



Braided Funding

What is Braided Funding?

Braided Funding is a resource process used by colleges and states where funds from different sources are combined to support students enrolled in integrated career pathways. Multiple sources of funding (federal, state, local, and private) are “braided” together for student support. Each source may have specific goals, target populations, and performance indicator requirements. Braided funding provides additional resources for various student needs such as textbooks, individual equipment and supplies a student may need, examination registration fees, training opportunities, etc. not allowed under Basic Skills or Basic Skills Plus funding.

Why are Additional Braided Funding Resources Needed for Students?

Colleges and states cannot rely on one or two major sources of funding to support and sustain innovative pathway programs designed to provide workforce preparation activities and transitions to postsecondary education and training. For example, as a part of Title II funding, Basic Skills Plus provides waivers of tuition and registration fees for eligible students. However, students in integrated instructional programs such as Basic Skills Plus often need additional resources and program staff must leverage multiple and smaller sources of funding, i.e. Braided Funding to meet student needs. In addition, cuts in federal funding for workforce development and education have made it significantly harder for community colleges to serve low-income, students with disabilities, lower-skilled individuals, first-generation college goers, English language learners, and out of school youth.

What Braided Funding Strategies Should We Adopt?

1. Identify available federal, state, local and private sources of funding available for your service area. Identify their funding criteria, priorities and goals; populations to be served; and performance requirements. Identify your college’s grant and contract requirements.
2. Use information from student orientation sessions, induction activities, and student surveys to prepare a profile of students’ needs (financial, counseling, and other support, etc.). Specify for each student, the type of additional resources they may need.
3. Adopt complementary funding strategies and policies (local, regional, private, community-based sources). Identify potential barriers and challenges to successfully implementing and better utilizing funding sources to support Basic Skills programs and students.
4. Consult with your College’s Grants Office and obtain their permission and guidance before submitting grant requests or proposals to external sources including employers and the local WDB.
5. Develop a Braided Funding Plan for each Student as needed. See example below. Update Braided Funding information each year.

| Student | Career Pathway | Educational Functional Level | Braided Funding Resource(s) Available to Student Based on Funding Source Requirements | Status of Student Access to Available Braided Funding Resource(s) | Barriers and Action Steps/Staff Notes |
|-------------------|----------------|------------------------------|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| Alice or John Doe | Welding | Level 5 | Vocational Rehabilitation SECU Scholarship BSKP Waiver | Applications for VR and SECU submitted. Funding Received for SECU Scholarship and BSKP Waiver applied. | Student needs career services. |

What Braided Funding Sources Can I Explore Now to Determine if Our Students Are Eligible?

Community College-Contact College Financial Aid Office. Many colleges offer scholarships for students. Contact your college's Financial Aid Officer or Foundation Office and follow their guidance and processes. **Possible sources include:**

- Scholarships offered by your College.
- Child Care may be provided through an on-campus child care center.
- Golden Leaf Scholarship Program (Two-Year Community College Program). Contact your college's financial aid office ([link to NCCCS's websites](#)) for more information on how to apply.
- Project Skill-Up is a training program sponsored by a grant to the North Carolina Community College System from the North Carolina Tobacco Trust Fund and is specifically designed to provide short-term training leading to employment to students who participate.
- TRIO Student Support Services.
- Contact your college's Workforce Development Vice President and obtain their permission and guidance before submitting grant requests or proposals to any external sources. This includes employers and the Workforce Development Board.

Federal Financial Aid

Ability-to-Benefit (AtB) provision of Title IV of the Higher Education Act (HEA). The provision, enacted as part of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act of 2015, allows students lacking a high school diploma or its equivalent to access federal financial aid if they are enrolled in an eligible career pathway program and can demonstrate college readiness. [Dear Colleague Letter Ability to Benefit](#) For more information contact your college's Financial Aid Office

Department of Social Services

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) Reimbursement
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)

Golden Leaf Foundation

Open Grants Program programs@goldenleaf.org

Local Workforce Development Boards offer grants and support for Serving Out-of-School Youth and other targeted populations. Contact your local WDB to obtain dates that RFPs will be released; connect with Youth Coordinators and the Youth Council if your local WDB has one. Only contact private employers through your VP for Workforce Development and local WDB staff.

Private Community Foundations may offer grant funding that align with Workforce Preparation Activities.

Federal Grants through Department of Labor, US Department of Housing, Department of Education, etc.

State Employees Credit Union

SECU Foundation established this **two-year scholarship program** to assist North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) students in achieving academic success.

United Way

Veterans Assistance Services

Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants

Sources: Jobs for the Future Braided Funding Resource Kit; NCCCS College and Career Readiness; [Basic Skills Plus Implementation Guide, 2018](#) Cassandra Atkinson atkinsonc@ncccommunitycolleges.edu