Yes, WIOA Can! Effectively Leveraging or 'Braiding' Multiple Funding Sources with WIOA

Q & A Document

Date of Webinar: November 15, 2022

Video Link - https://vimeo.com/771319813/ce779dcf79

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PREFACE

This is a follow up Technical Assistance (TA) resource document for the webinar held by the Next Level Now (NLN) Collaborative on November 15, 2022 on WorkforceGPS titled: [Yes, WIOA Can! Effectively Leveraging or 'Braiding' Multiple Funding Sources with WIOA.](#)

This webinar provided technical assistance for workforce entities to assist in understanding how to leverage or "braid" multiple funding sources to achieve improved outcomes for the workforce system's customers. The webinar provided information on how Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds can be leveraged or braided with other funding streams and how to properly track funds. The webinar also showcased examples of local areas that had leveraged "braided" funds.

The speakers included:

Moderator:

Charles Watts, Accountant Region 4, [U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration](#), Office of Workforce Investment

Presenters:

Amanda Wagner, Chief Operating Officer, [Employ Prince George's, Inc.](#)

Jeffery Dufresne, Chief Financial Officer, [Employ Prince George's, Inc.](#)

Kim Meadows, Training Director, National Association of Workforce Development Professionals (NAWDP)

Justin Grota, Youth Program Team Coordinator, [MassHire Greater New Bedford WorkForce Board](#)

Greg Cordova, Youth Employment & Training Supervisor, [Employment Services of Weld County](#)

This document was created to answer the questions that came in during the webinar. The following topics had additional questions from webinar attendees and are covered in this document:

- **How to Avoid Duplicating Services and Funding** – page 3
- **Timesheet Structure** – page
- **Managing Different Funds** – page
- **Examples of Braiding Funds** – page

Additionally, you will see a [Submit Request](#) link button at the end of each topic section. Please use this resource link to submit additional questions regarding the topic and/or to request specific TA with any challenge you may be facing.

Avoiding Duplicating Services and Funding

Question: How do you ensure you aren't duplicating services / funding?

Answer: The key to avoiding duplicating services and funding is to build the program first and then apply various funding sources to cover the costs of the program. This can also be done with existing programs, but it is imperative to identify where additional resources are needed and seek funding sources that can cover those activities. Your accounting system should be able to charge expenses by funding source to the various activities. Some boards have each program operate within a single department. Therefore, staff is responsible for using multiple funding sources to cover various parts of the whole program. When you switch to operating a program vs operating a grant, it is easier to identify gaps in services and then apply for other funding to fill those gaps.

Training and allowing a case manager to manage both services and funds for their customer's activities also helps ensure there is no duplication. An example would be helping a customer who is going into a paid Work Experience. The case manager identifies the funding for this activity which may come from two different sources such as Youth Build and Youth WIOA funding. Each source would pay half of the Work Experience in this example and the case manager would note this with a Work Experience voucher or other mechanism.
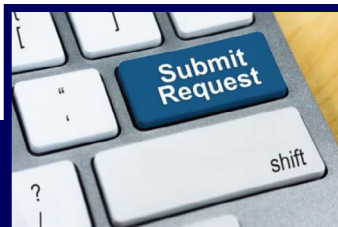
SUBMIT REQUEST ABOUT AVOIDING DUPLICATING SERVICES & FUNDING
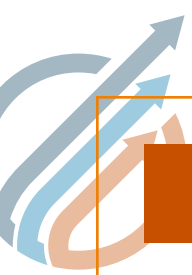
Timesheet Structure

Question: Is there a recommended timesheet structure and / or timesheet application that you recommend to capture staff time spent in the different grants?

Answer: There is no ETA recommendation on any specific structure or application since each grantee, and their subrecipients, have different ways of doing business. However, a good structure or application would include the ability to easily identify individual funding streams (activity codes) and would be easy for staff to complete and maintain their hours per funding stream. There are many time tracking software products on the market that are able to track staff time for multiple funding sources.
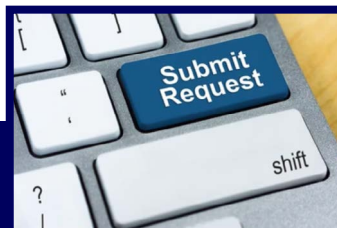
SUBMIT REQUEST ABOUT TIMESHEET STRUCTURE

Managing Different Funds

Question: How do you ensure you have SMEs in each funding stream for staff to gain knowledge in numerous funding streams and the accompanying regulations and policies?

Answer: (From Employ Prince George's Perspective)

The grant management skill is very important! Fortunately, WIOA is so highly regulated that most other grants are significantly easier by comparison. An experienced WIOA SME should be able to train grant managers how to read, organize and codify grant requirements in general. Employ Prince George's does not designate separate SMEs for each grant. Instead, the designated grant managers (it's a team effort) studies the award and systematizes the unique requirements through summaries, cheat sheets, calendars, and training for service delivery staff. This ensures grant requirements are built into the budget, the enrollment forms and other front-end documents.

- It is better to acknowledge that not all money directly correlates to the need and outcome, and sometimes we forego a grant because of seeing that the grant won't fit well with other funds/ programs. Some funding may be too complicated or require changes to many of the in-house processes. Chasing grants can stretch you thin. Therefore, defining the sweet spot and how wide of a net you need to cast to find out about grant opportunities is crucial. Whether it be your direct network, your area served, previous grant partners, organizations which specialize in your area(s) of service, grant databases, etc., understanding all resource paths is a very important part of the grant seeking process.

- Once you find a grant, analyze whether it aligns with your mission, your service need ad the population you will be working with.

- Ensure that the grant will actually be able to fund your project by looking at the amount, how the amount may be applied toward costs, start up funding available, whether the grantor aligns with your organization's philosophy.

- Consider the timeline associated with the availability and timeline of the grant versus the working timeline in which you need the grant funding to be available for project or initiative deadlines.

- Lastly consider the mandates of the grant as related to staffing, monitoring, reporting, and close out.

Remember that grants sticking to funding streams that fit the overall objective seems to be better rather than writing new plans for any grant that comes along. A few questions that may be asked when finding the right grant are below:

are both meeting a need for the grantor and grantee. You will be devoting a great deal of time to a cause and you want to ensure the cause aligns directly with your intended accomplishment. Do your homework before applying.
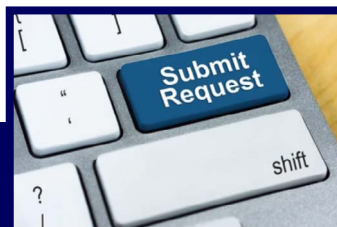
SUBMIT REQUEST ABOUT MANAGING DIFFERENT FUNDS
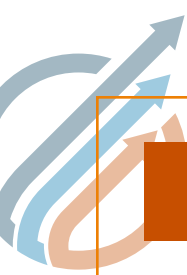
Examples of Braiding Funds

Question: Can two funding sources that provide supportive services and tuition support be braided?

Answer: Yes, it is possible to braid those funds if the participant can be co-enrolled according to each funding streams' eligibility requirements.

Question: Does Chafee provide their own funding or is WIOA funding used to provide services?

Answer: Both. There are times where a Chafee youth has no desire to gain a certificate or enter training and that is when we would utilize Chafee funds for a Work Based Learning activity and not enroll in WIOA. If co-enrolled in Chafee and WIOA we would use WIOA funds for Work Based Learning activities and or training just because Chafee doesn't have as much capacity to meet those service needs.

Question: Could you braid WIOA Section 169 funds serving justice-involved youth with WIOA Title 1 youth funds?

Answer: Yes, it's possible if there is an overlap in the program services.

Question: We received the Growth Opportunity grant and the ABA grant both for youth. Can we co-enroll clients in both, so they can receive the benefits from both? We also have WANTO and YouthBuild. Can we co-enroll in those 2, 3 or 4 grants?

Answer: Yes, as long as you do not duplicate services, they are eligible for each funding source and you track the expenses directly to each funding source.
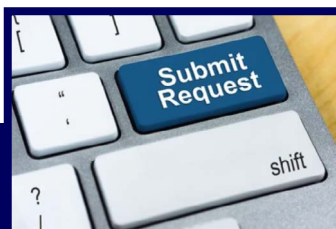
SUBMIT REQUEST ABOUT EXAMPLES OF BRAIDING FUNDS

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The term **'braiding' describes multiple independent funding streams coming together to fund a single project.** Each funding stream never loses their identity and grantees report to both participating agencies regarding how specific funds are spent.

- **Leverage additional resources** by tapping into existing relationships and partnerships

- Look for additional funding sources by **researching federal grants, state grants, community and non-profit organizations and local grants.**

- Be sure that you **provide supporting documentation** for each funding stream attached to the project or activity.

- Remember to meet the **evidence requirements and cost principles** located in 2 CFR §200.403 to avoid any questioned or disallowed costs. Evidence includes, but is not limited to, cancelled checks, credit memos, deposit slips, expense reports, invoices, material requisition forms, purchase orders, timecards, sales receipts.

- The "Yes, WIOA Can!" initiative aims to clarify how **flexible WIOA funds** can be used under existing federal, state and/or local policies.

ABOUT US

The Next Level Now (NLN) Collaborative will serve as U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training's hub for delivering strategic, short- and long-term technical assistance (TA) to the public workforce system and partners, assisting them at the state and local level as they improve services, quality, and outcomes for jobseekers and employers. In addition to developing and disseminating field-requested TA tools and resources, the NLN Collaborative will facilitate peer learning opportunities and information sharing, make subject matter experts accessible to increase efficacy and performance, and offer assistance in applying evidence-based practices for all users. Learn more about the NLN Collaborative, access and request TA through the Collaborative's website.

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