

GATEWAY TO OPPORTUNITY (G2O)

Program Toolkit

A guide to building tomorrow's workforce.





If you agree with any of the statements below...

THIS TOOLKIT IS FOR YOU!

We want YOUTH

employed in meaningful work in our communities throughout our state.

We want COMPANIES

to know how to connect with youth who are interested in meaningful work experiences.

We want COMMUNITIES

to have opportunities to come together to celebrate young people and local organizations working collaboratively.

We want FUNDERS

to invest in effective programming where youth, businesses, and communities can grow stronger together.

How to Use This Toolkit

This toolkit is designed to provide you with helpful guidance, ideas, and materials for understanding the approaches and best practices of the Gateway to Opportunity (G2O) program, and strategies for implementing components of this model in your community. This toolkit is intended to be flexible so local organizations and schools can adopt the best practices that best meet the needs of your community while maintaining fidelity to the G2O model.

The information in this toolkit is organized so that the foundational pieces of the model are described in the beginning, and then the “nice to have” features are outlined near the end. We honor that every community is different with unique needs and local expertise. For that reason, this toolkit is NOT intended to be used as a recipe, but rather as a guide with strong recommendations, best practices, and key steps to have a successful work-based learning program for youth operating within your community.

Why Use This Toolkit

To be successful in today’s economy, young people need opportunities to develop and hone their work-based skills and competencies beginning in high school. This includes soft skills such as arriving on time, interviewing well, and practicing a marketing pitch. It also includes technical skills such as learning software programs, earning employer-recognized credentials/certificates, and comfort in using technology. It is imperative for the growth of Maine’s economy to help young people who are high school aged build the critical skills that employers seek.

We want to support you to make G2O possible in your community, please reach out with questions at any stage from imagining to implementation.

In gratitude,
Youth and Community Engagement Team, [Cutler Institute](#)

**WANT TO ASSESS THE READINESS
OF YOUR COMMUNITY
OR ORGANIZATION?**

*Check out the
Readiness Scale on page 28!*





Contents

THE G20 APPROACH **6**

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS **8**

HOW DO I START? **10**

SUCCESSFUL PROJECT
IDEAS **24**

INTRO TO PERFORMANCE
MEASUREMENT **26**

READINESS SCALE **28**

SUPPORT & RESOURCES **34**

The G20 Approach

What is the Gateway to Opportunity model?

1. Work-based learning
2. National best practices
3. Dual customer approach

WORK-BASED LEARNING

Work-based learning is most effective when “an employer assign[s] a worker or a student meaningful job tasks to develop his or her skills, knowledge, and readiness for work and to support entry or advancement in a particular career field.”¹

Gateway to Opportunity (G2O) is operated in the Portland area through a partnership between the Cutler Institute at the University of Southern Maine (USM) and Goodwill Northern New England. G2O connects low-income, young people with paid, work-based learning projects where they hone and develop 21st Century Skills.

Since 2016, G2O has supported project teams at 15 different host sites serving more than 100 youth. Supervision support is provided to the youth by USM undergraduate students who are trained to be Team Leaders. Each team is based at a host site organization that identifies and supports the development of a summer project. With the Team Leaders serving as near peer mentors, youth hold responsibility for driving the work forward, culminating in a final presentation of their results. Evaluation results demonstrate that through this approach the youth participants and USM students are developing the critical work-based competencies that employers want.

GATEWAY TO OPPORTUNITY IS...

One way to bring youth and employers together; it's a program for...

YOUTH TO:

- Work on teams with other young people.
- Receive support from mentors near in age and experience.
- Develop 21st century skills.
- Make mistakes, reflect, re-examine and try again.
- Impact their communities through work-based initiatives.

LOCAL BUSINESSES + ORGANIZATIONS TO:

- Employ a team of energetic high school age students.
- Educate youth on their product and/or what they do.
- Engage staff to connect with the team in a range of ways.
- Invest in young people in their community.
- Produce an end-product that is driven and designed by youth.
- Showcase shared learnings with the whole community.
- Connect to potential employees before making hiring decisions.



NATIONAL BEST PRACTICES

The G2O model is based on national best practices and lessons learned from multiple, highly successful summer youth employability initiatives led by Brandeis University's Center for Youth and Communities from 2011 to 2013.² The team from Brandeis University led the assessment, documentation, evaluation, and analysis of these programs and created a learning community for grantees.³ They demonstrated that work-based learning initiatives helped youth persist through secondary and post-secondary education, develop the critical skills employers need, and more successfully connect to the workforce.

A DUAL CUSTOMER APPROACH: YOUTH ADULT PARTNERSHIP

Youth-adult partnerships⁴ create transformational relationships that are at the heart of this approach. This means that youth and adults work collaboratively and learn from each other. Each group, the youth participants and adult partners have the ability to:

- **Bring expertise**
- **Exercise leadership**
- **Change and grow**
- **Be included fully**
- **Give and receive respect**

The overarching goal is to build and hone the work-based skills of youth while exposing them to career pathways, postsecondary education options, and developing their professional networks. This is only achieved when adults – staff and employers – work as their partners. That's the "dual customer approach" at the center of this model. Employers are not merely involved as an end result when a young person is placed with them as an intern or

employee. Employers and their hiring needs are at the forefront of program design and delivery. Employers are imperative for the sustainability and growth for this program and must be equal partners from the outset.

Young people and employers do not always have a clear path to connect with each other in this way. That's why programs, such as G2O, are so important.

1. "Making Work-Based Learning Work," Jobs for the Future, July 2016: <https://www.jff.org/resources/making-work-based-learning-work/>.
2. The Walmart Foundation's national *Summer Youth Employability Initiatives* invested \$13.5 million in 10 cities supporting more than 8,500 young people from 2011 to 2013.
3. "Practical Advice Guides *Smart Strategies to employ, educate, and support youth in employability development programs*," The Center for Youth and Communities, Brandeis University, November 2014: <http://www.cyc.brandeis.edu/pdfs/EnoughisKnownforAction-folder/2014%20Brandeis%20CYC%20PAG%20FINAL.pdf>.
4. "Youth Leadership Advisory Team: An Innovative Approach to Systems Improvement," University of Southern Maine, March 2010: https://www.ylat.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/ylat_report.pdf.

"I love this program and it feels great to learn about things that I am interested in while getting paid."

— YOUTH PARTICIPANT

Essential Elements

In the following pages, we have outlined the Essential Elements for operating a program similar to the G2O model. Organizations and businesses that are interested in work-based learning should integrate as many of these elements as possible into their program approach. Central to this model is an emphasis on continuous quality improvement (CQI), data informed decision-making, and shared learning between program partners. The Essential Elements are grouped into the following categories: Learning Rich, Relationship Driven, and Collaborative Approach.

essential [1] Learning Rich

21ST CENTURY SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Youth learn and practice the skills that employers are looking for within their workforce, such as teamwork, problem-solving, and communication.

HANDS ON LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Youth are at the forefront of problem solving and providing critical feedback that impacts the project's outcomes.

REFLECTION

Youth have time to reflect on their experiences (in writing and discussion) and apply their learnings from their project to all aspects of their life from school to career goals.





essential [2] **Relationship Driven**

YOUTH DRIVEN

Youth guide and implement a project while learning from their experience along the way.

TEAM APPROACH

Youth work on a team with peers, have support to navigate group dynamics, and develop respectful relationships.

NEAR-PEER SUPPORT

A college intern, or Team Leader, supervises and supports each team. Team Leaders support the development of 21st Century Skills for the youth while also serving as a near-peer mentor.

essential [3] **Collaborative Approach**

LAYERING OF SERVICES

Youth receive opportunities to: open bank accounts, network with professionals, participate in financial management training, earn expanded learning credit from their high school, and develop a resume.

HOST SITES

Provide the backbone of ensuring there are a range of employment opportunities for youth to experience over the summer.

SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

Recruit and connect youth that would most benefit from this model. Also, schools ensure that the learning goes beyond the summer by awarding credit for their work.

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

Provides an opportunity for employers to invest in young people, the community, and their future workforce.

How Do I Start?

This section will outline some of the different steps involved in launching G2O. We include the strategy for the program in Greater Portland as a frame of reference to consider as you design what will work best for your community.

SECTION CONTENTS

PAGE **12**

Plan Program Operations

STAFFING
FUNDING
PROGRAM TIMELINE

PAGE **14**

Establish Community Partnerships

SUPPORT SERVICES
LOCAL SCHOOLS

PAGE **16**

Implement Recruitment Strategy

HOST SITES
TEAM LEADERS
YOUTH

PAGE **18**

Select Host Sites

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES
WHAT MAKES A GOOD
HOST SITE PROJECT?

PAGE **20**

Develop Trainings and Workshops

PRE-PROGRAM
DURING-PROGRAM





Plan Program Operations

STAFFING

There are a range of roles for staff within the G2O model to ensure that the essential elements happen, that a dual customer approach is successful, and to coordinate all the other moving parts. Roles can be shared across individual staff as well as partner agencies.

STAFF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Provide supervision to Team Leaders and youth throughout programming.
- Coordinate lunches, transportation, guest speakers, field trips, etc.
- Liase with schools, host sites, partner organizations and funders.
- Design and implement trainings, workshops and curriculum for youth, Team Leaders and host sites.
- Organize meetings with youth, Team Leaders, host sites and partners.
- Solicit grants and funding to sustain all aspects of programming.
- Organize all necessary paperwork (paychecks, media releases, travel, attendance, etc.).

Team Leaders are undergraduate or college-aged students that provide near-peer mentorship and supervision to teams of youth throughout the program. Team leaders may have expertise in group facilitation, working with young adults and/or a specific field/industry of one of the host sites.

Staffing level depends on the size of the program and the time of year. More staff are needed during the summer, but staffing can be reduced during the school year.

FUNDING

Funds are important for a range of reasons but primarily to:

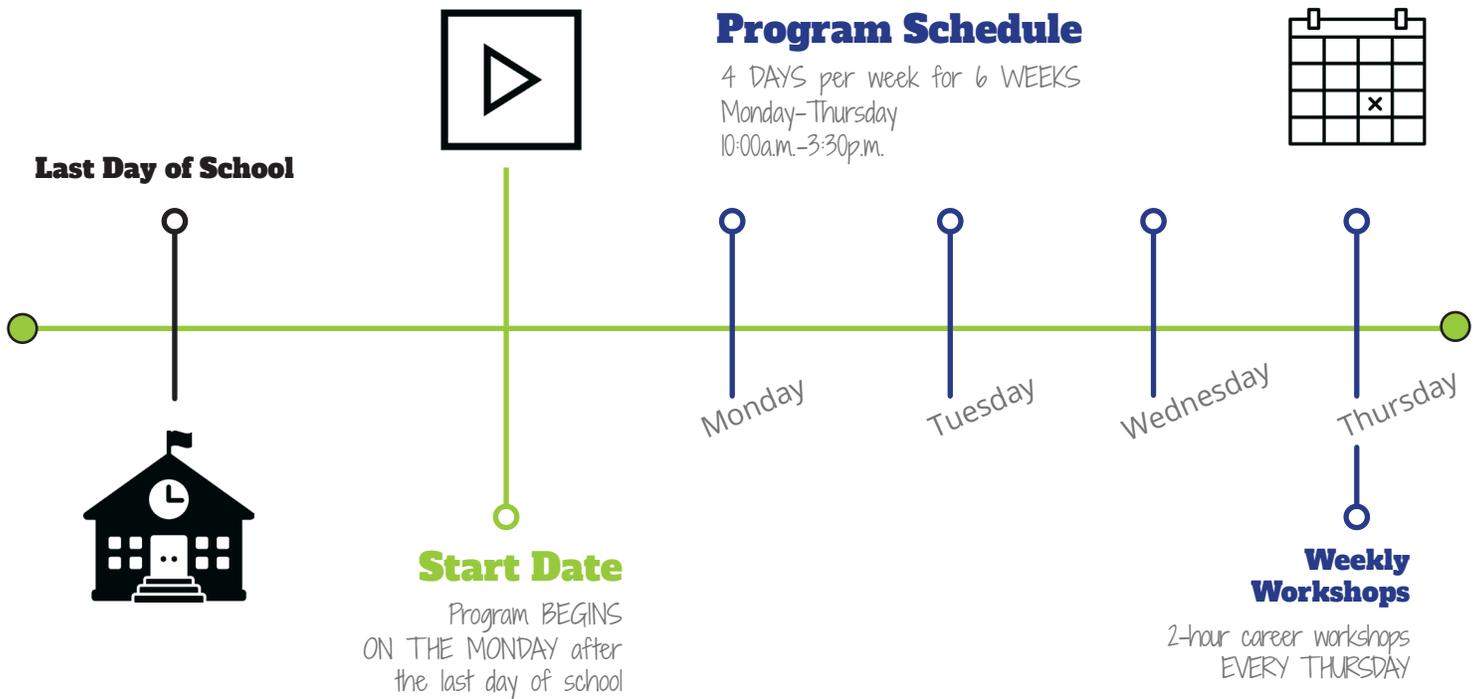
1. Pay young adults and Team Leaders a livable wage.
2. Pay staff to coordinate and implement all aspects of the program.
3. Cover food, transportation and material costs.

ROLE	HOURS/WEEK	# OF WEEKS	HOURLY WAGE	TOTAL
Team Leader	32	10	\$15.00	\$4,800/ Team Leader
Youth Participant	20	6	\$10.90	\$1,308/ Youth

The total cost for one project team is typically \$15,000, which includes the wages for 5 youth and 1 Team Leader plus staffing from the organization coordinating G2O in your community. There are numerous ways to raise funds to support the operation of G2O. Some examples to consider:

- Grant proposals to local foundations interested in your community and/or the populations you seek to serve.
- Businesses/industries looking to increase their talent pipeline.
- City/town funds.
- WIOA or other federal funds.

PROGRAM TIMELINE



LESSONS LEARNED

Program Timeline

Snow days can impact the start of programming; make sure there's at least a few days off between the end of school and the beginning of the program.

Summer school schedule can hinder some youth from participating. Ensure that all youth have access to this program by adjusting schedules, if needed, based on summer school hours.

National and religious holidays during the summer (Fourth of July, Ramadan and Eid)

Other camps/programs that recruit heavily in your area (such as Seeds of Peace). Decide early whether youth will be eligible for your employment program if they have to miss days for another opportunity.





Establish Community Partnerships

SUPPORT SERVICES

G2O is a truly collaborative model. To make G2O work Goodwill and Cutler's Youth and Community Engagement staff partnered closely together on implementation and convened numerous individuals and organizations to make the program a success. Partners provide a richer work-readiness perspective for the young people – whether through workshops with speakers from a range of jobs or engaging volunteers to do mock interviews with the youth.

Topics for partners to lead:

- Opening a bank account
- Financial management
- Hard and soft job skills
- Sector specific careers
- Skill building (more generally)

Additionally partners might participate in:

- Career panels
- Mock interviews
- Resume review
- Networking
- Job fairs

The more opportunities youth have to learn from people with diverse lived experiences and backgrounds, the better. The more exposure youth have to the range of resources within the community, the better equipped they will be at navigating those resources in the future.

LOCAL SCHOOLS

Schools are strong referral sources for youth participants and developing a close partnership with the local high schools enables the learning to stretch far beyond the summer.

School employees (teachers, staff, guidance counselors, academic advisors and administrators) can be additional resources for your program by:

- Serving as a strong referral partner for youth participants.
- Maintaining connections with students post-program and supporting a continuum of learning beyond the summer.

Awarding School Credit

In Greater Portland, youth may be eligible for an Extended Learning Opportunity (ELO) credit from their sending high school. This is one credit that applies to the total number needed to graduate from high school. While we do not have data on the number of students in G2O that are behind in credits, we do know that graduating from high school is a predictor of future success.

In 2018, the University of Southern Maine (USM) determined that youth who successfully complete G2O will be eligible for one general elective credit if they attend USM. That credit offers both an incentive to matriculate to postsecondary education and a financial reward for strong program participation.

Referrals and Recruitment

It is important to have a wide the range of school employees that know and understand the program. G2O receives referrals from social workers, guidance counselors, administrators, teachers, school resource officers, education technicians, alumni of the school and peers.

You may consider:

- Hosting information sessions about G2O at schools.
- Providing applications and/or links printed and available through multiple school personnel.
- Organizing tabling events hosted by alumni and/or college interns.

LESSONS LEARNED

Awarding Credit

Each school district and each high school within a district may have **different requirements** and parameters for awarding credit. It's important to connect directly with the schools to understand what work-based experiences are eligible for credit.

As schools move to proficiency-based learning, program staff will need to **work closely with schools** to meet the requirements for new standards that get established.

It is also important to note that G2O was unable to award any sort of academic credit to students not enrolled in public high school.

Referrals

It is important to establish **clear roles with school employees** and ensure they understand that youth participants are referred from multiple sources; no one should "promise" a spot in the program.

G2O staff makes the final decision on which students are selected. Balancing youth with a lot to gain as well as a lot to give is important to the strength of the program.



Implement Recruitment Strategy

Designing and implementing an effective recruitment strategy is a critical step. As with any recruitment effort, it is important to map out a timeline of key dates and develop an action plan for your outreach activities. In the Greater Portland program word of mouth is often the most effective recruitment tool for youth, but it is not the only one. We employ a range of strategies for recruiting host sites, youth, Team Leaders and core partners. We always ask youth and Team Leaders how they heard about G2O in order to help us strengthen our outreach.

PRE-PROGRAM RECRUITMENT TIMELINE



Host Site Recruitment

1. Make a target list of host sites (nonprofit and private) in or nearby your community.
2. Design employer-focused outreach materials, host site application, and presentation about your program.
3. Set up individual meetings with employers.
4. Hold 2-3 information sessions for potential host sites.*

.....***Organize Host Site Information Sessions**

Information sessions are a helpful way to explain your work-based learning model and answer questions from potential host sites.

Sample components to include:

- Overview of program structure
- Host site responsibilities
- Q&A time

Team Leader Recruitment

(if applicable)

1. Create a Team Leader job description.
2. Design young adult focused outreach materials.
3. Set up individual or group interviews.

Youth Participant Recruitment

1. Develop an outreach and recruitment work plan with tools for tracking enrollment.
2. Develop a general job description covering the responsibilities that all youth will perform across sites and distribute during outreach sessions.
3. Hold three to four outreach sessions at community based organizations and community centers to attract a diverse pool of applicants.
4. Liaise with administrators from the local schools to coordinate outreach and recruit specific students who would benefit from the program.

LESSONS LEARNED

Host Sites

- Be clear with host sites and set realistic expectations with regards to time, roles, and responsibilities.
- Document your learnings with host sites so these can be shared with future potential host sites.



PROGRAM
START DATE!

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

Host Sites

- How much time do host sites have to commit to the project? (The more present host site supervisors are the stronger the project).

Team Leaders

- Are there college students your organization knows and/or has worked with in the past (volunteers, interns, etc.)?
- Are there college students who are leaders within the community that you seek to serve? Can they be paid and supported to recruit youth?

Youth Participants

- What organizations/people work with the population you seek to serve?
- Are there youth that are connected to other aspects of your work and can vouch for your program?
- Is the application process accessible for youth – is it paper and online? Is the application available on mobile devices or through an app?
- What paperwork needs to be filled out (payroll, media releases, other forms used to assess eligibility)?



Select Host Sites

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The host site is the backbone of the work-based learning experience for the youth and Team Leaders. It is important that host sites understand the commitment required by a work-based learning program and see the value of youth voice. Take time to develop a value proposition for the investment of time and resources from host sites. Think about the challenges of local businesses and how this program can help address them. Be clear with host sites that this is not designed like a typical internship –it is a work-based learning approach informed by youth-adult partnership. A core component of the Greater Portland program is that youth and adults learn from each other. It is important for host sites to understand this and buy in from the outset.

In the Greater Portland program, each host site is responsible for:

1. Identifying a project idea for the team to develop.
2. Completing a host site application.
3. Participating in pre-program training activities.
4. Providing consistent supervision to the youth and Team Leader during the six week period of programming.

Host Site Supervisor

Host sites designate a staff person to serve in the role of host site supervisor. The host site supervisor receives training in youth-centered design and the G2O program model, and may participate in the youth and Team Leader hiring process if desired. The program requires a commitment from a host site and it is important to stress this in the beginning so there is less confusion later.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD HOST SITE PROJECT?

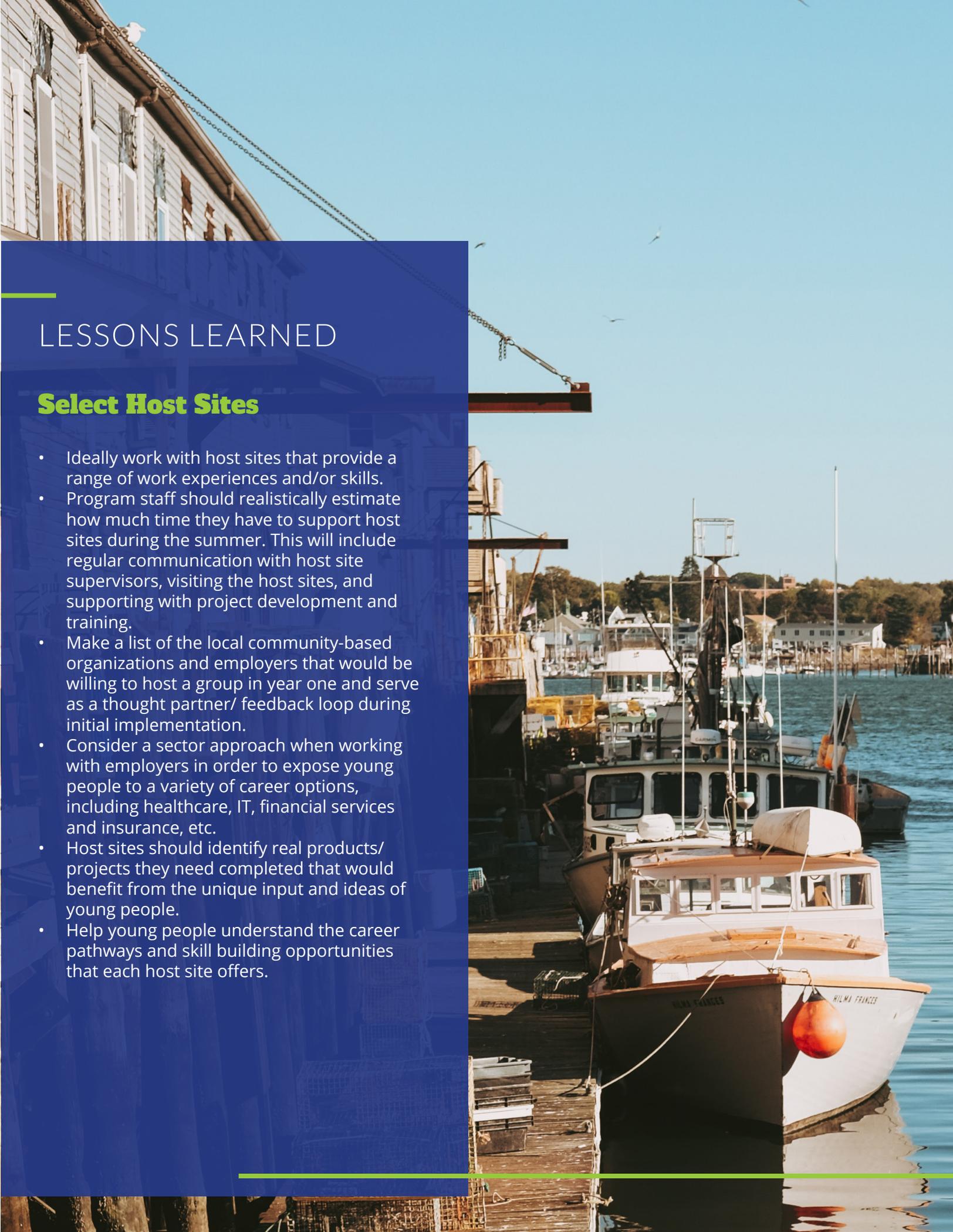
Questions to consider when assessing host site applications:

- Is the project exciting for youth?
- Does the project offer opportunities after summer (employment or otherwise)?
- Are the project goals achievable in 6-weeks?
- Is there room in the project for youth voice?
- Is this a unique opportunity? (Would this project happen without G2O or through another local program?)
- Would youth gain valuable skills?

For examples of projects that were successful for G2O in the Greater Portland area, see our "Successful Project Ideas" section, pages 24-25.

“This unique set-up seems to foster growth for nearly everyone involved in the program.”

— HOST SITE



LESSONS LEARNED

Select Host Sites

- Ideally work with host sites that provide a range of work experiences and/or skills.
- Program staff should realistically estimate how much time they have to support host sites during the summer. This will include regular communication with host site supervisors, visiting the host sites, and supporting with project development and training.
- Make a list of the local community-based organizations and employers that would be willing to host a group in year one and serve as a thought partner/ feedback loop during initial implementation.
- Consider a sector approach when working with employers in order to expose young people to a variety of career options, including healthcare, IT, financial services and insurance, etc.
- Host sites should identify real products/ projects they need completed that would benefit from the unique input and ideas of young people.
- Help young people understand the career pathways and skill building opportunities that each host site offers.



Develop Trainings and Workshops

This section provides an overview of the building blocks for designing effective trainings for your work-based learning program. Youth-adult partnership and youth-centered trainings are the foundation for a strengths-based collaborative program.

The Greater Portland program has a number of training components that have been deepened each year based on evaluation feedback and lessons learned. In your community, determine the training needs for Team Leaders, host sites and youth (see readiness scale to help you think through the needs in your community). Trainings ensure everyone is clear about the mindset, behaviors and activities that support a strength-based, positive, and learning-rich experience.

PRE-PROGRAM

Pre-program training ensures Team Leaders and host site supervisors are ready to support learning and skill building experiences for the youth participants. The following training topics are designed to help all stakeholders incorporate the essential elements of the approach, implement the work-based learning model, and foster relationship development throughout the program.

Topics for Team Leader Training and/or Host Site Trainings:

- Facilitation 101 and 201
- Communication
- Conflict Management
- Group work and group dynamics
- Positive youth development

- Work readiness and 21st Century Skills
- Action planning
- Youth-Adult Partnership
- Strengths based leadership
- Essential elements of work-based learning and how to incorporate these into the daily structure
- Identity, bias, microaggressions – *what and how do these play out in workplaces?*
- Adolescent Brain Development

Transferable Skills and Tools

A train the trainer approach allows host site supervisors and Team Leaders to see how they can use all of the content in their projects and make it their own.

During every training it is important to:

- Model the type of facilitating that should be happening with projects.
- Integrate activities people can take back to their projects.
- Be transparent about EVERYTHING from design and flow to facilitation and activities.

Trainings are clearly a foundation, and particularly valuable to Team Leaders as they are the glue holding all the pieces together for the project to work. The more training that can be provided to a Team Leader the better, but they also need time to:

- Plan with their host sites.
- Research and coordinate elements for their project.
- Participate in any other required pre-program activities: host site orientations, recruitment and screening of youth, etc.

DURING-PROGRAM

The trainings offered during the program should have a focus on building the skills of the youth participants. But, they are also opportunities for the Team Leaders to hone and improve on their own skills, from public speaking to interviewing. Before the program begins, develop and stick to a policy about missing trainings and offering makeup sessions, and be sure to incorporate this into orientation.

Youth Orientation

Hosting an orientation for all youth participants will ensure that everyone receives the same program information from the outset and that roles and expectations are clear from day one. Some tips to keep in mind:

- Provide youth with written protocols of program expectations.
- Identify an appropriate space that is youth friendly, accessible, and comfortably fits the number of youth involved in the program.
- Orientation facilitators should model shared leadership, co-facilitation and transparency.
- It should be fun!

21st Century Skills Workshops

An essential element of G2O is 21st Century Skills development for the youth with an emphasis on communication, problem-solving, leadership and work readiness. These 21st Century Skills are incorporated into the projects through daily reflection and experiential learning activities. Additionally, each week all youth attend a two-hour Career Workshop. The central element of G2O is to support youth to develop the skills they need to be successful in tomorrow's workforce.

In Greater Portland, the following workshops were offered each week covering a range of career readiness topics:

- Resume development and interview skills
- Networking and practicing elevator pitches
- Financial management and education
- Panel with experts in the field
- Job Fair (invited local business that are excited to hire high school aged youth)

LESSONS LEARNED

Pre-Program

- Requiring all partners to attend trainings is a helpful component to ensure fidelity to the model, buy-in and understanding of the local approach.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- How much time can people reasonably commit to attend a training?
- What will strengthen the connection between Team Leaders and host sites?
- What will create a safe space for everyone's learning without one group dominating over another due to privilege, age, gender, etc?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the host sites and Team Leaders? How can those be built on/addressed?

During Program

Youth participants were excited to meet professionals from a variety of careers and appreciated the opportunity to ask them questions. It is important to ensure that professionals:

- Represent a range of career pathways (including postsecondary education and non-traditional educational experiences).
- Have diverse backgrounds, genders, races, experiences, etc.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- What skills do youth and Team Leaders need to develop?
- Are there different locations/spaces for the career workshops that will expose youth to a variety of workplaces?



“The biggest success was the growth of the students in their knowledge and skills from week 1 to the final presentation...By the end, they showed confidence and passion for the work.”

— TEAM LEADER

Successful Project Ideas



Community Needs Assessment

- Youth craft questions, identify groups of individuals and design format for conversation with key informants (interviews, focus groups, etc.).
- Youth learn from local partners about issues and the ways they are addressed in their community.
- Youth design a creative presentation to share findings with key stakeholders and/or community. (If time) youth implement some of the suggestions.

EXAMPLE OPEN PROJECT

One year a group created a global summit on racism, which involved outreach to the community and interactive skits about the topic.



Technology

- Youth conduct market research with the intended audience.
- Youth explore design, learn coding, and app creation skills.
- Youth input all material into app or other platform.
- Youth create a marketing plan and gather input from stakeholders.

EXAMPLE YOUTH LEADERSHIP ADVISORY TEAM

One year a group created an app for youth in foster care and surveyed them about their interests at an annual youth in care conference.

Examples from 2016-2018

The following are project ideas that have been: youth led, meaningful (for youth and community/organization), attainable in the time allotted, and useful for the organization/community. They are examples based on 3 years of experience and can be customized to meet the unique needs of your organization.

What elements inspire YOU/YOUTH?

What could youth create for YOUR business/organization?



Community Events

- Youth research all aspects of event planning including: crafting budgets, soliciting sponsors, and renting equipment.
- Youth connect with partners to learn how to develop necessary skills for event.
- Youth design outreach strategies and materials to spread the word about the event.

EXAMPLE

EAST END COMMUNITY SCHOOL

One year a group created a “Books & Bubbles” literacy learning event held at the local laundromat.



Video Production

- Youth work with partners to write script, and map out key parts of video.
- Youth learn video making techniques (and the various roles/skills involved in film production).
- Youth go out in the field to shoot necessary material and edit content to create a final project.

EXAMPLE

MULTILINGUAL MULTICULTURAL CENTER

One year a group created an orientation video for families new to the Portland Public Schools and shared the video with school staff.

An Intro to Performance Measurement

Since launching the G2O program in Greater Portland, performance measurement has helped to inform our overall strategic planning and program implementation. We have worked with an evaluator from the Cutler Institute's Data Innovation Project (DIP) to help identify our program goals and related outcomes, prioritize metrics to track, and develop, implement, analyze and report on data collection activities. We understand that not everyone will have the capacity to hire an evaluator and we encourage you to consider the following important elements of program monitoring as you design and implement your own model.

Do I Really Have To?

WHY INCORPORATE PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT INTO YOUR MODEL

Simply put, systematic and thoughtful processes for collecting and reviewing data on your program is the only way to know if you are having an impact on the youth, Team Leaders and host sites with whom you are working. A performance measurement plan is a roadmap to engage in routine program monitoring and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI), which is a process used to gauge progress toward stated goals, make midcourse adjustments for improvement, and plan for future work streams.

The ongoing and cyclical nature of performance measurement encourages a thoughtful review and reflection of data to inform CQI and data-informed decision-making. In addition to highlighting successes, data can guide discussions around identified challenges or areas for improvement. A performance measurement plan will also set you on the path to having clear outcomes and related data to report back to funders and stakeholders to build excitement about your work.



Where To Start

Performance measurement plans start with a clear, logical and step by step map of how your program activities will lead to your hoped for outcomes. This map is often called a logic model. In developing a logic model, we also encourage you to articulate your theory of change, which will help you answer the following questions:

1. What is the problem your program is hoping to address? And why is this a problem, specifically in your community?
2. Inversely, what is the end goal? How will you know your program is successful?
3. What strategies are you going to implement to meet that goal?

Beginning To Think About Data Collection

Once you have a solid logic model with outputs and realistic, measurable outcomes you can begin to think about how you can collect related data. Pro tip – start small! Depending on your capacity, in year one, it may make the most sense for you to focus only on tracking output data – the how much, how many counts of program activities that tell you if your work as been completed as planned (e.g. number of youth who applied to the program, number of trainings offered to host sites).

From there, you may consider if you have the capacity to roll out feedback forms for host sites, Team Leaders and/or youth after any trainings that you offer. These types of forms would help you start to think about the outcomes associated with your work. In addition to creating the forms, remember you will need to build in time for data entry, analysis and reporting. Google Forms and SurveyMonkey.com are good free or low cost resources to help ease into the data collection and reporting process. (See Evaluation Tool, Appendix XI)

As you start to think about collecting data related to outcomes⁵, consider the following questions:

1. **What is the data collection method used to collect data on this outcome?**
Identify which type of data collection method (survey, interview, observation, or record review) will be conducted.
2. **When will the data be collected?**
Describe the timing and frequency of data collection.
3. **Who will collect the data?**
Identify who will be responsible for collecting the data.
4. **What will they do?**
Describe the steps they will take to implement the data collection.
5. **How will the collected data be monitored?**
Identify who will monitor the data collection process for quality and consistency and how they will do so.

One of the most important parts of a performance measurement plan is that it is realistic! Set yourself up for success by starting small, clearly assigning roles and responsibilities and continually reflecting on processes and results as a team.

-
1. Please note we use the term “outcome” here, but when thinking about a performance measurement plan you will need to make sure each outcome has an associated metric or indicator that makes it measurable.

Need help with a logic model?

CHECK OUT APPENDIX XV

This resource from our evaluation team, The Data Innovation Project, walks you through questions to help populate a logic model.

Readiness Scale

Before undertaking your own work-based learning initiative, it will be helpful to assess your readiness for this work.

If you want to assess your organization’s readiness, you can use this scale by assigning a rating in each area from 1-5. Then total your scores and reflect on your organization’s ability to incorporate different components of the model. Items included below are what we consider fundamental and foundational to the G2O model.

Staffing

It is critical to have dedicated staff to organize and implement the program, including: developing the curriculum; cultivating relationships with schools, businesses and community organizations; recruiting students; coordinating the summer schedule and more.

Areas to consider when thinking through... Organizational/Staff experience:	Rating 1= very little, 5 = a lot
Staff have experience prioritizing youth voice and developing youth adult partnerships	
Staff have experience incorporating reflection into programming, designing trainings and developing youth focused workshops and activities	
Staff have facilitation expertise and youth development experience	
Staff have experience building relationships with: young people, employers and schools	

SUB TOTAL:

/20

Staff have experience designing... Curriculum for youth:	Rating 1= very little, 5 = a lot
Staff could incorporate a youth driven approach to curriculum	
Staff could utilize reflection as a tool for synthesizing learning and understanding how to apply skill development inside and outside of the workplace	
Staff could highlight 21st Century Skills for development in youth (with a focus on communication, teamwork, problem solving and work readiness)	
SUB TOTAL:	
/15	

Staff have experience designing... Trainings and workshops:	Rating 1= very little, 5 = a lot
That incorporates team building	
That addresses job supervision	
That deepens understanding of group dynamics	
That engages the community	
That supports diverse groups and addresses systemic oppression	
That provides tools for conflict resolution	
SUB TOTAL:	
/30	

Instructions: For each focus areas score, add up the subtotals above. Place that number below.

Staffing Area Total Score	/65
<p>Readiness Score Considerations:</p> <p>0 - 20 = Are there other organizations/partners you could collaborate with to strengthen your ability to provide essential workshops and trainings?</p> <p>21 - 40 = Is there one area (staff experience, workshops or trainings) where you were stronger/weaker? Is it possible to focus on one of these areas to strengthen your readiness to implement the program? And/or are there partner organizations you could collaborate with to offer components of the model?</p> <p>41 - 65 = This is a strong area for your organization. While there is always room to grow, it probably wouldn't be too challenging for your staff/ organization to design, facilitate and implement youth driven, job skills workshops and trainings.</p>	

Local Host Sites/Employers

Organizations or businesses who are interested in investing in young adults from the community.

Areas to consider when assessing for potential... Host Sites:	Rating 1 = none, 5 = a lot
Local organizations/businesses represent a range of job experiences/sectors	
Local organizations/businesses can identify 2+ staff members who can support the project	
Local organizations/businesses have experience/interest in working with young adults (ages 16-19)	
Local organizations/businesses can commit to financial sponsorship of a project	

SUB TOTAL: /20

Local Host Sites/Employers Total Score	/20
<p>Readiness Score Considerations:</p> <p>0 - 5 = Start small. Perhaps you start with 1-2 host sites so your organization and staff can invest time and energy into supporting them as host sites.</p> <p>6 - 15 = Is there one area (range of organizations, staff from organizations, working with young adults or financial commitment) where you scored higher/lower? Is it possible to focus on one of these areas to strengthen your readiness to implement the program? And/or are there partner organizations you could collaborate with to provide missing pieces?</p> <p>16 - 20 = This is a strong area for your organization. While there is always room to grow, it probably wouldn't be too challenging for your staff/organization to engage host sites that are invested, interested and offer meaningful projects for youth to design and implement.</p>	

Partners/Support Services

Organizations and individuals are available within the community to provide training or workshops to youth and Team Leaders beyond what the program staff are able to offer.

Topics and life skills <i>(that are available in your community) and can be incorporated into the program may include...</i>	Rating 1 = none, 5 = a lot
Opening bank accounts (credit and savings)	
Financial management/awareness training	
Developing hard and soft work readiness skills	
How to receive credit for work from the summer	
Wraparound supports, including childcare, transportation, lunch, and mental health supports	

SUB TOTAL:

/20

Partners/Support Services Total Score	/20
<p>Readiness Score Considerations:</p> <p>0 – 5 = Start small. Perhaps you start by integrating 1-2 support services during the program that will bolster the young people’s experience.</p> <p>6 – 15 = Is there one area (bank accounts, financial awareness, hard and soft skills, high school credit, transportation and lunch, wraparound services or youth programming) where you scored higher/lower? Is it possible to focus on one of these areas to strengthen your readiness to implement the program? And/or are there partner organizations you could collaborate with to provide missing pieces?</p> <p>16 – 20 = This is a strong area for your organization. While there is always room to grow, it probably wouldn’t be too challenging for your staff/ organization to engage partners that have helpful services to offer youth involved in the program, and strengthen their overall experience during and after the program.</p>	

Funding

Resources and/or funding is available to pay youth and Team Leaders.

Funding sources available in your community...	Rating 1 = none, 5 = a lot
Local funders interested in employing young adults	
WIOA or other federal funds available	
Other private, public, local funding sources your organization can apply for	

SUB TOTAL: /15

Funding Total Score	/15
<p>Readiness Score Considerations:</p> <p>0 – 5 = Start small or don't start. Is it possible to find ways to re-allocate funds within your organization and/or partner with another organization whose mission aligns with youth employment?</p> <p>6 – 10 = Is there one area (local funders, WIOA, other) where you scored higher/lower? Is it possible to focus on one of these areas to ensure you have funds to implement the program? And/or are there partner organizations you could collaborate with to minimize the cost of the program?</p> <p>11 – 15 = This is a strong area for your organization. While there is always room to grow, it probably wouldn't be too challenging for your staff/organization to engage funders to implement a strong program.</p>	

Team Leaders (Optional)

College-age youth (referred to as Team Leaders) live in the community and are available to work during the summer.

Available sources in your community...	Rating 1 = none, 5 = a lot
There is a local source/resource for college aged youth seeking summer employment (such as community college, university, or trade school)	

SUB TOTAL: /5

Team Leaders Total Score	/5
<p>Readiness Score Considerations:</p> <p>0 = We found Team Leaders to be an incredible asset to G2O by providing mentoring and near peer learning to the youth teams. It is possible to run the program without this role, but it does require more effort from staff and host site supervisors. Ensure your readiness score for host sites is strong enough to counter 0 Team Leaders.</p> <p>1 - 4 = Is there one source (universities/community colleges, other) where you scored higher/lower? Is it possible to focus on this one area to try to recruit enough Team Leaders for 1 host site? Are there any obstacles that can be mitigated to ensure Team Leaders are employed with the program?</p> <p>5 = This is a strong area for your organization. While there is always room to grow, it probably wouldn't be too challenging for your staff/organization to have Team Leaders to support the overall success of the program.</p>	

Support & Resources

WHAT IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT CAN THE YCE TEAM PROVIDE?

- Trainings before and during summer programming
- Technical Assistance before, during and after programming
- Provide curriculum and templates of useful materials
- Explore funding opportunities
- Thought partner

The YCE team wants youth across the state to be able to have meaningful, paid work experiences in the summer. This is a key time to strengthen learning beyond the school walls, connect young people to their communities and develop a range of skills in a positive, youth – friendly, strength-based environment.

YCE is here to support this. As the backbone organization for this program over the last three years, we have learned a great deal. One of the roles we have found most helpful is offering trainings and workshops both before and during the program. These trainings can be customized to your needs or you can pick from a menu of already established trainings.

YCE is also happy to support convenings and professional development opportunities across partners. This might look like bringing all partners together at the close of program to debrief and discuss learnings and challenges.



WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?

We have provided examples of tools for your organization or community to use, modify or build from in an appendix available online. To download the appendix, visit <https://www.yceme.org/g2o-toolkit>. If you are interested in other resources, please be in touch!

Check out these resources available to download
at <https://www.yceme.org/g2o-toolkit>

Youth Flyer

APPENDIX I

Team Leader Job Description

APPENDIX II

Host Site Selection Process

APPENDIX III

Host Site Application

APPENDIX IV

Host Site Criteria for Youth

APPENDIX V

Host Site Application Rubric

APPENDIX VI

Youth Application

APPENDIX VII

Team Leader Interview Questions

APPENDIX VIII

Youth Screening

APPENDIX IX

Host Site Checklist

APPENDIX X

Training Agenda (example)

APPENDIX XI

Evaluation Tool

APPENDIX XII

21st Century Skills

APPENDIX XIII

Career Workshop Agenda

APPENDIX XIV

Logic Model Template

APPENDIX XV





" Before G20 I didn't have a lot of trouble getting a job, but keeping a job was where I struggled. I had problems with communication and I wouldn't speak up when I didn't understand something or thought there was an issue and that always became my biggest weakness. I also believed I was only able to get hired for the standard entry level jobs, like fast food for example. After G20 I started to respect myself more as a working person."

— YOUTH PARTICIPANT

Acknowledgments

THANK YOU!

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Goodwill Northern New England

who has been an equal and engaged partner with us since launching the program in Portland and played a critical role in building and improving this model.

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for providing the funding and support to launch this toolkit and bring G2O to communities in Cumberland County.

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And to the many young people, host sites, and individuals who were critical to G2O's success.

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GATEWAY TO OPPORTUNITY

*Curious?
Questions?
Be in touch!*

claire.schroeder@maine.edu
207.523.0224

www.yceme.org

