



## **Construction Plus Framework for a Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Experience**

In 2013, YouthBuild grantees began to implement the Construction Plus component. Since the inception of Construction Plus, over 81 YouthBuild grantees have integrated this component into their YouthBuild program design. As the Construction Plus model has grown, it's become more important to provide a clear framework for how to align in-demand industry training to the traditional YouthBuild construction model, which provides integrated academic and vocational training, the opportunity to earn industry-recognized credentials, and required hands-on work experience in the industry. These aspects are the hallmark of the YouthBuild program model, regardless of whether the vocational training is in construction or another in-demand industry, such as healthcare, information technology, or retail.

The goal of this Construction Plus Framework Guide is to provide information and tools in order to assist DOL YouthBuild grantees to ensure the Construction Plus component aligns with the key elements of a quality pre-apprenticeship program model as defined in the WIOA Final Rule. This framework provides guidance to DOL YouthBuild grantees to effectively operationalize the Construction Plus model. The framework is a guide to support quality programming and positive outcomes for YouthBuild participants, as well as assisting with the delivery of technical assistance, identifying best practices, and ensuring grant compliance with the program model.

### **In this Guide, YouthBuild grantees and prospective applicants will gain:**

- A greater understanding of Construction Plus;
- An overview of the Construction Plus framework;
- An assessment tool, along with spotlights of five existing Construction Plus programs aligned to the framework;
- An action planning tool with an example; and
- Links to key resources and guidance.

### **What Construction Plus Is and What It Is Not**

#### *What It Is...*

The Construction Plus model allows previously-funded YouthBuild grantees to use DOL grant funds for the expansion of occupational skills training into additional in-demand industries beyond construction, with the goal of attaining industry-recognized certifications and placement for employment or further training in these additional industries. This model has been offered to YouthBuild grantees since 2013. Construction Plus was both a response to the 2009 housing crisis, which saw a great decrease in the demand for construction workers, as well as a recognition that the majority of YouthBuild participants do not pursue construction as a career pathway after exit from the program. Due to these circumstances, it was important to create an opportunity for training in in-demand fields that benefit both participants and local employers.

As stated in TEGL 07-14, Change 1, *Guidance for Implementing the "Construction Plus" Component of the YouthBuild Program*, Construction Plus refers to the inclusion of occupational skills training opportunities for YouthBuild participants in in-demand occupations other than construction. All Department-funded YouthBuild programs are required to offer construction skills training to program participants. Whether Construction Plus training is provided consecutively or in tandem,

the required training time of educational skills (50 percent of the time) and occupational skills (40percent of the time) - also known as eligible workforce activities - for each participant must be maintained, as identified in the Final Rule (Sec. 688.350). Further, the participation timeframe must not exceed 24 months, regardless of the participant’s occupational skills training track, and must allow for a follow-up period of 12 months. YouthBuild applicants who wish to pursue Construction Plus must provide, as part of the grant application, a plan that includes:

- Information on the industry(ies) in which the applicant plans to offer training;
- Local labor market data that supports the decision to provide occupational skills training in the additional targeted field(s);
- A description of all the training curricula that it will use;
- The industry-recognized credential(s) that will result from the training;
- How the additional occupational skills selected will benefit the target community(ies);
- An explanation of why the skills training and proposed credentials will be a good fit for YouthBuild participants;
- A description of how industry partners have or will be engaged in the design of the program with a demonstration of capacity to work with employers to identify local or regional hiring needs and design training programs that are responsive to those needs.

YouthBuild programs that offer Construction Plus are still expected to use the same rigor and the same program requirements for the Construction Plus industries as they do for the construction industry model.

#### *What It Isn't...*

Some YouthBuild programs may have strong referral partnerships that allow them to refer YouthBuild participants after exit to training partners who then assist those youth with ongoing training. However, this is not Construction Plus integrated into the active programming, but is instead a placement outcome.

The goal of the Construction Plus model is to allow YouthBuild programs to build the capacity to provide training in in-demand industries for participants who are not interested in pursuing a construction career or in local areas where construction may not be as much of a growth industry as other fields. In order to be considered a Construction Plus program, YouthBuild grantees must provide the additional industry training either in-house or through a sub-contract or MOU in which DOL grant funds are also supporting some part of the additional training, such as the payment of stipends or subsidized wages during the required Construction Plus work experience or through payment to the training providers or staff.

Additionally, the Construction Plus component is focused on training for the attainment of industry-recognized certifications. This means that programs that propose to provide additional certifications such as CPR or ServSafe are not providing a Construction Plus component and cannot count those credentials as participant outcomes. Programs that propose specialized construction industry training, such as weatherization, solar paneling, and green building are also not doing Construction Plus as these are all part of the already approved construction industry work of the basic YouthBuild program model.

#### **Construction Plus Framework**

The Construction Plus framework defines the requirements for Construction Plus. In the WIOA DOL-Only Final Rule Sec. 681.480, a pre-apprenticeship program is defined as a program designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in an apprenticeship program registered under the Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the “National Apprenticeship Act”; 50 Stat. 664, chapter

663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et. seq.) (referred to in this part as a “registered apprenticeship” or “registered apprenticeship program”), and includes the following elements:

- a. Training and curriculum that aligns with the skill needs of employers in the economy of the State or region involved;
- b. Access to educational and career counseling and other supportive services, directly or indirectly;
- c. Hands-on, meaningful learning activities that are connected to education and training activities, such as exploring career options, and understanding how the skills acquired through coursework can be applied toward a future career;
- d. Opportunities to attain at least one industry-recognized credential; and
- e. A partnership with one or more registered apprenticeship programs that assists in placing individuals who complete the pre-apprenticeship program in a registered apprenticeship program.

Whether Construction Plus is a new program component or has been a part of the YouthBuild program for a number of grant cycles, it is imperative that YouthBuild grantees align components and activities with effective practices and industry needs, and support the career pathways of youth participants with quality placements in postsecondary education and/or employment opportunities.

For many in-demand industries, apprenticeship pathways do not yet exist broadly; thus, industry partners will be essential to the success of Construction Plus planning, implementation, and quality assessment to ensure youth participants are provided with a pre-apprenticeship experience in any industry training they receive. As apprenticeship opportunities continue to expand into new industries and local areas, new opportunities are emerging and hands-on work experience is becoming increasingly valuable to employer and apprenticeship sponsors.



QUALITY CONSTRUCTION PLUS PRE-APPRENTICESHIP COMPONENTS	ALIGNMENT WITH YOUTHBUILD PROGRAM
<b>Training and curriculum that aligns with the skill needs of employers in the selected in-demand industry(ies)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Program recruitment strategies align with increasing access of underrepresented populations in in-demand industry(ies) and apprenticeship programs.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The approved curriculum aligns with an industry-recognized credential. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training and credentials have been reviewed, are recognized by industry partners, and are desired by industry partners.</li> <li>• Credential leads to additional stackable credentials.</li> <li>• Credential is portable.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Hands-on, meaningful learning activities that are connected to education and training activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Program incorporates project-based and program-based learning and in-the-classroom and hands-on training experiences.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Hands-on training must be meaningful and significant.</li> </ul>
<b>Access to educational and career counseling and other supportive services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Promote career exploration and planning in the selected industry(ies) and apprenticeship opportunities throughout the program phases from orientation through placement.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide effective supportive services to youth participant during active programming and the follow-up phase of the program, including educational and career counseling.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop transition support agreements with industry partners.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities to attain at least one industry-recognized credential</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure the training and work-based learning provided aligns with the selected industry-recognized credential(s).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The Construction Plus program must include adequate time in training and work-based learning in order to prepare youth participants for credential attainment.</li> </ul>
<b>Partnership with one or more apprenticeship programs that assist</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Grantee has established partnerships in the local in-demand industry(ies) that influence program</li> </ul>

<p><b>with placement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Apprenticeship sponsors;</b></li> <li>• <b>Workforce development agencies;</b></li> <li>• <b>Economic development agencies;</b></li> <li>• <b>Business and industry partners;</b></li> <li>• <b>Labor management organizations;</b></li> <li>• <b>Community colleges and other education partners</b></li> </ul>	<p>design and has local post-program education and employment opportunities for YouthBuild participants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Training and hands-on experience meet entry requisites for post-secondary education and employment opportunities.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The industry has post-program career growth opportunities from initial employment or apprenticeship pathway participants enter (upward mobility and geographic opportunities).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Program has established (including documented MOUs/subcontracts) formal relationships with key partners for any/all the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core curriculum that leads to credential</li> <li>• If needed, certified external staff to teach curriculum</li> <li>• If needed, certified internal staff to teach curriculum</li> <li>• Training facility for hands-on training</li> <li>• Internship/field experience opportunities</li> <li>• Community service opportunities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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**Construction Plus Planning and Continuous Quality Improvement Roadmap - Key Considerations**

Early and ongoing assessment of the proposed Construction Plus model is essential to successful and quality implementation. This section provides an outline of key considerations for planning and implementation of the Construction Plus component at varying stages of development.

YES	NO	Industry and Certificate/Credential Determination
		a Have you assessed what industries are in-demand in your local area? Is there growth potential? Are there on-ramps to the career pathway?
		b Have you identified an industry-recognized credential(s)? If yes, what is it?
		c Is the credential recognized by employers and taken into consideration in hiring, promotion, and compensation decisions?
		d Is the credential stackable?
		e Is the credential portable?
		f Have you identified who will provide the credential? If yes, who?
		g Are you familiar with the requirements of the credential?
		h Does the credential exclude specific populations – either from attaining the degree or being gainfully employed in the affiliated industry?
		i Have you assessed whether the credential qualifies using credential considerations from TEGL 15-10 Attachment 2 – Credential Resource Guide?

		j	Have you assessed whether the industry/credential are a good fit and reasonably attainable for the participants served by the program based on the attachment to TEGL 07-14, Considerations Guide for Credential Attainment for US Department of Labor (DOL) YouthBuild Grantees
		<b>Construction Plus Schedule</b>	
		a	Have you assessed the classroom and hands-on schedule? Does it interface with the program calendar?
		b	Will Construction Plus be provided separately and concurrently with the construction skills training or will all youth first be required to do construction training prior to the C+ industry?
		c	Have you determined the allocation of hours for classroom and on-the-job learning for the training component (i.e. 200 hours of classroom time and 200 hours of on-the-job training)?
		d	Have you assessed your training and curriculum to ensure it is aligned with the approved credential?
		e	Does the program design provide sufficient opportunities for participants to attain the credential? What is the minimum length of time required to attain the necessary skills for certification?
		<b>Construction Plus Staffing</b>	
		a	Will YouthBuild program staff provide Construction Plus training? If so, does the program have the capacity to provide quality classroom and hands-on training?
		b	Will industry partner(s) provide Construction Plus training? If so, does the partner have the capacity to provide quality classroom and hands-on training?
		c	Where will the training take place? At the partner's training facilities, at the YouthBuild program site, at a community college?
		<b>Curriculum</b>	
		a	Have you identified the curriculum? If yes, what is it?
		b	Is a high school diploma or equivalency required to achieve the credential? Can career and technical training be started concurrently with secondary education? How much of it requires seat time and how much requires hands-on work experience, if any?
		c	Do you know how many hours are involved on average for successful attainment of the credential? If yes, how many?
		d	Have you assessed the specific products/skills that a participant will receive from the training curriculum?
		e	Are there training and certification needs for YouthBuild program and/or partner staff?
		f	Have you identified an industry-related safety training curriculum (i.e. OSHA 10-General Industry) to integrate into the Construction Plus training?
		<b>Hands-On Work Experience</b>	
		a	Have you assessed what and how much hands-on work experience participants will receive?
		b	If hands-on work experience is not required for the industry-recognized credential, are you able to modify or enhance the training curriculum to incorporate it, as required by DOL?

		c	Have you determined whether hands-on work experience will be group-based or individual?
		d	Have you determined the frequency of the hands-on work experience?
		e	Have you determined where and how hands-on work experience will happen?
		f	Have you identified a partner(s) to provide hands-on work experience or will that be provided at the program?
		g	Have participants completed the industry-related safety training (i.e. OSHA 10-General Industry)? Does this training need to be completed prior to starting the hands-on learning or in conjunction?
		<b>Employer and Post-Secondary Partners</b>	
		a	Have you identified your employer and post-secondary partners? If yes, who will they be?
		b	Have you considered how partners will interface with the YouthBuild program staff and participants?
		c	Have you determined what specific setting and resources your partners will provide? Have you formalized an agreement that outlines these details via MOU?
		d	Do you understand what your partners will expect from the YouthBuild program?
		e	Will the partner(s) provide training to youth participants towards the credential?
		f	Will the partner(s) provide placement opportunities?
		<b>Job Growth</b>	
		a	Does the training increase the participant's employment potential in an in-demand occupation, either nationally or locally?
		b	Does the credential allow students to achieve the skills to get, keep, and progress in a chosen job or to enter further post-secondary or vocational training options?
		c	Have you identified examples of employment in this pathway starting from entry to more advanced?
		d	Have you identified what level of professional attainment can be achieved over the course of the YouthBuild program?
		e	Have you considered what a participant needs to know and be able to do in order to gain employment in the field?
		f	Are there opportunities for further post-secondary study or training in a related field that lead to additional credentials?
		<b>Technology and Equipment</b>	
		a	Does the YouthBuild program have access to the necessary technology and equipment needed to provide a high-quality training and work-based learning experience?
		b	Will the participants use technology as part of their training and work-based learning experience?
		c	Will participant job placement depend on the successful use of technology?

### **Construction Plus Models - Examples from the Field**

The following five DOL YouthBuild grantees' Construction Plus career pathways are spotlighted to demonstrate the diverse set of curricula, credentials, and partners that are being used to create a pre-apprenticeship career pathway approach to the Construction Plus model:

1. **HealthCare** – Randolph County Housing Authority, Elkins, West Virginia
2. **Logistics** – Pathways, Petersburg, Virginia
3. **Information Technology** – Portland YouthBuilders, Portland, Oregon
4. **HealthCare** – Mile High Youth Corps, Denver, Colorado
5. **Culinary and Hospitality** – CLIMB CDC, Gulfport, Mississippi

Reviewing these Construction Plus peer examples can assist grantees in assessing and aligning their current program design to the Construction Plus Framework elements, as well as providing considerations related to locally in-demand credentials and resources, and the level of coordination and partnership required for effective programming and successful outcomes. The link to the spotlights is provided below:

- [Construction Plus Models – Examples from the Field](#)  
Career Pathways Spotlighted: HealthCare, Logistics, Information Technology, and Culinary and Hospitality

### **Construction Plus Program Planning Resources**

This action plan can help grantees assess their current program design relative to the Construction Plus Framework elements. This tool can help programs ready to expand into Construction Plus to prepare the steps necessary to establish a Construction Plus pathway or to assist grantees already doing Construction Plus to incorporate any elements not yet in their Construction Plus programming. This tool is included in the guide to assist grantees with planning and program improvements. Links to the following tools are provided:

- [Construction Plus Action Planning and Partner Directory Tool](#) - editable in Microsoft Excel  
Example: [Mile High Youth Corps Action Plan](#)

### **DOL Guidance Resources**

- [TEGL 07-14 - Guidance for Implementing the “Construction Plus” Component of the YouthBuild Program](#) - Provides guidance and resource references
- [TEGL 07-14 Attachment](#) – Provides considerations of the requirements of credentials, and possible barriers within certain industries, to inform decisions related to the in-demand industry training for YouthBuild participants
- [WIOA Final Rule](#) - WIOA Regulations include the definition of a pre-apprenticeship program on page 333
- [TEN 13-12 - Defining a Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Program and Related Tools and Resources](#) - WIOA regulation definition supersedes this definition. This is a good resource for how to partner and develop a pre-apprenticeship model

- [TEGL 15-10 - Increasing Credential, Degree, and Certificate Attainment by Participants of the Public Workforce System](#) - Provides guidance and resource references on qualifying credentials and what it means to be stackable and portable
- TEGL 10-16, Change 1 - [Performance Accountability Guidance for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act \(WIOA\) Title I, Title II, Title III, and Title IV Core Programs](#) – Pages 13-17 describe qualifying credentials under WIOA and the types of awarding bodies that certify such credentials