be co-enrolled?).
- 

## Tips for Preparing to Apply for Sustainable Funding

- Understand the performance measures to meet expected accomplishments and align them with your YouthBuild grant.
- Develop boilerplate grant language that can be used for each application.
- Build a strategic plan regarding where you will or won't apply.
- Establish a strong grant management system in alignment with generally accepted accounting principles, including sufficient/proficient staff, meticulous financial tracking, report writing, timesheet maintenance, and a program budget (including possible travel).
- Evaluate your program's capacity for managing multiple interconnected grants to ensure effective coordination.
- Ensure the appropriate infrastructure (e.g., technology, policies, and processes) to responsibly steward and implement grant funds.



# WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA)

## What is WIOA?

WIOA is legislation designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy.

## Finding & Preparing for WIOA Funding

Funds for youth services are allocated to states and local areas based on a formula:

The WIOA Youth Program focuses primarily on out-of-school youth, requiring local areas to expend a minimum of 75% of WIOA youth funds on them. It includes 14 program elements that must be available to youth participants. WIOA prioritizes work experience through a 20% minimum expenditure rate for the work experience program element.

To determine how much funding is available in your area, check your local Workforce Development Board Finder and American Job Center (AJC). Your Workforce Development Board will likely have a 3-5-year strategic plan that you may benefit from reviewing.

## WIOA Youth Formula Funds ➡

DOL allows young people to co-enroll in both DOL YouthBuild and WIOA Youth. Your DOL YouthBuild program is ideal to partner with the WIOA Youth funding since YouthBuild can provide access to a population that many AJCs have problems accessing, and AJCs can provide a wide array of services to help support YouthBuild participants' career/work readiness.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Are you attending your local workforce board meetings? Do you have a seat at the table if there is a youth council? Is your Memorandum of Understanding with the American Job Center more than just a piece of paper – are you truly creating this partnership?



WIOA Youth funds are put out to bid in many areas every one to two years. Consider bidding on this funding to enhance the programming you provide. Programs have used this funding for things like staffing, stipends, supportive services, paid internships, and work experiences.

### **WIOA Adult Formula Funds**

Youth who are 18 years or older can be co-enrolled with WIOA adult programming. This is an opportunity to access Individual Training Account ([ITA](#)) funding so participants can use the money during their time at YouthBuild and further engage in training as they exit your program. These ITA training dollars are limited and may not be available in all areas.

In addition, you can register your YouthBuild program for the state's eligible provider list. Research your state's Department of Labor to find out more about how to get included on the eligible training provider list.

### **Governor's Reserve Funds**

According to the National Governors Association, governors have the authority to “invest substantial portions of their state’s WIOA allotments in their highest workforce development priorities. This includes set-asides within WIOA program funds known as the ‘Governor’s Reserve.’” Governors can also establish alternative funding formulas that allocate WIOA resources based on their priorities. Work with your local workforce board to determine the priorities of your state’s governor and their office.

## **Example Uses of WIOA Funds**

- Tuition for training
- Stipends
- Credentials
- Supportive services to remove barriers
- Housing
- Transportation or car repairs
- Childcare
- Food
- Clothing, uniforms, work boots, safety equipment
- Foundational training incentives
- Customer service
- Work readiness



# FEDERAL, STATE, AND REGIONAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

## Using State or Regional Funding

Additional funding can come through state YouthBuild coalitions, criminal justice initiatives, and state agencies such as the Department of Labor, Health and Human Services, and the Department of Transportation. Often, YouthBuild programs use these funds to increase their recruitment efforts, provide supportive services, provide additional occupational skills training, facilitate placement activities, and increase staffing.

### EXAMPLES OF USING FUNDS



- Breakfast, lunch, and meal kits for youth to take home on Fridays
- Activities on the weekend to keep participants engaged and safe
- Additional stipends for youth to pay for necessities and recognize accomplishments

## YouthBuild Coalitions

As of June 2024, six states currently have YouthBuild coalitions, with two others in development. There are also two regional collaboratives in Southern California and New York City.

The funding comes directly from the state, and every coalition decides how it will be divided among all YouthBuild USA affiliated programs. It is also flexible in terms of how it is spent within each program.

At various times, funds have been available within state coalitions for programs that lost major funding to sustain their programming. In states with only one program, consider advocating for direct line-item funding for your program. However, DOL YouthBuild grantees **cannot** advocate using the DOL grant dollars or time.

There are also more regional approaches. Some programs in New York City receive funding directly from the city through the YouthBuild collaborative. This could be a strategy for other large cities with multiple programs. This approach could bring together several programs to advocate for county or regional funding in smaller cities or rural areas.

## Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

The U.S. [Department of Housing and Urban Development](#) (HUD) administers funds to support community development activities. YouthBuild programs have used funding for building projects,

public service projects, and other program activities. In Virginia, a program uses CDBG funding for stipends, food, transportation and employability skills training.

## Criminal Justice Initiatives

Several state agencies offer criminal justice funding to target first offenders or those at risk of offending. YouthBuild programs have partnered with police and other community service organizations for funding to create referral systems, support staff positions (such as case managers), and provide needed supportive services. In Illinois, a program received a state crime prevention grant that, coupled with a local non-profit grant, allowed them to build out a mini construction lab that has eight construction stations. Also in Illinois, a program received a state crime prevention grant therapist.

## State Lotteries

Revenues from [state lotteries](#) may have funding opportunities. Those that do often have flexibility in how entities can use the funds.

## Other State Workforce Funding

States may have job training funding that your program could be eligible to apply for. Research your state agencies to view what may be available. For example, Massachusetts' Clean Energy Center provided funding to a YouthBuild program to train participants in partnership with a local wind energy company.

A California program used the state's Transformative Climate Communities Program funding to train its participants in solar installations. In [New York](#) and [Massachusetts](#), funding exists for direct entry or expansions of eligible apprenticeships. For New York YouthBuild programs, this could mean up to \$6,500 per eligible participant who successfully completes the YouthBuild program.

## Federal/State Earmarks

Several YouthBuild programs have received federal or state earmarks. Earmarks are designated funding in the federal or state budget that comes directly to the sponsoring organization. These programs worked with their federal and state representatives to receive the funding. Often, depending on which federal or state agency the funds come from, they can be managed similarly to any other federal or state grant. Recent organizations with YouthBuild programs receiving this funding include states like Alabama, New York, and Kentucky. For more information, reach out to your federal and state legislators.

### PROGRAMS HAVE USED DOLLARS FROM THESE TYPES OF FUNDING TO:

- Pay for a licensed therapist to provide counseling, trauma-informed therapy, gun and gang violence counseling, and training
- Provide resources for families impacted by drugs, guns, and violence
- Provide incentives for attendance



## SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY RESOURCES

- **Leveraging New Funding and Strategic Planning for Sustainability** - This webinar focuses on diversifying funding streams for YouthBuild programs. Presenters explain why planning for sustainability is essential and share strategies for augmenting your program with additional funding that improves outcomes while still using grants for allowable costs.
- **Making Your Dollars Go Further** - This fact sheet will provide grantees with ideas and methods to make their DOL dollars go further, by diversifying funding and creating strong partnerships that can support and sustain the local YouthBuild program while it has secured DOL funding and beyond.
- **Candid** - Find additional grant resources, including The Foundation Center and GuideStar.

## Government-Specific Funding Resources

- **Grants.gov**: Sign up to receive RFP announcements from all government agencies.
- **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**: Find lists of grants for substance use programs, adjudicated youth, and young parents, and locate your state Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) office.
- **U.S. Department of Justice**: Grant postings and resources to support and work with adjudicated youth.
- **DOL Employment & Training Administration (ETA)**: Grant information, training materials, YouthBuild resources, and WIOA/One-Stop contact information.
- **U.S. Department of Agriculture**: Grants for rural programs.
- **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development**: Grants, housing information, and state contacts.
- **U.S. Department of Energy**: Grants to strengthen job pipelines and training programs in the energy field.
- **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency**: Grants for environmental education and initiatives that engage youth in environmental efforts.
- **U.S. Department of Education**: Grants for educational programs.
- **Community Development Block Grants**: Funds for various community needs funded through HUD.
- **Corporation for National and Community Service**: AmeriCorps and VISTA opportunities.