

Tips for Building and Maintaining Immunization Coalition Financial Stability



This tip sheet is for immunization programs (IPs) or for individuals/vaccine champions who want to start or reinvigorate an immunization coalition. Use this tip sheet as an overall funding guide when establishing a coalition or **share this tip sheet with your coalition to support their funding efforts**. These tips can help your coalition build and maintain financial stability, transparency, and effective use of resources.

- 1. Set financial goals.** Define your coalition's financial goals, including both short-term and long-term objectives, based on your coalition's overall goals and planned activities. Consult with coalition leadership, including board and executive committee members, or seek input from volunteers with financial expertise. You can also connect with [other coalitions](#) to learn about their financial goals.
- 2. Develop a comprehensive budget.** Your coalition's budget should align with the overall goals and include all expected expenses and revenue sources. Update the budget regularly to reflect changes in funding, costs, and project scope. See the sample budget included on this tip sheet for a starting point.
- 3. Decide on a legal status.** Choose the best status for your coalition. A 501(c)(3) status provides certain federal tax exemptions and access to a wide range of funding options but limits advocacy activities. For more advocacy work, consider registering as a 501(c)(4). For guidance, see the Alliance for Justice [factsheet](#) and the [National Association of County & City Health Officials \(NACCHO\)](#) resources.
- 4. Diversify your funding sources.** Funding sources can vary by location and year. To maintain a consistent operating budget, it may be helpful to:
 - Explore a more formal partnership between the immunization program and the coalition. See examples of Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and Contracts in AIM's Coalition Toolkit.

- Apply for grants from government agencies, private foundations, professional associations, and corporations.
- Host events, like conferences, to generate income.
- Seek donations and sponsorships from businesses, pharmaceutical companies*, individuals, and philanthropic organizations.



*Coalitions should consider if they will accept funding (and how much) from pharmaceutical companies and provide this information in a transparent statement to their coalition members and the public. This information can also be added to the coalition by-laws.

- 5. Maintain transparency and accountability.** Provide regular financial reports to coalition members and stakeholders. Make your financial records accessible to coalition members. Financial reports/records are available for any 501(c)(3) nonprofit on [Guidestar.org](https://www.guidestar.org).
- 6. Implement strong financial controls.**
 - Keep coalition funds in separate bank accounts from personal or other organizational program funds.
 - Set clear procedures for approving expenditures and handling cash.
 - Conduct regular internal and external audits to ensure financial compliance.
- 7. Leverage in-kind contributions.** This could include office space, equipment, supplies, and volunteer time. Keep detailed records of in-kind contributions to accurately reflect the coalition's resources and impact. This may be important for grant applications and reporting.
- 8. Hire financial help.** Some coalitions use outside help to manage the coalition's finances. For example, the California Immunization Coalition uses a third-party for administrative tasks and for payroll and partners with a community foundation for grant management. Additional examples from healthcare coalitions of how fiscal agents (also known as fiduciary agents) may be used can be found in this [Healthcare Coalition Fiscal Models](#) resource from the Department of Health and Human Services.
- 9. Develop a financial sustainability plan.** Include strategies for maintaining and growing funding over time.
- 10. Conduct regular financial reviews.** Track the budget, spot variances, and adjust as needed. Perform an annual review to assess financial health and plan for the next year.
- 11. Share the outcomes.** Coalitions should share both financial needs and programmatic successes with stakeholders, funders, and the community. Highlight the outcomes to demonstrate the value of financial support.

12. Utilize publicly available financial resources from trusted sources. Ohio State University offers a tip sheet on [financial resources for coalitions](#). The Community Toolbox shares several supportive resources, such as [Creating and Maintaining Coalitions and Partnerships](#), and [Planning and Writing an Annual Budget](#).

In addition to these resources, the table below shows a sample budget template that IPs and coalitions can replicate and review together.

Category	Description	Estimated Budget	Actuals	Variance
Revenue				
Grants	Government & private	\$25,000	\$22,500	(\$2,500)
Department of Health	State Department of Health contract	\$50,000	\$50,000	--
Donations	Individual and corporate	\$5,000	\$6,000	\$1,000
Fundraising Events	Proceeds from events (example: Annual Conference)	\$3,000	\$2,500	(\$500)
Total Revenue		\$83,000	\$81,000	(\$2,000)
Expenses				
Staff Salaries	One FTE	\$63,000	\$63,000	--
Program Costs	Direct costs of coalition programs	\$8,000	\$7,500	\$500
Administrative Costs	Office rent, utilities, supplies	\$4,000	\$4,200	(\$200)
Marketing	Promotion, advertising, outreach	\$3,000	\$2,800	\$200
Fundraising Events	Costs associated with fundraising	\$2,000	\$1,900	\$100
Contingency	Unexpected expenses	\$1,000	\$800	\$200
Total Expenses		\$81,000	\$80,200	\$800

Disclaimer: The information in this tip sheet is provided for informational purposes only and should not be construed as legal or financial advice.

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