

Sustainability

What is Sustainability?

Youth Ventures are unique because they are designed to be ongoing rather than one-time projects or events. This means that these Ventures have the power to make a lasting impact. Even if you do not plan to be involved with your Venture forever, it's important to plan for your Venture's future. Below is a list of some different aspects of Venture sustainability for you to think about. The Youth Venture "Sustainability Worksheet" can be used together with these questions.

Membership: How are you going to recruit new members? How will you keep members interested and involved in your Venture? Here are some quick membership tips:

- Ensure that members feel needed and encouraged.
- Find out what members hope to accomplish and make that happen!
- Recognize hard work and acknowledge or reward it.
- Take advantage of what new members bring to the Venture such as energy, ideas, and new contacts.

Leadership: How will you put new leaders into place when the current leaders leave? Who will be the driving force behind your Venture? Plan for sustainable leadership by:

- Giving members opportunities to gain more experience and responsibility.
- Sharing leadership roles with newer/younger members.
- Creating a system to choose a new leader. For example, you may want to hold yearly elections or have co-leaders.

Fundraising: Youth Venture grants must be used in the first year of the Venture. How will your team raise money after YV funds are spent? You could decide to:

- Sell a product or a service.
- Request in-kind donations.
- Apply for grants or ask for individual donations.
- Hold fundraisers for your Venture.

Knowledge Management: How will your Venture stay organized? How will your successes and lessons-learned be remembered? It's important to keep records, so new leaders don't have to start from scratch. Here are some strategies:

- Create a "Venture Binder" full of information on strategies, events, contacts, passwords, finances, and other relevant information.
- Record reasons for successes and failures.
- Write up short "tutorials" or guides that teach new members how to do activities central to the Venture, such as updating your website.
- Create a logical organizational system that can be easily understood and used by many different people.