



March Funding Tip

The Finance Project is pleased to announce the next installment in a series of [monthly funding tips](#) for youth programs. These tips cover different financing strategies to help programs finance and sustain their work.

Tip: *Coordinate Resources and Services to Support Workforce Development Services for Youth*

Given the wide range of programs with the potential to support youth workforce development services, efforts focused on better coordinating and aligning resources and services hold great promise for improving the funding climate for youth programs. Local leaders can use several strategies to better coordinate and align resources and services.

- **Map community resources** – This can help leaders identify local youth-serving organizations and their programs, gaps and duplication in the service delivery system, youth funding streams that flow into the community, and resources that could be leveraged.
- **Develop a shared vision or common standards for youth workforce development services or youth programming more broadly** - This can help promote collaboration, buy-in, and resource alignment.
- **Use the contracting process to promote collaboration and resource leveraging** - This can help spur partnerships and the leveraging of other funding sources
- **Think strategically about youth council membership** – This may afford local youth workforce development leaders with the opportunity to engage key stakeholders in efforts to build and support services and systems for youth.
- **Maximize the potential flexibility of funding sources that can support youth workforce development** – Local leaders can explore whether there is flexibility in available funding sources that could be leveraged to help support youth workforce development services.

Developing a Coordinated Youth Workforce Development System in Hartford

In recent years, leaders in Hartford, Connecticut, received several sizable U.S. Department of Labor discretionary grants, including a Youth Opportunity grant and a Youth Access/Youth Offenders Grant. These resources provided support for developing and testing new strategies to improve employment outcomes among Hartford's youth. They also spurred the growth of new partnerships. To ensure the key partnerships and services would be sustained beyond time-limited grant funding, Hartford leaders developed an infrastructure to support collaborative planning and fundraising. This effort, the Future Workforce Investment System, includes school leaders; a capital area workforce development board; the United Way; the mayor's office; the city's health and human services department; business leaders; and several local community-based organizations. Together, they have articulated 10 shared priorities for youth in Hartford and developed a coordinated system on youth across separate systems and agencies. They have also leveraged a diverse base of resources to support their work, including federal, local, and private funding. For more information, contact Rachel Rivera, Capital Workforce Partners, (860) 522-1111, ext. 323.

For more information on this financing strategy and the various strategies that can be used in finding resources to support workforce development and youth, see the Finance Project's publication, Finding Resources to Support Workforce Development Services for Youth: http://www.financeproject.org/publications/workforce_youth.pdf.

Within the [Youth Programs Resource Center](#) you will also find an [online clearinghouse](#), jointly developed by The Finance Project and The Forum for Youth Investment. The clearinghouse contains a wealth of information and resources for supporting and sustaining youth programs and initiatives. It is designed to help you learn about data, tools, policies, practices, financing strategies, coordination efforts and technical assistance resources developed by organizations in the field that aim to improve the lives of youth.