



BUDGET AND SUSTAINABILITY

Goals for this section:

- Create a budget for your SparkPoint center
- Develop a process for creating a sustainability plan

This section is about creating a budget for your center that lists revenue sources and major expenses. The section also discusses considerations for long-term financial sustainability for your center beyond the first few years.

REVENUE

Based on the process so far, what is the revenue your center needs to raise in its first year? In years 2 and 3? A SparkPoint center's annual budget could range from \$100,000 to \$1million depending on the scale of the center and its development, but they often average around \$500,000. The funding needed in the first year of the center is also often higher than on-going costs as there are one-time costs to purchase initial equipment and supplies or set up the space with signage and furniture.

Your center revenue will likely consist of institutional funding that is committed as well as grant funding that you raise from government or other foundation and corporate sources. If you have strong partnerships, they may provide additional in-kind or paid support (e.g. writing SparkPoint into a grant they are submitting). Your institution may also provide in-kind supports such as space. Below is an example of revenue sources that a SparkPoint center at a college tapped into that includes government, institutional (college or district), and private funding.

EXAMPLE OF SPARKPOINT CENTER REVENUE

Government Funding	HUNGER FREE CAMPUS	20xx-xx CA State Budget	\$10,000	Food security
	STRONG WORKFORCE	CA State	\$30,000	Develop more workforce opportunity and lift low-wage workers into living-wage jobs
	FRESH SUCCESS	CA Dept of Social Services (funding from US Dept of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service)	\$20,000	Employment and training activities provided to CalFresh recipients
	WORKFORCE ACCELERATOR FUND	CA Workforce Development Board and Employment Development Dept	\$150,000	Design, develop, and implement projects that drive equitable recovery with quality jobs and accelerate employment and re-employment for California workers
	AMERICORPS	Community College Foundation through the state	\$5,400	Increase access to health programs and employment and career programs for students

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District or College Funding	STUDENT EQUITY PLAN	State Chancellor's Office	\$50,000	Student Equity Plans
	PROMISE FUNDING	XX Community College District	\$30,000	Make college more affordable
	DISTRICT & INNOVATION FUNDING	XX Community College District	\$275,000	Institutionalize staffing positions
	EARNED INCOME		\$4,000	
	PRESIDENT'S INNOVATION FUND	XX College	\$8,000	To support creativity and innovation
Private Foundations or Corporations	LOCAL XX FOUNDATION		\$125,000	Scholarships
	XX CORPORATE FOUNDATION		\$10,000	
Other (Individual, events, local collaboratives)	EVENT REVENUE	Fundraising events	\$2,000	Flexible
	SERVICE-SPECIFIC FUNDS	Funds specifically raised for the VITA site, for example	\$20,000	Depends on service
	INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS		\$1,000	Flexible. Could tap into client expertise for individual asks.
	XX CONSORTIUM FOR ADULT EDUCATION	Local collaboratives	\$200,000	Depends on the collaborative
	TOTAL		\$940,400	

[For details on the above funding sources check out this document.](#)

EXPENSES

Based on the process so far, what expenses will your center incur in its first year of operation? In years 2 and 3? Here are typical expense categories for a SparkPoint center:

- **Staffing and benefits:** Staffing and benefits for personnel employed by the college or district are often higher than personnel costs at nonprofit organizations or independent contractors due to higher benefit costs. For more information about staffing, see Staffing section.
- **Professional fees:** Grants to partners to provide services, could also include consultant financial coaches or experts who provide services.
- **Supplies:** Office and marketing supplies
- **IT Equipment:** Phone, IT, refurbishing laptops, software, etc.
- **Data collection and evaluation:** One of SparkPoint's grounding principles is that we constantly evaluate our programming and engage in learning through the use of data and engaging with clients directly to ensure equitable outcomes and continuous improvement.
- **Occupancy:** Does your center need to pay for its space? Consider costs such as software or database licenses, administration, maintenance, consultants, stipends for clients, staff time, etc.
- **Marketing and outreach:** Marketing and outreach costs are on-going, but first-year costs are often higher as they may include purchasing marketing materials for initial tabling and outreach, or one-time expenses for space such as decorating offices or signage. Consider costs related to social media marketing and maintenance, creating flyers, printing, or digital ads.
- **Travel:** This could include travel to service locations, partner meetings, conferences
- **Training:** This could include costs for staff training and on-boarding
- **Incentives:** A number of SparkPoint centers at community colleges have provided financial incentives

for students who successfully demonstrate financial behaviors such as opening a savings account or pulling a credit report.

- **Admin costs:** Consider at least 10-20% of your overall budget to cover administrative expenses.

[Use the sample budget template that includes the most common revenue and expense categories for SparkPoint centers.](#)

SAMPLE BUDGET TEMPLATE			
REVENUE	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
Government grants			
Institutional funding			
Foundational grants			
Individual donations			
Shared income			
Other revenue			
TOTAL REVENUE			
EXPENSES			
PERSONNEL COSTS			
Staff salaries and wages			
Benefits			
PROFESSIONAL FEES/CONTRACTS			
Consulting/professional fees			
Collaboration with partner agencies			
PROGRAM AND OPERATING COSTS			
Program Supplies			
Student incentives			
IT support/consulting			
Cell phone & internet			
Data collection/evaluation			
Change and downtime			
Travel and occupancy			
Printing and publications			
Deliverables and research			
Staff			
Conferences, meetings, workshop, retreats			

TEMPLATE

LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY PLANNING

Decide on a long-term plan for fund development.

Guiding questions:

- Who will be raising funds?
- Whose responsibility will it be?
- What are guiding principles for fund development?
- Will you seek any funding that could support your center, regardless of funder or focus?
- Will you do targeted fundraising?

First, decide on guiding principles for fund development, including roles, responsibilities, and expectations. Will there be a sustainability committee, or will it be the responsibility of the Advisory or Steering Committee (see section on Advisory and Steering Committees)? Or would this be the responsibility of the SparkPoint Director

or their supervisors?
Or other leadership?
Will there be a fund development committee? What will its charter be?

[See what sample guiding principles and scope of work for a sustainability committee looks like.](#)

Next, document your sustainability plan, by using the [sample template](#).

TEMPLATE SPARKPOINT SUSTAINABILITY PLAN	
I. Timeline of Programming, History, Milestones	
II. Our Problem Analysis (Why do you have a SparkPoint center? What does describe the need for SparkPoint? What is the scenario within your center/quarter?)	
III. Our Sustainability Definition (What is your definition of sustainability for your center? What are your sustainability goals?)	

TEMPLATE